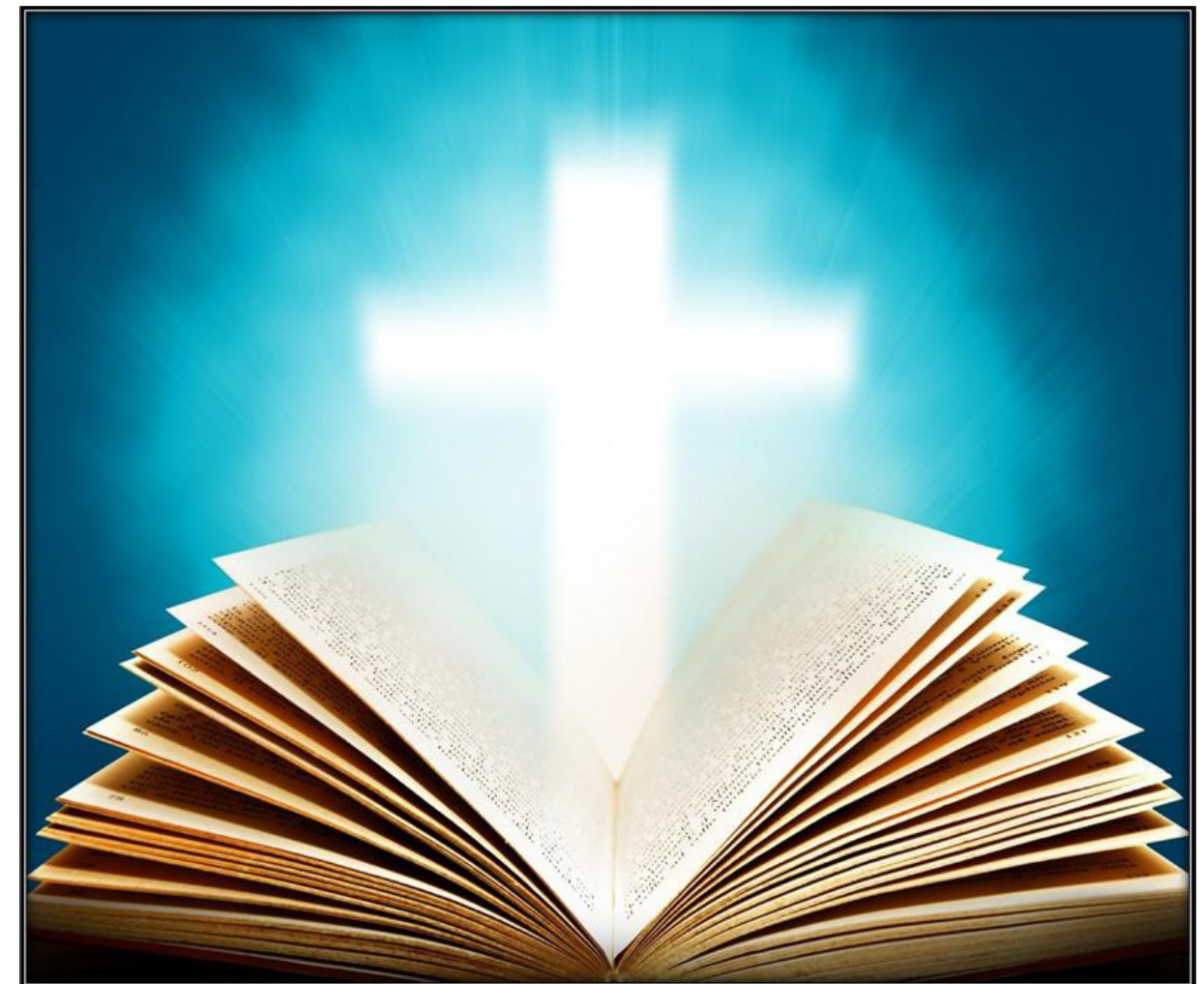


EVANGELISM AND CHURCH
PLANTING MOVEMENTS



School of Global Missions

EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS

KINGDOM DISCIPLESHIP

DISCIPLESHIP 101

The Book of Acts:
The Holy Spirit's Guide to Church Planting Movements

School of Global Missions
Dr. Frederick Osborn, M.Div., D.Min.

The School of Global Mission course curriculum for EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING is divided into six parts. Classes will meet one evening each week for one hour. Each part will be 12 lessons. It will take two years to complete all six parts.

Students will be required to take home extra materials and class handouts to read and study on their own.

At the end of each year (36 Lessons) each student will be required to submit a written summary of what they have learned (submission must be no less than three typed pages, single space, Times New Roman 12 pt. font). However, if the student has no access to a computer, special arrangements can be made for a handwritten paper to be submitted.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Frederick Osborn traveled the world teaching and preaching the Word of God from 2005 - 2017. His first trip to South Asia was in 2001, and since 2005 he has been fully involved in ministry. His books and study guides have been used in classrooms by hundreds of students around the world.

In 2013 he earned his M.Div. from Andhra Christian Theological College in Hyderabad, India and in that same year was officially ordained into the ministry in a holy convocation administered by Indian pastors representing AG, CSA, and other independent ministries. In 2017 he completed his D.Min. from Covenant Bible College & Seminary, Florida, USA.

He and his wife, Deena now live near Atlanta, GA where he continues to write, teach, and publish his books and study guides.

Evangelism and Church Planting Movements

Discipleship 101

The Book of Acts: The Holy Spirit's Guide to Church Planting Movements

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The teaching materials of Discipleship 101 were previously published under the same title, but they have been edited and reformatted by the author for the SGM course in Evangelism and Church Planting Movements.

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Course Materials for EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS

Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Survey, Second Edition, A. Scott Moreau, Gary R. Corwin, and Gary B. McGee, © 2004, 2015, Pub. Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI

Encountering Theology of Mission: Biblical Foundations, Historical Developments, and Contemporary Issues, Craig Ott, Stephen J. Strauss, with Timothy C. Tennent, © 2010, Pub. Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI

Developing A Strategy For Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Cultural Introduction, John Mark Terry, J. D. Payne, © 2013, Pub. Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI

Encountering Missionary Life and Work: Preparing for intercultural Ministry, Tom Steffen, Lois McKinney Douglas, © 2008, Pub. Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, MI

Published by Dr. Frederick Osborn:

Church Planting Movements: India

Exploring the New Testament

Kingdom Discipleship: Becoming Like Jesus

Messiah: The Mission of Jesus of Nazareth

Reviving A Nation

The Apocalyptic Vision: Understanding the Apocalyptic Writings of the Bible

The Book of Acts: The Holy Spirit's Handbook for Church Planting Movements

The Holy Spirit in You: Nourishing the Life of Holiness and power in You

The Revelation of Jesus Christ: John the Apostle's Heavenly Vision of Christ the King

The Way, the Truth, and the Life: the Teachings and Ministry of Jesus the Messiah

This Gospel of the Kingdom

School of Global Missions

SGM BIBLICAL STUDIES: DISCIPLESHIP 101-103

COURSE SYLLABUS - PROFESSOR

Dr. Frederick Osborn, Academic Dean | Chancellor/President, SGM
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COURSE OBJECTIVES:

This course in EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS is designed to teach and train three groups: (1) those who are preparing to go to unreached people groups in foreign mission fields (2) those indigenous workers who need more teaching and training for the work they are doing, and (3) to provide materials for indigenous church planters to teach and train others for evangelism and church planting.

CREDIT VALUE:

SGM uses what is known as a *Trimester Calendar* for holding classes. In a trimester system, students have three terms of 12 weeks in each school year. The students will cover a full year's worth of teaching in a normal two-semester year. This course in EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS has a 30-credit hour value (Three Terms in Evangelism and Church Planting Movements Studies in the first year and Three Terms in Evangelism and Church Planting Studies in the second year).

COURSE TEXT:

The only required text for all School of Global Mission courses is THE HOLY BIBLE. We recommend that each student has a good Study Bible, if possible.

NOTE TO STUDENTS: SGM recommends the website, www.blueletterbible.org for Bible translations and reference materials for Bible study. The site is also available on Mobile apps for your phone or tablet.

NOTE TO PROFESSORS: Additional materials are included in the teaching materials that you may or may not wish to take advantage of. Anything that is identified as HANDOUT material is NOT seen by the students unless you copy and give it to them as supplemental material. It will be up to the individual teacher to review the teaching materials and decide what to emphasize in their class time. Whatever is not covered in the class, the students will be able read and study as homework assignments.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE STUDENTS:

1. Read the required texts.

NOTE TO PROFESSORS: Because the Bible is the only required text for all BIBLICAL STUDIES classes, the students should read the relevant chapters from the Scriptures. The chapters and verses covered in each class should be given at the beginning of each lesson.
2. Attend all classes in person or online, or review recording of an excused class (maximum two per term).
3. At the end of each term (12 weeks) write a term paper of at least three typewritten pages (12 point, Times New Roman font, single space.)

EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS (FIRST YEAR LESSONS)**EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS: DISCIPLESHIP 101 LESSONS**

(LESSONS 1 – 12 *The Book of Acts: The Holy Spirit's Guide for Church Planting Movements*)

1. Introduction: From Jerusalem to the World, “Christ is Lord”
2. Jerusalem: A Move of the Holy Spirit
3. The Message: Kerygma & Personal Testimony
4. Paul’s First Missionary Journey: The Holy Spirit Prepares the Way
5. Paul’s Second Missionary Journey: A Church Planting Movement Takes Shape
6. Paul’s Third Missionary Journey: A Church Planting Movement is Established
7. Learning Points for Modern CPMs From Paul’s Missionary Journeys
8. Disciples Making Disciples: A Church Planting Movement is Extended (Part One)
9. Disciples Making Disciples: A Church Planting Movement is Extended (Part Two)
10. Developing A Strategy for Church Planting Movements: The Apostle Paul’s Missionary Strategy (Part One)
11. Developing A Strategy for Church Planting Movements The Apostle Paul’s Missionary Strategy” (Part Two)
12. Obstacles to A Church Planting Movement

EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS: DISCIPLESHIP 102 LESSONS**Kingdom Discipleship – One**

1. Introduction to Biblical Discipleship
2. The Key Parable of “The Sower and the Soils” pt. one “Not for Everyone”
3. The Key Parable of “The Sower and The Soils” pt. two: “The Strongholds”
4. The Key Parable of “The Sower and The Soils” pt. three “The Thorns of Money, Sex, and Power”
5. The Key Parable of “The Sower and The Soils” pt. four “The Good Soil – A Heart Prepared to Receive”
6. The Terms of Discipleship “Counting the Cost”
7. The Terms of Discipleship “A Supreme Love for Christ and a Fervent Love for All Who Belong to Christ”
8. The Terms of Discipleship “A Deliberate Choosing of the Cross”
9. The Terms of Discipleship “Confronting the Giants of Self”
10. The Terms of Discipleship “A Life Spent Following Christ”
11. The Terms of Discipleship “An Unswerving Continuance in His Word”
12. The Terms of Discipleship “Abiding in Christ”

EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS: DISCIPLESHIP 103 LESSONS**Encountering Missionary Life and Work**

1. “Decision-making and the Will of God”
2. “Missions and Spiritual Formation”
3. “The Indigenous Mission Strategy”

Kingdom Discipleship – Two (Lessons 4-7)

4. Dying to Self: “The Agape Road”
5. Love Is the Key
6. The Seven Things We Must Die To
7. Learning to Abide in Christ

The Holy Spirit in Ministry Life and Work

8. “The Fruit-bearing Life”
9. “The Fruit of the Spirit”
10. “The Gifts of the Holy Spirit”
11. “The Ministry Gifts of the Spirit”
12. “The Kingdom of God and Missions”

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101

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NOTE: ALL HANDOUTS FOR THIS COURSE ARE IN A SEPARATE FILE. HANDOUTS ARE NOT INCLUDED WITH THE STUDENT NOTES. THE HANDOUTS MAY BE COPIED FOR THE STUDENTS AT THE TEACHER’S DISCRETION.

NOTE TO THE TEACHER

The materials for the lessons of the School of Global Mission’s DISCIPLESHIP 101 COURSE are taken from *The Book of Acts: the Holy Spirit’s Guide for Church Planting Movements* written by Dr. Frederick Osborn. The course material has been edited and reformatted from the original to conform to the hour-long lessons. No part of these TEACHING NOTES may be copied and distributed to others without the written permission of the author or the School of Global Missions administration.

These special Teaching Notes are intended for the teachers only; they are in Times New Roman #14 for ease of reading while teaching. A separate set of notes for the students has been produced and are intended for the student to read and follow as you use the Teaching Notes.

Because this course uses the Inductive Method of Bible Study, you will notice a number of places where words, phrases, or sentences are in **bold print and underlined** these are intended for the students as fill-in-the-blank answers in their Student Notes as they follow your lesson.

There are more notes in the teaching materials than can be taught in the one-hour class time. So, it is best to review each lesson before you start teaching and refer to the student notes for reading and homework assignments. The additional materials in the *Teacher’s Notes* allow the teacher some flexibility in how they teach this course. The teacher may look through the HANDOUTS and select which of the additional materials they want to copy and distribute to their students.

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101-1

LESSON ONE: INTRODUCTION

From Jerusalem to the World...Christ is Lord!

"As long as there are millions destitute of the Word of God and knowledge of Jesus Christ, it will be impossible for me to devote time and energy to those who have both." – J. L. Ewen

The Book of Acts is often studied and presented in sermons and in Sunday School lessons as interesting church history, but little more. Some spiritual principles may be drawn out of its stories, but the idea that the Holy Spirit gave Acts to the church to be our **handbook or training manual** for how to fulfill the Great Commission is often overlooked. "That was then" most will say, "but this is a different time and place. Surely, the Lord does not intend for the church to experience the same results today!" But the evidence from around the world is clear: the church planting paradigm of Acts produces **rapid, exponential growth** of the kingdom whenever and wherever it is properly applied. David Garrison wrote in the opening statements of his book *Church Planting Movements* (1999):

"From every corner of the globe the reports are coming in. Only a few at first, but now more and more frequently, reinforcing one another with their startling accounts of hundreds, thousands, and even tens of thousands coming to faith in Christ, forming into churches and spreading their newfound faith".

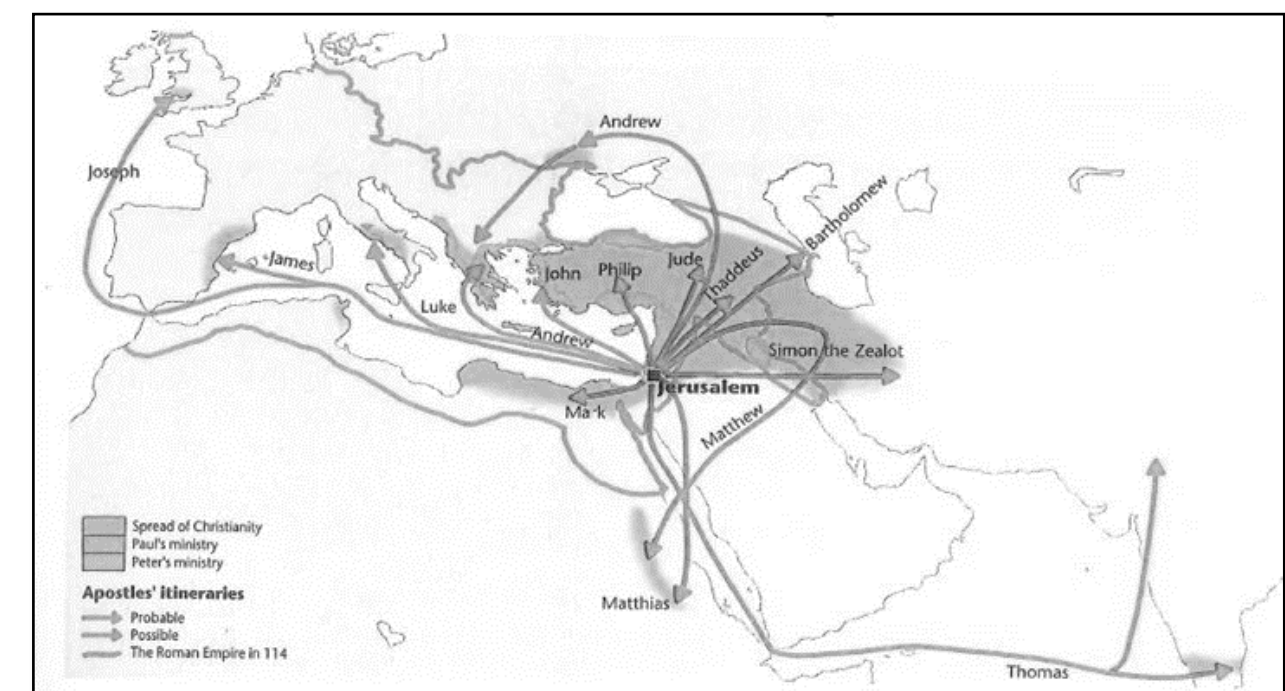
What David Garrison was describing could just as easily have been an introduction to the Book of Acts; for that was exactly what Luke was describing as he recorded the rapid expansion of the church that started in Jerusalem on that first Pentecost after Jesus' Resurrection and Ascension.

The Book of Acts begins where the Gospels end; it records the initial fulfillment of the Great Commission from Jesus to His disciples in Matthew 28:19, 20 and Luke 24:48, 49. As it traces the northern and western expansion of the church throughout the Roman Empire, Acts describes the church's successful implementation of the Lord's mandate. At the same time, it is important to note that Luke does not tell the whole story of the early church; missionaries were fanning out from Jerusalem in every direction, preaching the Gospel, and planting churches to the ends of the known world at that time.

The Book of Acts is Luke's personal account of his **missionary experiences**. Included in his account are stories of the Apostles working in the Roman territories that Luke would have had known in person (Peter, James, John, Paul, etc.). However, if we look closely at Luke's account, we will notice that it is more than just a few Apostles who are spreading the Gospel. In fact, the Apostles were often running to catch up with what the Holy Spirit was doing. They often found fertile soil already prepared for them and in many cases, believers already primed and waiting. What the Holy Spirit began in Acts continued around the world (and will continue until the end of the Church Age). "God desires to spark Church Planting Movements (CPMs) all over the world. CPMs are His work. But He waits for cooperating servants. We don't have to convince God that we want a harvest. He has to convince us." (Steve Smith, with Ying Kai, T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution, Kindle Edition).

However, the rapid expansion and dynamic growth of the New Testament church was not without cost. Jesus warned His disciples:

"But before all this, they will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. This will result in your being witnesses to them." Luke 21:12-13



The martyrdom of Steven is well documented (Acts 7), as is the death of James the son of Zebedee, the elder brother of John, who was beheaded in Judea 44 A.D. (Acts 12:1-2). However, the martyrdoms of other disciples in faraway places are not included in Luke's account. It is difficult to say with certainty exactly where each Apostle went to spread the Gospel or what happened to each one because accurate records from that time are difficult to find, but from what sources are available, here is a short list of what is believed to have happened to some of them:

- Philip was born at Bethsaida in Galilee and was one of the first disciples called by Jesus (John 1:43). He was martyred c.80 AD by crucifixion. He labored diligently in Upper Asia, and suffered martyrdom at Heliopolis, in Phrygia. He was scourged, thrown into prison, and afterwards crucified.
- Matthew, the tax collector called by Jesus (Matthew 9:9), wrote the gospel that bears his name. The places of his labors were Parthia and Ethiopia, in which latter country he suffered martyrdom, being slain with an axe in the city of Nadabah. (c. 60 AD)
- James (the Less), the brother of our Lord, was the head of the churches in Jerusalem. He was the author of the Epistle that bears his name. At the age of ninety-four he was beaten and stoned by the Jews; and finally had his brains dashed out with a club.
- Matthias, of whom less is known than of most of the other disciples, was elected to fill the vacant place of Judas (Acts 1:26). He was stoned at Jerusalem and then beheaded (c.80 AD).
- Andrew was the brother of the Apostle Peter. He preached the gospel to many Asiatic nations and is believed to have preached the gospel as far away from his home as present day Scotland; on his arrival at the city of Edessa in Macedonia, he was taken and crucified on an X-cross (c. 80 AD).
- Peter, one of the disciples in Jesus' inner circle (along with James and John), became one of the most influential leaders of the early Church. He undertook a missionary journey to Lydda, Joppa and Caesarea, becoming instrumental in the decision to evangelize the Gentiles. Peter is believed to have been instrumental in establishing the church in Rome before was condemned to death by the Emperor Nero and crucified at Rome in 67 AD.

- Paul was the apostle who before his conversion was the infamous Saul that helped persecute the Church. He became one of the early church's greatest missionaries. After experiencing many trials and tribulations from promoting the Gospel of Christ, Paul suffered martyrdom under Nero. After his second imprisonment, the soldiers came and led him out of the city to the place of execution, where he was beheaded in 67 AD.
- Jude, the brother of James, was commonly called Thaddeus. He was crucified at Edessa (the same name, but not the same city of Andrew's death; this place is an ancient city of Mesopotamia on the site of present-day Urfa in southeast Turkey) c. 72 AD.
- Nathaniel (a.k.a. Bartholomew) is believed to have preached in several countries. Tradition says he translated the Gospel of Matthew into the language of India, and propagated the Gospel in that country. He was at length cruelly beaten, flayed alive (skinned), and then beheaded; some sources locate his death at Derbend on the Caspian Sea.
- Thomas, called Didymus (Gr. *twin*), preached the Gospel in Parthia (a region in what is now northeastern Iran) and India; he was martyred by being thrust through with a spear in Mylapore, Madras, India in 72 AD.
- Luke, the evangelist, was the author of the Gospel that goes under his name. He traveled with Paul through various countries. Tradition states he was hanged on an olive tree in Greece by the idolatrous priests c.84 AD.
- Tradition states that Simon, surnamed Zelotes, preached the Gospel in Mauritania Africa, Armenia; Suanir, Persia; Edessa and even in Britain. The time and place of Simon's death is disputed.
- John, the "beloved disciple," was brother to James. John founded the churches of Smyrna, Pergamos, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, and Thyatira. He was arrested in Ephesus and sent to Rome, where it is believed he was cast into a cauldron of boiling oil, but miraculously escaped without injury. The Roman Emperor, Domitian, banished him to the Isle of Patmos, where he wrote the Book of Revelation. He was the only apostle who escaped a violent death; he died of old age in Ephesus c.100 A.D.

Modern Church Planting Movements (CPMs) can best be understood in context of what was happening in the Roman Empire of the 1st century. As we look around the world at the dawn of the 21st century, we see the church in many places catching up with God’s vision for the nations that was presented by Jesus in Matthew 24:14, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

As the world is being prepared for the 2nd Coming of Jesus Christ, it is not surprising to hear reports from every region of the world describing growing numbers of people responding to the Gospel message. No one can say for certain how many new believers there are in the closed countries and in places where simply announcing that you believe in Jesus Christ for salvation is cause for you to be killed. Americans are often stunned when they hear that there are probably more committed Christians in Communist China than in the United States. And the truth has not changed since Luke wrote his book of Acts. But remains a fact that it is often in those places where Christians are under the greatest persecution where the response is the greatest.

A January 4, 2018, report by Cristian Maza appeared in a News Week story online: “Christian Persecution and Genocide is Worse Now Than 'Any Time in History,' Report Says” (<http://www.newsweek.com/christian-persecution-genocide-worse-ever-770462>). Her story noted that the persecution and genocide of Christians across the world is worse today than at any time in history. Citing a study by Aid to the Church in Need, a Catholic organization that helps persecuted Christians, Maza noted that “the treatment of Christians has worsened substantially in the past two years compared to the two years prior, and has grown more violent than any other period in modern times.”

“Not only are Christians more persecuted than any other faith group, but ever-increasing numbers are experiencing the very worst forms of persecution,” the report said. Christians in China, Egypt, Eritrea, India, Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, and Turkey are experiencing “the very worst forms of persecution” in ever-increasing numbers. In many countries around the globe, Christians are subject to the worst crimes against humanity – many are tortured and imprisoned without hope of release, and some were hanged or crucified. The persecution and genocide of Christians across the world – especially in territories controlled by anti-Christian extremists – continues unabated, and complacent Western governments are failing to stop it.

In Africa, the report focused on countries like Sudan, where the government ordered churches to be destroyed; and in Nigeria, where ISIS-affiliated groups like Boko Haram have led a surge in attacks on Christians in many African countries.

The government of Sudan ordered the demolition of churches while in Eritrea, hundreds of Christians are being rounded up and imprisoned because of their faith. The radical Hindu dominated government of India turns a blind eye when Christians in that country are routinely beaten, imprisoned, and even murdered for practicing their faith. In spite of all of these crimes against Christians, it is being reported by many missionary groups that Christianity is growing faster in many of these persecuted countries than in the West (<http://www.operationworld.org/hidden/evangelical-growth>).

Christ’s last words before His Ascension, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8), were so perfectly realized in the Book of Acts that they effectively and concisely outline its contents:

- **You shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem [chaps. 1 – 7]**

Defining Events

Power of the Church 1:1 – 2:47

Progress of the Church 3:1 – 8:4

Main Missionary

Peter

Primary Audience

Jews

Jerusalem

Timeframe

33 – 35 A.D. (two years)

- **And in all Judea and Samaria [chaps. 8 – 12]**

Defining Event

Expansion of the Church 8:5 – 12:25

Main Missionary

Philip

Primary Audience

Witness to Judea & Samaria

Samaritans

Timeframe

35 – 48 A.D. (13 years)

- **And to the end of the earth [chaps. 13 – 28]**

Defining Events

Paul’s Three Missionary Journeys (31:1 – 21:16)

Paul's Three Trials (21:17 – 28:31)
 Main Missionary
 Paul
 Primary Audience
 Witness to the outermost borders of the Roman World, and beyond
 Jews, Greeks and Romans
 Timeframe
 48 – 62 A.D. (14 years)

Although Acts only traces the rapid **westward expansion** of the church – beginning in Jerusalem and spreading throughout the Roman Empire – the overall history of the church indicates that the Gospel was being spread around the world by a small but rapidly growing band of dedicated and determined disciples who had been filled with the power of the Holy Spirit (Act 1:8; 2:1-4) and were not about to let anything stop them from moving forward (see HANDOUT “5 Ways Christianity Spread Through Ancient Rome”).

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:35-39)

“From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness – besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.” (2 Corinthians 11:24-28)

These disciples were motivated by a single conviction that the message they carried was *gospel* (“good news”). Beginning in Jerusalem with Peter’s sermon on

the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-36), until Paul’s preaching of the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning Jesus Christ in Rome (Acts 28: 30-31), the crucial assertion of all those who proclaimed Jesus Christ as the Son of God, is that God saves those who believe.

Anywhere in the world where the church stops proclaiming without fear or compromise the message that Jesus is Lord and Christ, it starts to implode. In the Western nations today we see Christianity collapsing from the weight of postmodernism, secularism, materialism, liberal theologies, and scientific skepticism. The church is in retreat because they can no longer stand in the arena of ideas and proclaim Jesus Christ as the Way, Truth, and Life without compromise.

Far too many Christians in Western nations are looking for excuses and have become embarrassed or ashamed of anything that sounds like an absolute statement of their faith. Afraid to be called “fanatic” or “fundamentalist,” Christians in the West are being bullied into silence. Meanwhile, the church shows no signs of slowing down in many places outside of the West.

The vitality of non-traditional, non-denominational Church Planting Movements described in various mission organizations’ reports means that far from being down-and-out and self-obsessed, the church in the rest of the world is energetic, passionate, and excited as the Gospel of the Kingdom spreads rapidly from community to community by missionaries who often rely upon their feet or bicycles to carry the Gospel seed to mission fields prepared by the Holy Spirit and ready to receive it.

The evidence of Church Planting Movements around the world indicates that it is only in those places in the world where the proclamation of the Gospel is given second place to social works, or is subjected to denominational agendas, that the Gospel is not advancing. Where denominational self-interests prevail, evangelism will falter; the churches will at best only try to hold onto their own and keep up with the rate of population growth within the church family.

The book of Acts teaches us that a genuine CPM begins when the church – apostles, prophets, missionaries, evangelists, pastors, teachers, ministry leaders, etc. – catch the vision for the Kingdom of God and conform their work to the mission of Jesus to:

1. **seek and save the lost**
2. **make disciples, and**
3. **bring glory to God in all they do.**

As the Holy Spirit spreads this vision and mission to every member of the body, a dynamic CPM will be produced because they will be motivated to look beyond the four walls of their church on Sunday mornings and will obey the Lord’s

command to go out onto the highways and byways to invite the lost to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, thus bearing much fruit and reproducing themselves without waiting for the “professional” clergy to do the job of church planting that they themselves are capable of doing.

NOTE TO THE TEACHERS:

The Great Commission of the church in Matthew 28:19, 20 may be expressed simply as: “Loving God, Loving Others, and Living Sent.”

Allow some time in this lesson for the students to share how they are applying this to their life and ministry.

In the following lessons we will examine up close the Church Planting Movements described in the book of Acts and compare them with modern CPMs that are taking place today. We will draw out of Luke’s account the universal elements, common factors, and practical lessons that will help the modern-day church to get on the right track and do what needs to be done to see the Great Commission fulfilled in this generation... so this world will at last see the Lord’s return.

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101-2

JERUSALEM (Acts 1:1 – 8:4): A MOVE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.” Luke 24:50-53

Acts makes it clear from the beginning that this is Luke’s effort to continue his story from the Gospel that bears his name. “In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen...” (Acts 1:1-2) Written between A.D. 63 and 70, Luke, no doubt, followed the same careful investigative procedures that he used in writing his gospel (Luke 1:1-4), but unlike his gospel, Luke was a **firsthand eyewitness** to a large part of what he wrote in Acts. Luke was one of the close traveling companions with the **Apostle Paul** on his missionary journeys (Acts 13 – 28), which made him uniquely situated to describe Paul’s missionary journeys. But to those events that Luke was not a personal eyewitness, he would have had the testimonies of Paul and the other Apostles he encountered on his travels to help him fill in key events.

Although Acts is an historical document, it is important to keep in mind the fact that Luke is telling the story of the advance of the Gospel message from his perspective of following in the Apostle Paul’s footsteps through Asia minor, to Greece and ultimately to the heart of Rome itself. Paul was in no way the only missionary traveling to far countries to fulfill the Great Commission to reach the outermost parts of the world. At the same time that Paul was making his journeys, other missionaries were rapidly spreading the gospel north, east, and south – as well as west. (See HANDOUT “5 Ways Christianity Spread Through Ancient Rome”).

Above all else, a church planting movement must be a work of the Holy Spirit.

However, to study Acts merely as ancient church history while ignoring the spiritual lessons it teaches misses one of the primary purposes for which the Holy Spirit moved Luke to write this account. Acts is as much about what the Holy Spirit was doing in and through the church in general as it was about what the Apostles

were doing that Luke wrote about. In this study of Acts, we will examine Acts as more than church history; we will study the book as the Holy Spirit's **training manual** for how to start and sustain church planting movements. Simply stated, a church planting movement (CPM) is a rapid and exponential increase of **indigenous churches planting churches** within a given people group or population segment. The description of a CPM is exactly what is being described by Luke in his book. By following this movement from Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria and to the outermost parts of the Roman Empire, we can easily conclude that the same kinds of things were happening as the Gospel message was spreading north, east, south and west beyond the borders of the Empire by other dedicated missionaries. Our conclusions can be further confirmed by examining modern-day CPMs and examining the parallels between Luke's story and the stories of today's church planters.

"The mark of a great church is not its seating capacity, but its sending capacity." – Mike Stachura, Global Ministries

According to Luke, on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:5-12), "there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven." Of the three thousand souls who heard and believed the gospel that day, there were Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs. When the Feast was completed and these new believers returned home, they shared what they had witnessed in Jerusalem. In this way the Gospel was advancing swiftly to "every nation under heaven."

Acts is an important historical document because it forms an important bridge between the Gospels and the Epistles. Acts gives us the backdrop and context for all the New Testament writings that follow the Gospel stories. Because of Acts we have important information about where, when, and to whom the Epistles were written. It helps us to understand some of the more difficult passages from the Epistles when we understand the specifics of the issues being addressed. Of equal importance to the historical significance of Acts, is the theological significance of the book. As more and more Gentiles poured into the church, Acts describes how faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior became distinct from Judaism, but at the same time, is the ultimate fulfillment of the Jewish faith.

However, we may miss the most essential purpose for which the Holy Spirit moved Luke to write the book of Acts when we fail to see the relationship between Jesus' commandment to **"go" and make disciples** of all nations and the practical application of the lessons of that book. The lessons found in Acts are essential to

fulfilling Jesus' commandment; and the proper application of these lessons will ensure the success of modern church planting movements.

"Luke, under the inspiration of the Bible's editor, the Holy Spirit, is providing us with a model. The obvious intention is to stir up Christ's followers to 'go and do likewise' among the people to whom the Lord of the harvest has sent you." David Livingstone

In Acts 1:4-8 Jesus gave specific instructions to His disciples:

"And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, 'which,' *He said*, 'you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.' Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, 'Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' And He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.'" Acts 1:4-8

We see in Acts 1:12-14 and 2:1-4 that the disciples carried out His instructions and the results of their waiting for the Holy Spirit to arrive according to the Lord's promise.

"Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers." Acts 1:12-14

"When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and

began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
Acts 2:1-4

These early verses from Acts are vital for those who want to start a Church Planting Movement today. They reveal that **the key to seeing CPMs emerge is to understand the Lord’s agenda and cooperate with the Holy Spirit’s schedule.**

We cannot generate or sustain a genuine movement of God by our own strength or force of will or by attempting copy or imitate other movements. Believing that all is needed is the right “formula” and it will automatically produce a CPM whenever it is tried, will only result in failure. Only the Spirit of God can create such a movement. Jesus fully understood this and ordered His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit. If we run down the track of a CPM using our own strength we will run out of steam before too long; or worse yet, we will get run over by the Holy Spirit and be left lying on the tracks as the genuine movement passes us by. What we can (and must do) is wait.

“Many of us go about evangelism assuming that we are the first to witness to someone. We aren’t. The Spirit was there before us” Steve Smith, *T4T*.

Sometimes waiting can be the hardest part of creating a Church Planting Movement. **But waiting on the Lord should not be inactive or passive.** Waiting on God allows us to prayerfully align ourselves in such a way that when the Holy Spirit is made His presence known and starts to move, we are ready to jump on board and move forward with the Lord’s agenda and not our own. The Holy Spirit is always moving and preparing people for the Lord’s arrival. In John 16:8 Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit came, “He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment...”

In Acts chapters 1 & 2 the disciples of Jesus were waiting in Jerusalem for the arrival of the Holy Spirit. When we study those chapters, we see they were not just sitting around doing nothing – they were preparing themselves spiritually and organizationally so that “When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.” (Acts 2:1). Therefore, what these first two chapters of Acts (and many verses following) tell us is that a genuine CPM must be the work of the Holy Spirit and not just the works of men.

"The Lord did not tell us to build beautiful churches, but to evangelize the world" – Oswald J. Smith

It is impossible to underestimate the **importance of prayer** in the lives of all those who desire to obey the Lord and go out to fulfill their part of the Great Commission. In every situation – good or bad – Acts confirms the disciples as men and women of prayer. Paul is an excellent example of this. Like his Lord and Savior, Paul’s life was bathed in prayer. Before he set out on his First Missionary Journey, Paul and his companions were sent out with prayer. Near the end of that first Journey, Paul and Silas appointed elders to lead every new church that was founded: “with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed” (Acts 14:23 ESV).

Kingdom disciples must have the same mindset before they go to share their faith in Jesus Christ. Before going out disciples should **fast and pray** that God will lead them to those that He is already preparing to receive Him. Acts 13:2-3 confirms this: “While they were worshiping 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, after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.” We must realize that there are people all around us whose hearts are being prepared by the Holy Spirit and who are hungry for the truth – the truth of the Gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus – the truth we can bring them.

Our goal should be to seek out those who are ready and invite them to join us and become disciples too. On this point we see clearly who a disciple of Jesus Christ truly is. Converts are believers, but they are not committed to Jesus as the Lord of their life – they never share their faith with others. Converts are easy to identify because they see no real reason **to share their faith with others.** Converts justify never sharing their faith in Jesus Christ with non-believers because they think evangelism is the responsibility of the pastors and “professional” clergy. Disciples on the other hand, are **fully committed** to Jesus Christ as the Lord of their life; they are motivated by the Holy Spirit to be **personally and sacrificially** involved in the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20 because they have a burden for those who are perishing. Leaders should never hold back those whose hearts are overflowing with passion and a desire to share their faith with others.

“Then He said to them, ‘The harvest truly *is* great, but the laborers *are* few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.’” Luke 10:2

Acts 1:15 and 2:1-13 reveal that it was more than just the twelve chosen Apostles that received the power of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost and who shared “the wonderful works of God” in other tongues. Luke 10:2 and Matthew 9:36-38 reveal that the Great Commission is not just for the few. In fact, the Lord indicates that there are never enough workers in the harvest. When Peter stepped forward on

the Day of Pentecost and spoke to the crowd, it was clear that all those who were waiting and praying in the Upper Room were also empowered by the Holy Spirit. Remembering Jesus' words to His disciples just a few days earlier, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth..." (Acts 1:8 NKJV), it is certain that the power of the Holy Spirit to make His disciples witnesses "**to the ends of the earth**" was intended for all followers of Jesus.

"And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on *My* menservants and on *My* maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days." Joel 2:28-29 (NKJV)

The first two chapters of Acts teach us that from the beginning, **prayer in unity** is recognized as an essential and universal element before starting any CPM. Because the expansion of God's kingdom is the work of the Holy Spirit, without the prayers and unity of those involved, the Holy Spirit will be restrained or unwilling to communicate or reveal all the facts necessary to get started. **The Holy Spirit** chooses who will go, when, and where. Therefore, from the beginning, all successful Church Planting Movements must make prayer a key component. Often what happens is a personal belief in the efficacy of prayer becomes a part of the life of the church planter and the new believers will emulate the model of the missionary. Prayer encourages the people to worship the Lord in **the heart language** of the people, which in turn encourages them to read and study God's word.

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me." John 17:20-21

John chapter 17 contains Jesus' final prayer for His disciples before He will be arrested and crucified. Verses 11 and 17 are the Lord's call for unity among all believers. In verses 21 and 23 Jesus indicated that unity is essential so that "the world may believe that you have sent me" and so that "the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me."

"I believe that in each generation God has called enough men and women to evangelize all the yet unreached tribes of the earth. It is not

God who does not call. It is man who will not respond!" – Isobel Kuhn, missionary to China and Thailand

On the day of His ascension, Jesus met His disciples on the Mount of Olives. By that time, He had accomplished all that the Father sent Him into the world to accomplish:

- He had sought out **the lost sheep of Israel** and opened the way into the kingdom for them.
- For three- and one-half years Jesus had been pouring His teachings into His disciples, revealing **the mysteries of the kingdom** to them in word and deed.
- He finished **the work of atonement** for all mankind through His death burial and resurrection.

Acts chapter one sets the tone for the rest of the story. The time had come for Jesus to return to the Father and launch His disciples out into a world waiting to hear the message of salvation. His disciples were commissioned to make known the way into the kingdom of heaven that Jesus taught them. One thing remained to be done for His disciples before they would be ready to fulfill their commission: **the supernatural empowerment of the Holy Spirit**. But the disciples were still expecting Jesus to immediately establish His kingdom on earth. They did not understand all that was ahead of them and the generations to come before the Lord would return and establish His kingdom, as promised in the Scriptures.

The church planting movements these disciples were about to start were only the beginning of many church planting movements that would need to happen before people to the ends of the earth would be saved. Acts would serve the purpose of preserving for future generations the ways and means of growing the church that they needed to follow until the Lord's Second Coming at the end of the age.

"Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.'" Acts 1:9-11

As the Lord disappeared into the heavens, the disciples stood still with their eyes fixed, watching for the Lord's immediate return. They stood watching the skies because they did not fully understand the work of evangelizing the world that was

ahead of them. It took the divine intervention of angels to get the disciples to move up the road that led back to Jerusalem and wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit that the Father promised them. Once the disciples realized that the Lord was not immediately returning, they returned to the city and waited for the promised arrival of the Holy Spirit.

FROM PENTECOST TO A CPM

A modern church planting movement is defined as, “a rapid and exponential increase of indigenous churches planting churches within a given people group or population segment.” Based upon that definition it is clear to see that the first genuine CPM started in Acts chapter two. On the Day of Pentecost, many hearts were already prepared to receive what Peter was preaching. And convicted of their sins by the Holy Spirit; they cried out, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.’ Now when they heard *this*, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.’” Acts 2:36-39

Pentecost is tied to the Passover celebration; it is a harvest celebration that takes place on the fiftieth day after Passover and was one of three major annual feasts commanded by God (Deuteronomy 16:16). Pentecost was significant to the Jews because it was on the fiftieth day after their deliverance, that they were given the **Law of Moses at Mount Sinai**. Jews of many nations gathered in Jerusalem for this festival. Therefore, Peter’s speech (Acts 2:14ff) was given to an international audience, which resulted in a wide harvest of new believers – the first disciples of the first church planting movement in history.

“And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, ‘Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how

is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?’”
Acts 2:5-8

The timing of this first CPM was no accident or random event. This was planned and timed by the Holy Spirit from the beginning. Those who were assembled that day were fully aware of the events that had just taken place surrounding Jesus’ death and burial. They were also aware of the rumors of His resurrection. The Holy Spirit was already at work in their hearts bringing **conviction** over their sin of rejecting God’s chosen Savior and Deliverer. In one day, the Holy Spirit would transform a small group of fearful men and women into a thriving, multicultural and multiracial church planting movement that was moving forward and fulfilling the Great Commission.

The church was fully involved in the Great Commission as they baptized the new believers and turned them into disciples. It would only be a matter of days before the Feast would be completed and most of those who believed that day would be packing their things and returning to their places of origin. But when they returned, they would be disciples-in-the-making who would carry the “good news” of Jesus’ resurrection to their homes and communities and share with them what they had experienced. The spiritual significance of the Passover is made clear as Luke records three thousand believers from different tribes and tongues were added to the church on that day. In this way, **God prepared the way** for the spread of the gospel through the rapid growth of church planting movements among a multitude of people groups. As we continue in our study, we will see how the way was often prepared for the Apostles and other disciples by the Holy Spirit. In many places, people who had become believers at Pentecost were ready and waiting to hear from the Apostles.

From that day forward, we see the church growing rapidly, at first only within the walls of Jerusalem, but as Luke’s narrative continues, we will see how the church experienced **rapid growth** beyond their leaders’ wildest dreams. While it was still in its infancy, the church remained centered on the Temple and its services. At first, believers in Jesus saw no need to separate themselves from Judaism. This became a **hindrance** to what the Holy Spirit was doing. But soon persecution against those who believed in Jesus started.

As the church grew in numbers, it aroused the attention of the Jewish authorities who instantly intensified their opposition to the followers of Jesus. Tensions in the city were on the rise and reached their height when Steven was accused of blasphemy and arrested. **Steven’s martyrdom**, and the **general persecution** of Christians that followed, forced the church out of Jerusalem.

Leaders of church planting movements should be prepared to face opposition as the movement starts to take shape and people are being saved. Jesus warned us to

be prepared for it, but not to fear because His promise is to be with us always, even unto the end of the age.

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.’ Amen.” Matthew 28:18-20

LESSON TWO QUESTIONS FOR THE STUDENTS

1. What instructions did Jesus give His disciples before His ascension?
2. Why was it important for them to wait for the Holy Spirit to arrive?
3. What does this mean for those who want to start a Church Planting Movement today?
4. How many disciples were in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost?
5. Were these the only disciples of Jesus Christ at that time?
6. What were the disciples doing as they waited?
7. Was it only the twelve Apostles who received the power of the Holy spirit and who shared “the wonderful works of God” in other languages?
8. Is the Great Commission only for a few disciples? How many workers in the harvest is enough? (Note Luke 10:2 and Matthew 9:36-38)
9. What was the main thing Jesus prayed for all His followers in John 17? Why is the unity of all believers so important?
10. In what way does Acts chapter two fit the definition of a CPM?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101-3

THE MESSAGE: THE KERYGMA AND PERSONAL TESTIMONY

The Message Is Carried by Disciples Only

“Then the word of God spread, and the *number of the disciples multiplied greatly* in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.” Acts 6:7

“Then the twelve summoned the *multitude of the disciples* and said, ‘It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.’” Acts 6:2

The chapters in Acts that describe the events immediately following the Feast of Pentecost make it clear that the Apostles were making many disciples. Here, it is important to note that disciples were more than just believers; they were followers also. Paul and the other Apostles encouraged those who believed in Jesus Christ to **follow their example** and the examples of other disciples: “Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.” (Philippians 3:17). Paul also wrote to Timothy, “But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance...” (2 Timothy 3:10). Add those verses to 1 Corinthians 11:1 and 2 Thessalonians 3:9 and it becomes clear that the life of a disciple is not intended for a limited few, but that all those who believe in Jesus Christ for salvation ought to be disciples as well.

Jesus said, “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master...” (Matthew 10:24-25a). Therefore, every believer should be trained to be a **disciple of Jesus Christ** from the moment of their salvation. Philippians 3:17; 2 Thessalonians 3:9; and 2 Timothy 3:10 tell us that a disciple is like the one who disciplines them. Jesus trained His disciples to be like Him and His disciples trained others in the same way. Therefore, each generation of disciples should be trained to **be like the Master**.

“And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.” Acts 11:26

Paul's letters were filled with **instructions** for what should be done in every church he planted. Paul's priorities for the church come into focus when we read 1 Corinthians 5:11-12; 2 Corinthians 2:15-17; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 2:1-10; Philippians 1:27-29; Colossians 1:9-15; 1 Thessalonians 1:2-9; 2 Thessalonians 3:11-15; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; 2 Timothy 2:15-19; and Titus 2:11-15.

Believers are urged not to associate with anyone in the church who claims to be a believer but continues in their old sinful habits. Christians are to speak the word of God in sincerity and be aware that their words and actions are done in "the sight of God in Christ." Paul taught that believers are to **walk in the Spirit**, bearing the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control). "For we are His workmanship," Paul wrote, "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10).

From his prison cell, the Apostle urged the churches that in all things, the believers' conduct must be worthy of the gospel of Christ. Bearing in mind that Christ is the head of His church, should be motivation enough for all believers to walk worthy of the gospel they have received. Paul reminded the church that by their **good conduct** they are **positive examples** of Christ-followers to other believers and non-believers alike. Paul also admonished believers to **not grow weary** in doing good but stay the course over the long-term. The things Paul wrote and taught in person were and remain the wholesome teachings from the Holy Spirit to the church that promote a **godly life**.

Paul instructed his disciples Timothy and Titus (and through his letters to them) that all leaders in the church "must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them." They are to continue in "the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Because "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:14-17).

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you." Titus 2:11-15 (NKJV)

Paul and the other Apostles knew that **bad examples** of Christians and **poor role models** in the leadership of the church would become obstacles to the advancement of the gospel of salvation. Sadly, Christians have been poor examples of followers of Jesus too often. If they are truly disciples of Jesus Christ, then there should be some evidence of the new life they received; a change in behavior should be the result of the faith we profess.

If established churches in an area have non-regenerate, worldly members who engage in immoral behavior and set bad examples in their family and business affairs, it will be difficult for new leadership in the community to convince those outside the church that the Christian faith is genuine and will produce the new life of love, joy, peace, and righteousness in the Spirit. In this situation the need for **repentance and revival** in the existing churches may be necessary before a successful Church Planting Movement is possible. Hopefully, the local pastor would be open to leading a revival that brings correction, but if not, a Church Planting Movement is still possible, but may face opposition not only from outsiders, but also from those on the inside. Gene Getz in his book, *Building Up One Another* (p. 128) said, "No matter how gentle, kind, sensitive, and humble we are, there are some worldly Christians who will not respond to this approach. Paul saw this possibility when he wrote to the Corinthians. Consequently, he gave them a choice. 'What do you prefer?' he asked, 'Shall I come to you with a whip, or in love and with a gentle spirit?' (1 Cor. 4:21)."

"Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ." Jude 1:3-4

The gospel Message carried by disciples will become muddied and confused in the hearts and minds of those who cannot distinguish between a genuine follower of Jesus Christ and those who are "Christian in name only" but not in their deeds. That is why it is so important for anyone who wants to start planting churches among the unreached choose only those who are truly disciples of Jesus Christ in **word and deed**. The spiritual principle involved here is "**reproduction after kind**" (Gen. 1:21-25). Although in the end it is the Holy Spirit who truly does the making, only **disciples make disciples**. Mature disciples provide the leadership and role models for those who are just coming into the church. If the church is filled with poor specimens of Christians, the new believers will quickly follow their bad examples.

Therefore, Paul and the other Apostles insisted that the church be cleansed of **worldly and faithless converts** either through repentance and faith or through strict discipline and separation from those who refuse to repent. Many Christians are the victims of poor leaders who neither know nor understand what it means to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ. They can only grow as far as the leader permits them to grow and so they never reach maturity in Christ.

“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual *people* but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able *to receive it*, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where *there are* envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like *mere* men?”
1 Corinthians 3:1-3

THE KERYGMA

David Garrison noted in his book *Church Planting Movements* that “We have yet to see a Church Planting Movement emerge where evangelism is rare or absent.” (p. 33). This is confirmed by the book of Acts as it tells the story of the evangelism of the Roman world. Social works are needed in many places where there are unreached people groups. So, missions’ schools, hospitals, orphanages, etc. are established to address the physical needs of the people, but at the same time, sowing the Gospel must never be allowed to take a secondary role to our overall mission. In countries where government opposition to Christian missions and religious hostility to the preaching of the gospel are common, promoting social works can be a legitimate means to the end of presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all who have ears to hear.

Kerygma – is a transliteration of the Greek word that means **proclamation or preaching**. Depending on the context, it may refer to either the content proclaimed or the act of proclaiming. The word is used once in Matthew (12:41), once in Luke (11:32), and six times in Paul's letters (Rom 16:25; 1 Col 1:21; 2:4; 15:14; 2 Tim 4:17; Titus 1:3). All of these New Testament occurrences appear to refer to what is being proclaimed.

Whenever and wherever possible, Gospel meetings can allow hundreds or even thousands to hear the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ. In addition to open meetings, our modern age allows us to sow abundantly through mass media

evangelism and sowing the Gospel through music and video in the big cities and urban areas. Modern CPMs often employ the tool called “**Precision Harvesting**.” Precision Harvesting is a method of evangelism that relies upon a means called “**response filtering**.” This tool is used to identify and locate people who have already made some kind of response to a Gospel message heard on a TV or radio broadcast, or some other form of mass evangelism. The idea is for the missionary or church planter to glean from these broad sowing ministries, by targeting those areas where seekers or new believers are likely to be found and start working in those places. However, this strategy is not the best strategy for establishing Church Planting Movements throughout the villages where mass media forms of evangelism have not reached.

“Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed.” Acts 14:1

The story of Peter and Cornelius from Acts 10, Paul’s Macedonian Call (Acts 16:11-15), and Paul’s first missionary visit to Athens (Acts 17:16-34) are all examples of Precision Harvesting in different settings of the ancient world. Cornelius and his household were primed and ready to hear the gospel from Peter before the Holy Spirit sent him on his mission to this centurion’s home. Acts 10 is a microcosm of what the Lord was commanding His church to do. The ancient world was primed and ready for the Gospel; they were spiritually hungry and thirsty for some truth.

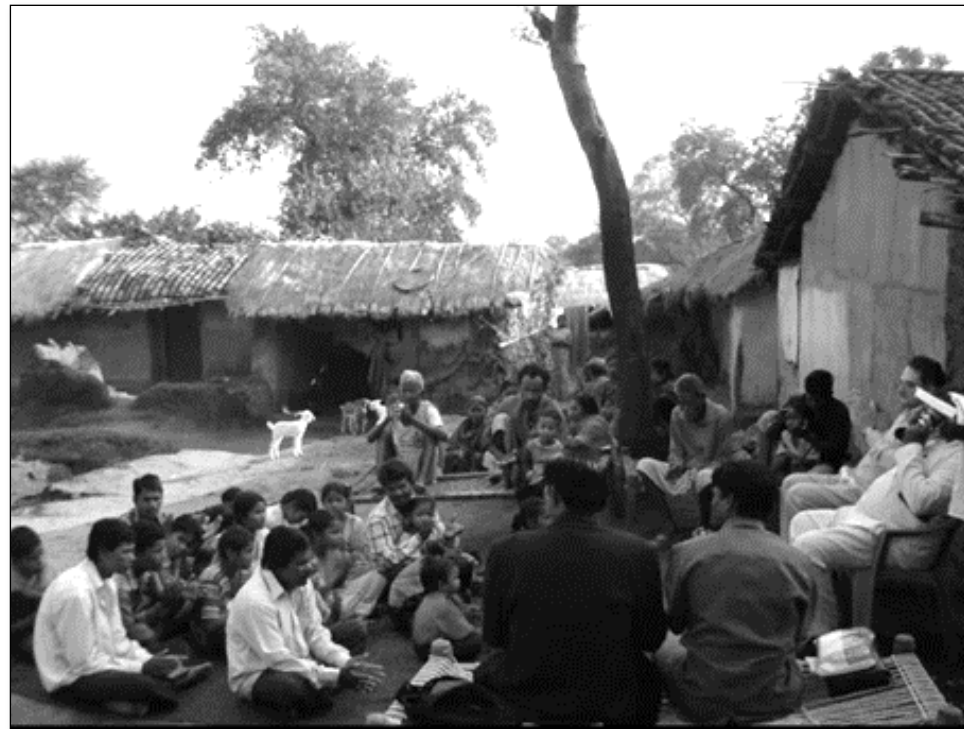
Paul’s vision of the Macedonian asking him to come and preach the gospel to them was another example of how the Holy Spirit had already prepared that region for the missionaries’ arrival. Paul’s audience in Athens was a much tougher crowd; they were the intellectual elites of the Greek world and as such, needed much more convincing. Still Paul was able to pick up on a void in their religious worldview and addressed their doubts by addressing their belief in an “unknown god” that had yet to be revealed to them. Paul proclaimed Jesus Christ as that unknown god they were searching for. The risen, glorified Christ was the one true living God their hearts were longing to discover, but only a few would believe.

In a sense, Pentecost was the Holy Spirit showing us how **Precision Harvesting** works on a large scale. The crowd that day was primed and ready to receive the message that Peter would deliver. But Precision Harvesting can work in different ways and on a smaller scale. In Acts 10 we see how the Holy Spirit prepared one family and then brought Peter to them. When Peter arrived, Cornelius had already gathered a small group of family and friends who were prepared to hear the Message. This pattern is used in hundreds of small villages in remote areas where

mass communication of the Gospel is almost never heard. Paul was the master at using this method of Precision Harvesting. As he moved from city to city, Paul would visit the Synagogue in each place first because it was where he found those who were ready to receive the Gospel. In the case of Philippi, Paul heard of a group of God-fearing Gentiles who met by a river outside the city and sought them out. In Athens, the curious philosophers of that city invited Paul to speak. Because so many were open to discuss new ideas, Paul captured the imaginations of those who wanted to hear more about their “Unknown God” that Paul said he could explain and make known to them.

"God is a God of missions. He wills missions. He commands missions. He demands missions. He made missions possible through His Son. He made missions actual in sending the Holy Spirit." – George W. Peters

Those involved in modern CPMs recognize that in many regions of the world, village life has not changed as dramatically as in the modern metropolitan areas. **Person-to-person contact** is still highly valued in villages where people are not as isolated and where they still interact with one another daily. Family relationships are important in most parts of world, and village houses are grouped together rather than spread out across large tracks of farmland. Precision Harvesting must be carefully crafted to reach a particular unreached people group. For example, in India the ancient village organization that makes them almost entirely independent and self-



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sufficient communities is still very much intact in the majority of villages. Each village has its own body of craftsmen and merchants, plus its own informal governing council, called the *Panchayat*, which consists of the heads of important families. Every village stands apart, surrounded by its own fields, and in many cases the boundary that divides the houses from the fields has not changed for centuries. The characteristics of village life in India make personal evangelism more effective than mass media marketing. Gathering the people of the village together for a gospel meeting or to show a gospel film will be more effective than expensive television broadcasts or mass gospel meetings in big cities that few can manage to attend. This makes the personal evangelism of the indigenous lay leader involved the Church Planting Movement much more effective than any mass media marketing strategy.

In the underdeveloped rural areas of many nations, personal evangelism and testimonies of the life-changing power of the gospel, accompanied by healings or other acts of spiritual warfare are the most effective means to spread the gospel. (We will study this in detail in lesson four: “Paul’s Church Planting Movements.”)

It is important not to take a “**one-size-fits-all**” approach to Church Planting Movements. It is important to carefully study the particulars of the people group where the CPM is to be started. It is also important to remember that not every missionary is given the same skills – some are better organizers, some are better at personal evangelism, some are better teachers or preachers, etc. So, it is essential that the skills of the person match the plan to be implemented.

“...a common practice in the first few moments after a person comes to faith is to help him think through the implications of being a follower of Jesus and a fisher of men. Within minutes he receives encouragement to think about his lost family and friends and learn a way to witness to them (and eventually train them). From the moment of his salvation he is receiving a vision to be the mustard seed of a movement.” Steve Smith, *T4T*

Very early in Acts (chapter eight) the Gospel is already breaking through the restraints of Judaism and is being received in Samaria. Peter discovers that the Roman, Cornelius has sent men to find him and invite him to come and share God’s word with his household (9:19). Paul’s first missionary journey was expanding the gospel far beyond the reaches of Jerusalem. Everywhere the Gospel took root, new leaders were being raised from among the disciples being made.

Acts 11:19-23 describes the aftermath of Steven’s martyrdom in Jerusalem and the persecution that followed. But among those being scattered as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch were men who boldly spoke to the non-Jews and preached the gospel of salvation in the Lord Jesus. It soon came about that “a great

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number” of Gentiles in Antioch believed and turned to the Lord. Later, Paul on his first missionary journey proclaimed the gospel in the cities of Asia Minor, making many disciples from both Jews and Gentiles. Before returning to Antioch, Paul “appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.” Paul would continue this pattern and encouraged his young disciple Timothy to share with the churches “the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses” and “commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach [disciple] others also” (2 Timothy 2:2).

“Any discipleship program that creates a dependence on the human teacher rather than the ever-present Teacher of the Spirit is doomed to plodding human-dependent growth.” Steve Smith, T4T

Central to the life of the disciple is **going and making other disciples**. Evangelism is not for the seminary trained or full-time clergy only. These early disciples could not be contained because they were motivated by a single conviction that the message they carried was *gospel* (“good news”). David Garrison in his report on Church Planting Movements noted that “New believers were immediately baptized and taught that it was normal for them to win others to Christ and lead them to form new churches. This ‘high demand/high risk’ reliance on new converts as **evangelists and church planters** contributed greatly to the rapid expansion of the movement.”

Beginning in Jerusalem with Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-36), until Paul’s preaching of the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning Jesus Christ in Rome (Acts 28: 30-31), the crucial assertion of all those who proclaimed Jesus Christ as the Son of God, is that God saves those who believe and follow Him. Once a person believed and became a disciple of Jesus Christ, they immediately went out and started sharing the “Good News” and making other disciples. In that way the church was not confined to Jerusalem where the Apostles were staying, but it was experiencing the rapid, exponential growth that characterizes a genuine CPM. Robert Savage of the Latin American Mission commented on the church today saying:

“The command has been to ‘go,’ but we have stayed – in body, gifts, prayer, and influence. He has asked us to be witnesses unto the uttermost parts of the earth ... but 99% of Christians have kept pattering around in the homeland.”

Disciples immediately become a part of the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20. They believe that Jesus’ commands are not just for a few but are for all. Therefore, ALL disciples should do these three things:

1. **“GO”**. Disciples must go and “seek and save the lost.”
2. **“TO EVERYBODY”** (*not* to just a select few). Disciples share with everyone they can because they never know who will be ready to believe and receive the gospel.
3. **“MAKE DISCIPLES”** (not just church members or “converts”). From the very beginning disciples teach every believer to be a disciple. Converts do not reproduce. A disciple is one who not only hears, but also obeys what he/she has learned and passes it on.

“How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’ But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed our message?’ Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.” Romans 10:14-17

The **command** that disciples “go” and share is the fundamental proclamation of the Christian faith. In Greek, the word Christians proclaim is called the *kerygma* – the message that through His death, burial, resurrection, Jesus truly is Lord and Savior. In 1 Corinthians, Paul confirms that this message, which is foolishness from the viewpoint of the world, is in fact “the power and wisdom of God” that the world is seeking (1:18-25). For Paul and all those early disciples, the *kerygma* – proclamation or preaching of the atoning death and resurrection of Christ – was the only way to bring about the salvation of all those who believe, restoring them into a right relationship with God (Romans 10:14-17).

The *kerygma* is the heart of the Christian message; it is our justification for declaring that “*Jesus is Lord and Christ.*” It is the content of the gospel of salvation



that Peter, John, Paul, and the other missionaries in Acts so courageously proclaimed throughout the world. *Kerygma* is preaching without compromise the message of the Kingdom that all disciples have done from the beginning. As they went about fulfilling the Great Commission, disciples carried this message of salvation in Christ Jesus from Jerusalem, to Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the world. That same message is being carried even to this day.

“Then He said to him, ‘A certain man gave a great supper and invited many, and sent his servant at supper time to say to those who were invited, ‘Come, for all things are now ready.’”

But they all with one accord began to make excuses. The first said to him, “I have bought a piece of ground, and I must go and see it. I ask you to have me excused.”

And another said, “I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to test them. I ask you to have me excused.”

Still another said, “I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.”
Luke 14:16-20

All too often, evangelists preach what some call, “the gospel of me.” That means, instead of proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord, and that salvation means believing and following Him as Lord and Christ without compromise, salvation becomes all about the person being saved: “Jesus did it all for you; and now all you have to do is pray a simple prayer, asking Him to forgive you of your sins, and you are guaranteed a lifetime of answered prayers for your wants and needs.” All that is required of the new believer is that they attend church regularly, pay their tithes, and try to live a moral life as best they can (but knowing Jesus is there to forgive their every transgression just for the asking). **That is not the gospel Jesus preached and it is not the gospel the Apostles preached!** The gospel message that turned the world upside down was the *kerygma*. It is a message that requires a response of faith and obedience to Jesus Christ as LORD and KING. We follow Him not because of what He can do for us personally but because who He is demands nothing less than our total loyalty and commitment to Him.

The problem with those who accept a “gospel of me” is that it requires no real **commitment or sacrifice** on their part. In other words, Jesus paid it all, so they don’t have too. They are unable and unwilling to make any real sacrifices of their time, treasure, or talents for Christ’s sake. They came to Christ not counting the cost. So, whenever any real cost for being a follower of Jesus presents itself, they shrink back (Luke 14:28-33). If they are unable to sacrifice the things of this world for the sake

of the kingdom, how will they ever be willing or able to sacrifice their very self for Him (Luke 14:26-27)?

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

“Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. So, there was great joy in that city.” Acts 8:4-8

Once out of the confines of Jerusalem, the followers of Jesus began to interact with new communities that traditionally would have little or nothing to do with the Jews. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Philip travels to Samaria. There he becomes a bold witness for the Lord; and following in the footsteps of his Master (John 4:5-30), he crashes through the ethnic and spiritual barriers established by Judaism. He takes the Gospel of Salvation directly to the Samaritans, a mixed race of Jews and Gentiles. From there, Philip was led by the Holy Spirit to travel south along the major coastal highway that leads through Gaza to Egypt and beyond. On the road, he kept a divine appointment when he met up with an Ethiopian eunuch and preached the Gospel to him. The Ethiopian believed and was baptized by Philip on the spot, making him the first fully Gentile believer in Jesus Christ recorded in Acts. The wall between Gentile and Jew had just come crashing down! Later the Apostle Paul would say in Colossians 3:11, “Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.”

One thing is very important to remember: a testimony is designed to move someone’s heart to listen to the gospel, but it is not the gospel itself! The goal of the testimony is simply to help us bridge to the gospel.” Steve Smith T4T

From the story about Philip, the scene changes and Luke takes his readers back to Jerusalem and introduces them to a young Pharisee named Saul who is preparing to pursue and capture the followers of Jesus that had fled from the persecution in Jerusalem and sought refuge in Damascus. The story of Saul’s conversion marks a dramatic turning point in the book of Acts and in the history of the church. No individual, apart from Jesus Christ himself, shaped the history of Christianity like the apostle Paul. When Paul is first introduced, he is standing with

the Jews as they stoned Steven to death (Acts 7:58). After Steven's death, Saul's intense persecution of the church in Jerusalem (Acts 8:3) contributed in large part to the scattering of the church and Philip's flight to Samaria.

After Paul is born again and filled with the Holy Spirit, his **personal testimony** and **preaching of the gospel** from Jerusalem to the heart of Rome itself confounded both Jew and Gentile alike. His training under one of the greatest Jewish rabbis of the day made him a fierce advocate for the Lord as he used his command of the Hebrew Scriptures to prove that Jesus is the Messiah. His personal testimony of how His encounter with Jesus Christ changed his life became his most effective method of introducing the gospel to those who had little or no understanding of the Scriptures. At the same time, Paul's personal testimony helped those who knew the Scriptures to understand the sincerity of Paul's message.

“For the king, before whom I also speak freely, knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.”

Then Agrippa said to Paul, ‘You almost persuade me to become a Christian.’ And Paul said, ‘I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me today, might become both almost and altogether such as I am, except for these chains.’” Acts 26:26-29

When we study Acts 22:1-21; 26:1-23; Galatians 1:13-24; and Philippians 3:4-11 it becomes clear how Paul's personal testimony formed an essential part in his preaching of the Gospel.

“It was Paul's contention that the gospel he preached was not simply something he had heard from others; it had come to him direct from God. That was a bold claim. To make, and it demanded some kind of proof. For that proof, Paul had the courage to point to himself and the radical change in his own life.” William Barclay

Paul shared his personal story in a powerful way to demonstrate that he was not ashamed of the gospel that saved him or others (Romans 1:16). Disciples today can learn a valuable lesson from Paul's preaching. The *kerygma* reinforced by personal testimony can be most effective with those who have been exposed to the gospel. On the other hand, personal testimony can form a natural bridge to the gospel message when sharing with those who have had little or no exposure to the Scriptures.

LESSON THREE QUESTIONS

1. Define who is a disciple and describe their mission.
2. Everywhere Paul planted a church what did he insist must be done?
3. What does *kerygma* mean?
4. What is “Precision Harvesting”?
5. In the book of Acts, where did the disciples come from?
6. The book of Acts reveals Paul's approach toward his personal testimony. How should our personal testimony relate to our preaching of the Gospel?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101-4

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY: THE HOLY SPIRIT PREPARES THE WAY

"A God-centered theology has to be a missionary theology" — John Piper

“Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.” Acts 13:1-3

In the first lesson we learned that any CPM must begin with **a move of the Holy Spirit**. It is for this reason that Jesus instructed His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit to come upon them. As the story of Acts unfolds, it describes how the transition of the church from a primarily Jewish church to a Gentile church begins to take place. The persecution of the church in Jerusalem and Judea continued. Herod had James, the brother of John, killed and Peter was thrown into prison again but was miraculously delivered. Herod's violent death brought a temporary halt to the persecution and Luke says, “The word of God grew and multiplied” (Acts 12:24). It is at this point that Acts describes a new phase in the growth and expansion of the church. The last verse of Acts chapter 12 is a foreshadowing of what is about to happen as Saul (Paul) and his companions shift from Jerusalem to Antioch – now a vital center of Christianity (Acts 11:19-21). Their ministry in Jerusalem behind them, Paul and the others are about to launch out on their first missionary journey which will take the gospel beyond Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria to the ends of the earth.

“What variety there is in the church! The common thread among these five men was their deep faith in Christ. We must never exclude anyone whom Christ has called to follow him. Like the early church, if believers today do their part to reach out to all who are lost, church congregations will eventually be comprised of people from different racial and cultural backgrounds... The more we understand the gospel and embrace God's version of the body of Christ, however, the more we

will begin to transcend these differences. More than merely getting along, we will be able to honestly and authentically say from our hearts that we love each other.” *Acts 13:1- Life Application Study Bible*.

Beginning in Acts 13, Luke records how the center of gravity in the church was shifting away from Jerusalem and a strictly Jewish sect of followers of the Messiah Jesus. The first thing we recognize about the church in Antioch is the **diversity of backgrounds**. The only thing these men had in common was their **faith in Christ**. From this group, the Holy Spirit selects Paul and Barnabas “for the work to which I have called them.” So Paul and Barnabas, with John Mark to assist them, set off on the first of three missionary journeys recorded in Acts. This first mission set the pattern Paul would follow on each of his journeys:

1. **The Holy Spirit** would lead him on when and where to go.
2. **He followed** the communication routes of the Roman Empire – the system of Roman roads and sea routes made travel easier.
3. He visited key **population and cultural centers** to reach as many people as possible.
4. He went to cities with **synagogues**, speaking first to the Jews in hopes that they would see Jesus as the Messiah and help spread the Good News to everyone.

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

“From Attalia they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed. On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. And they stayed there a long time with the disciples.” Acts 14:26-28

In Lesson One we learned that any successful CPM must be a move of the Holy Spirit. Before even attempting to start a CPM those involved must first wait and pray for the Holy Spirit to come upon them. If a movement begins without the Holy Spirit it will quickly fail because human effort is not sufficient to sustain it. Acts 2 thru 12 tells story after story to demonstrate that what was born on Pentecost was nothing less than **a move of God** confirming Jesus' promise of power to fulfill

the commission for His church. Acts 13:4; 13:9; 13:52; and 14:27 specifically mention the Holy Spirit's involvement to prepare the way for these missionaries (Note – 14:27 says "God").

"People who do not know the Lord ask why in the world we waste our lives as missionaries. They forget that they too are expending their lives ... and when the bubble has burst, they will have nothing of eternal significance to show for the years they have wasted." – Nate Saint, missionary martyr

God's vision always involves and blesses others. God blesses His people with **Vision** in order that we become blessings to those who have not experienced the fullness of God's salvation. Acts can be told as the story of how the Holy Spirit was crashing through walls and breaking down barriers ahead of the disciples who in far too many cases were running to catch up with where the Holy Spirit was leading them. Still, half-way through Acts, a genuine CPM has yet to materialize. But all of that was about to change. **Barnabas**, no doubt led by the Holy Spirit went to find Paul and bring him to **Antioch**, a city far away from their powerful religious persecutors in Jerusalem and a flourishing city for disciples of Jesus Christ.

In Acts 13 we see the Holy Spirit working in every way to prepare the ground over which these missionaries were about to travel. (See HANDOUT, "How God Sovereignly Guided His People in Acts"). First, it is the Holy Spirit who moves upon the leaders of the church in Antioch to **fast and pray and select** specific people who had been called by Him for a particular mission. Nothing quite like this had been done before in Antioch. Believers made at Pentecost had returned home and were no doubt sharing with their friends and family what had happened to them. But this is the first time we see believers outside of Jerusalem listening to and co-operating with the Holy Spirit to deliberately send out missionaries to "go" and preach the gospel far from their home (13:4).

"So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus." (Acts 13:4) The first great **opposition** to Barnabas' and Saul's mission came at the first stop on their mission. Acts 13:4-12 tells the story of what happened in Cyprus. When they reached Paphos, they met a Jewish sorcerer and a false prophet named Bar-Jesus. He interfered with the missionaries' efforts to witness to the governor and urged him to pay no attention to what Barnabas and Saul said. Paul, (Here is where Paul is first called by his new name in the Scriptures.) filled with the Holy Spirit, looked the sorcerer in the eye and prophesied the Lord's punishment upon him, and he is immediately struck blind. When the governor saw what had happened to Bar-Jesus, he became a believer.

Here, there is an intriguing similarity with the story of Paul's salvation told in Acts 3:9-18. In the *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* on these verses, I. Howard Marshall observed: "The character of the judgment suggests an analogy with what had earlier happened to Paul himself, and the phrase *for a time* suggests that it was meant to be merely temporary; hence the judgment was probably meant to be a warning and intended to act as a stimulus to conversion, although we do not know whether it achieved this result. The unfortunate magician was afflicted with a mistiness of the eyes and his consequent blindness was evident from his need of somebody to *lead him by the hand*. The superior power associated with the teaching of the Christian missionaries astounded the proconsul to such an extent that he was prepared to believe their message."

Missionaries around the world have often testified to the fact that some kind of miracle – a divine physical healing or healing of a demon possessed individual – often resulted in the opening of a door to planting a church in a particular village or community. Once the news spread, people would come – if not for a miracle for themselves – to see if God would move again in their midst in a miraculous way. Miracles are often God's way of getting people's attention that would otherwise not pay close attention to a spoken message.

"For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit..." 1 Thessalonians 1:5-6

"And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit." In Acts 13:52 we see another way the Holy Spirit helped prepare the way for the missionaries. Preaching the gospel and planting churches among the unreached is not easy; in fact, it is often filled with hardships and both physical and spiritual opposition. Discouragement, loneliness, fear, and feelings of failure often accompany the missionary along the way. It is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the disciple that gives them the ability to overcome everything and stay on mission with God and complete the hard work of establishing a Church Planting Movement.

This first mission was a great success. Paul and Barnabas reported that the gospel was being received "in large numbers" throughout Asia Minor (14:21), but not without **trials, and great opposition**. On their way back to Antioch, they strengthened and encouraged the new disciples to remain true to the faith. "***We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God***" (14:22).

“Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.” Acts 14:27 may well be the most significant verse in all of Acts for it not only foreshadows all of what is to follow in the book, but also reveals that God had opened the **way of salvation** to the **Gentiles**. The church planting movements Paul will establish throughout the rest of his life will find their greatest success among the Gentiles. Was it because Paul was so great? No. It was because the Holy Spirit was blazing the trail for Paul and the other missionaries to reach the unreached Gentile people groups God was sending them to.

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” Romans 5:1-5

When we study Old Testament verses like Isaiah 2:2-3; 11:10; 42:1-6; 49:6-7; 52:10; 55:5; 56:6-7; and 66:18-20, we see that God’s intention was always for the Gentiles to experience the blessings of His salvation along with His chosen ones. But Isaiah was not alone among the Old Testament prophets to proclaim God’s intention for all the nations to come and worship Him in spirit and truth. Luke’s description of Paul’s missionary journeys is the first record the church has of the key role those **cross-cultural missionaries** played in fulfilling those prophecies. By laying the groundwork for Church Planting Movements, Paul and the other early church missionaries were on the way to fulfilling God’s ultimate plan for the nations. When we understand the Book of Acts as a series of reports written by Luke describing the successful activities of missionaries in the mission fields in Asia Minor, Greece, and Rome then we can search them for clues on how we can use those reports as the Holy Spirit’s handbook to guide us in the present context of cross-cultural missions.

“Then He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city

of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” Luke 24:46-49

Then as now, missionaries were the ones that **introduced the gospel** to unreached people groups for the first time. In his book on Church Planting Movements, David Garrison recognized **Ten Universal Elements** of church planting: “While it may be possible to have a Church Planting Movement without them, we have yet to see this occur. Any missionary intent upon seeing a Church Planting Movement should consider these 10 Elements.” In Paul’s First Missionary Journey we see almost all of these elements taking shape.

1. **Prayer**

The New Testament teaches throughout that prayer is fundamental to the life of every believer regardless of their calling. Dr. Richard J. Krejcir, a pastor, writer, speaker and missionary who trains and equips other pastors and church leaders said, “Without effective prayer, you cannot be effective in your evangelism-period! Do not even try it without prayer! Sharing your faith without praying for the person is like training a pig to fly; all you will do is waste your time and annoy the pig! All you will accomplish in trying to do evangelism without prayer is stay away from God, waste your time, and annoy the person!”

An important role for the missionary is to instill in the local body of believers from the beginning how important prayer is in the personal life of every disciple. And the history of missionary movements around the world has shown that prayer is always the first pillar of any successful plan for reaching a people group. Paul’s first missionary journey demonstrates that the source of the missionary’s power is prayer (13:3; and 14:23). But prayer is not for those involved in church planting alone; prayer is critical to the life of the church. Prayer can mobilize new believers from the beginning and lead them to become fully involved in efforts to reach those who are not saved.

2. **Abundant Gospel Sowing**

Church Planting Movements do not emerge spontaneously; not only must the Holy Spirit do the work of preparing the way and empowering those who go out, but those who go must go and share the gospel of salvation (Acts 13:16-41 gives us a good idea of Paul’s presentation of the gospel). Evangelism must abound in the region and among the people group targeted. Although social works are much needed in many places around the world (such as mission schools, hospitals, and orphanages, which can address the physical needs of the people) sowing the Gospel must never be allowed to take a secondary role to our overall mission. In countries where government opposition to Christian missions and religious hostility to the

preaching of the gospel are common, promoting social works can be a legitimate means to the end of presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However, whenever possible, public meetings will allow hundreds or even thousands to hear the Good News of salvation in Jesus Christ.

"Never pity missionaries; envy them. They are where the real action is – where life and death, sin and grace, Heaven and Hell converge." – Robert C. Shannon

Our modern age allows us to sow abundantly through mass media evangelism. Sowing the Gospel through music and video in the big cities and urban areas can get the word out. The Holy Spirit shows us in Acts that in the end it is still personal evangelism and the testimonies of the life-changing power of the gospel – often accompanied by signs and wonders, such as exorcisms, healings and other acts of spiritual warfare – that are the most effective means to win the lost.

3. Intentional Church Planting

Paul, Barnabas, and the other early missionaries in Acts started out with a specific strategy: whatever town they entered they would go to the Jewish Synagogue first. There Paul would be recognized as a Pharisee with authority to speak. Once Paul was given the opportunity, he would present the gospel to all in attendance. Those who responded (both Jew and Gentile) would form the nucleus of a church. After a while, Paul had to adjust his methods because as he became known as a leader of the followers of Jesus. The Jews who opposed what was being called “the Way” would be waiting for Paul and would stir up trouble before he could complete his presentation of the gospel. So, in time, he adjusted his strategy and went straight to the Gentiles who were receiving the gospel with gladness (Acts 13:46).

“In every Church Planting Movement, someone implemented a strategy of deliberate church planting before the movement got under way.”
David Garrison

Luke 9:1-6 tells us a lot about Jesus’ method of leadership and the purpose for which He was making disciples. This passage tells us that Jesus did not do everything for His disciples. He did not expect them to be “hearers only,” but empowered his disciples (9:1), and gave them specific instructions so that they knew exactly what they were expected to do (9:3, 4). Jesus expected them to obey; He also knew that they would face opposition and instructed them how to deal with those who rejected

them (9:5). Read a little further and you will see that Jesus held them accountable (9:10). As you study Paul’s first missionary journey you will see that he followed the Master’s instructions for starting church planting movements.

“Shaking the dust of certain towns from their feet had deep cultural implications (9:5). Pious Jews would do this after passing through Gentile cities to show their separation from Gentile practices. If the disciples were to shake the dust of a *Jewish* town from their feet, it would show their separation from Jews who rejected their Messiah. This action also would show that the disciples were not responsible for how the people responded to their message. Neither are we responsible if we have carefully and truthfully presented Christ but our message is rejected. Like the disciples, we must move on to others whom God desires to reach.” *Life Application Study Bible*

When we study the Gospels, we learn that Jesus’ vision was for the Kingdom of God (or heaven). Jesus mentions the Kingdom of heaven no less than 32 times in Matthew’s Gospel and the Kingdom of God is mentioned another 69 times in the other Gospels. To fulfill His mission, Jesus announced His Kingdom by both preaching and healing, and when He sent his disciples out, He gave them the power and authority to do the same. In Acts, Jesus’ power and authority is passed onto His disciples by His Holy Spirit.

The purpose of church planting movements is to rapidly and greatly increase the Kingdom of God in the hearts of people by proclaiming the truth about Jesus: that He is the one, true, living God. Second, and of equal importance is the truth that salvation comes through Him alone. Because Paul knew that any teaching that fails to emphasize our responsibility as disciples of Jesus Christ to obey His commands to preach the Good News, make disciples, baptize, and to teach them to obey everything Jesus taught (Matt. 28:19-20) was in danger of distorting Gospel, he emphasized sound doctrine from the beginning (Gal. 1:6-10; Eph. 1:15-23; Phil. 3:17-21).

“It is important to dedicate our skills to God’s Kingdom, but we must also be equipped with his power and have a clear vision of what he wants us to do.” *Life Application Study Bible*

Paul and the other church planters knew Jesus’ teachings about evangelism (recorded in Luke 9:3, 4) and understood that:

- Their purpose was to take Jesus’ message of **the kingdom** to the ends of the world; by traveling light they could move quickly.

- Their dependence on those they came to evangelize had other good effects as well:
 1. It clearly showed that the evangelists had not come to **provide income** for those they preached to.
 2. It forced the disciples to rely on **God's power** and not on their own provision.
 3. It **involved** the villagers and made them more eager to hear the message.

“Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, ‘Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.’ And He said to them, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.’” Luke 10:17-20

This was an excellent approach for the disciples' **short-term mission**, but it was not intended to be a permanent way of life for them. Far too many modern-day missionaries will sit around at home and wait until all their needs are met and a steady stream of funds are coming to them before they will move out into the harvest fields. They want to buy land, build church buildings, and establish a large missionary organization – often just to reach a small area or a single unreached people group. This tends to encumber the work of evangelism and restrict church planting to how much money comes in and how fast they can build buildings; it turns missionaries away from the field and makes them fund-raisers to sustain a **“missionary organization.”** Depending upon outside sources of money also sends the signal that the missionary is doing what they are doing not because they truly care about the people, but because they are being paid. When the missionary depends upon others to be their provision, it causes them to depend less upon God's power and provision for their ministry. It also denies the opportunity for the locals who respond to the Gospel to become personally invested in spreading the message to their family, friends, and neighbors. As the missionary, Roderick Davis, once said, “Love is the root of missions; sacrifice is the fruit of missions.” Inviting the local believers to be an integral part of evangelism from the beginning requires love and sacrifice from them.

“After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.” Luke 10:1

In Luke 9:4, Jesus was already establishing the pattern for a **house church movement**. Once a homeowner received the representatives of Jesus Christ and responded to the Gospel message, the disciple could spend the maximum amount of time with them to quickly train them to become a house church leader in their community and then quickly move on to the next town or village.

4. **Scriptural Authority**

“Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region.” Acts 13:48-49

Even before the church began at Pentecost, Jesus made it clear that He had not come to destroy the authority of the Torah (Law), but He had come to “fulfill” it (Matthew 5:17-20). Therefore, the Bible is and will continue to be the primary source for **sound doctrine** for the church community and for the life of every believer.

Jesus fulfills the Law by:

1. **Confirming** its validity
2. **Teaching** its full and intended meaning
3. **Expanding** its commandments beyond mere outward conformity to a set of laws to changing the inward attitudes of the heart
4. **Revealing** the true *eschatological* will of God recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures concerning the Messianic Kingdom

"We talk of the Second Coming; half the world has never heard of the first." – Oswald J. Smith

It should not be forgotten that it took several centuries after the birth of the church for the New Testament Canon to be confirmed and closed. While the book of Acts was being written, the Jewish Scriptures – the Torah, the Old Testament prophets, and books of wisdom and poetry – were all that the church had to prove Jesus was truly the Messiah or Christ (Acts 8:35; 17:2, 11; 18:28; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4; 2 Tim. 3:16). As a Pharisee, Paul was uniquely qualified and trained in the Law of Moses. His knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures made him able to bridge the gap between Gentile and Jew. From his first missionary journey onward, Paul was able to walk into any Synagogue of the Jews and start preaching from their Scriptures. Before long Paul would bring his audience to discover Jesus. This would

always be the turning point for them: would they believe the Word of God or not? But those who refused to believe often stirred up trouble for Paul and the other missionaries:

“Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren.” Acts 14:1-2

When it is orally transmitted, transmitted by the written word, or by transmitted by some other form of contemporary technology, Scripture must be the rudder and compass for the individual Christian’s life. When the authority of the Scripture is undermined, the moral and spiritual authority of the church will be destroyed, and the kingdom will not advance because the Holy Spirit cannot bless the efforts of those who seek to build a Church Planting Movement on a poor foundation of false doctrines based on human knowledge or traditions alone.

5. Local Leadership

“And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.’ So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.” Acts 14:21-23

“And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...” Ephesians 4:11-13

Critical to the rapid, exponential growth of a church planting movement is the empowering of local leadership as quickly as possible. When the leader of a church planting movement tries to keep everything under their personal control it will choke and constrain the movement. The Holy Spirit knew this and led Paul to quickly install local leadership and entrust them to the **Holy Spirit** for guidance and

knowledge: “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you” (John 14:26).

Planting churches should be a **co-operative effort** between the Holy Spirit, the missionary, and the local leaders. The missionary can offer experience, guidance, mentoring, and training. But if the work is going to become a movement, the local leaders must be released from the direct supervision of the missionary as quickly as possible. There is a delicate relationship that must develop between the church planting missionary and the local leadership. If the missionary exercises too much control, the local leaders will become dependents and never grow and mature. If the missionary releases the local leader too soon they may quickly stumble and fall away, abuse their power, or misuse their authority to take advantage of others.

The role of Missionaries involved in CPMs can best be described as that of a **trainer or disciple-maker**. If the missionary sits in the pilot seat and takes the local leadership along for the ride, the Movement will never truly get off the ground. The church planter must be the one who **trains others to lead**.

6. Lay Leadership

“From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed.” Acts 14:26

On his first missionary journey, if Paul had used the traditional church planting methods used today, he never would have finished his first mission trip. Think about it. The way evangelism and church planting are done today:

- First the evangelist, usually a seminary trained professional receiving financial support from his denomination or from a missionary society, comes to a particular unreached village or rural community and starts to share the gospel.
- Over time they make a few converts who usually meet in a house church setting.
- The missionary slowly builds a group that starts to outgrow the house church. So, the missionary searches for funds from his denomination or other supporters at home to buy land and if successful in raising funds, they will build a church.
- After the church is built the missionary – now pastoring the church or directly supporting a new pastor for that church – will reach out to a neighboring community and start the whole process again.

- If they are successful at raising funds from home, they can raise many thousands of dollars to support them and build more churches. After a few years they may have planted one or two churches in their area that are totally dependent upon their leadership and financial support.

“Somewhere along the way we have subtly and tragically taken the costly commands of Christ to go, baptize, and teach all nations and mutated it into a comfortable call for Christians to come, be baptized, and listen in one location.” – David Platt

Traditional church planting that relies upon central or denominational control with seminary trained professional leadership differs greatly from the kind of Church Planting Movements being written about in Acts. Traditional methods may work in large urban areas where the gospel has already been saturated and where the population is familiar with Christianity, but the traditional method is not the best method for reaching populations of unreached people groups. Paul and the other early missionaries quickly realized that planting churches where they had successfully preached the gospel must rely upon **lay leaders** – otherwise these small, scattered groups of believers would quickly disappear while waiting for educated and skilled leaders to return to them and take care of them.

“Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of 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 who hear you.” 1 Timothy 4:13-16

An unfortunate fact in many unreached regions of the world is that the more educated and highly trained indigenous pastoral leaders will not go to these remote places because the risks are too high and the financial rewards too low for them to leave the population centers and relatively safe or prosperous areas where Christianity is accepted. It is an unfortunate fact that too many foreign missionaries make church leaders that are more concerned with raising money to support their work than they are concerned with preaching the gospel in these remote places where the sacrifice is high and the rewards few.

“And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.” 1 Corinthians 12:28

Paul’s missionary journeys teach us that for a CPM to be successful it, must be the “**tip of the spear**” and always moving forward, opening new territory and reaching new people. Entrusting the movement to gifted and anointed **lay leaders** ensures the momentum from slowing down due to a lack of well-financed professionals who will not make the sacrifices and go to the ends of the earth. Lay leaders should come from the largest possible pool of potential church planters and cell church leaders from within the targeted area. The missionary should spend the **maximum time** molding and shaping the character (discipling) of gifted leaders to be like Christ in all their ways.

The missionaries in the book of Acts demonstrated how to successfully sustain and rapid, exponential growth: once a group of believers is started, they must quickly be the **senders and the ones being sent**. The missionary should be the **teacher-trainer** and move on as quickly as possible once the group has independent church planters. The longer the church is dependent upon the missionary for their physical needs, the less time the missionary has available to spend discipling them and molding them into the character of Christ; and the weaker and more prone to corruption the leaders will become. A church planting movement will quickly fall apart if it depends upon a single foreign missionary for its financial support and leadership.

7. **Cell or House Churches**

“And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus *as* the Christ.” Acts 5:42

A quick review of Acts 13 and 14 will reveal that Paul did not construct a single **church building** or **ministry center** on his first missionary journey. The average pastor of today’s Christianity has been trained to view his church as a local church with a mission program. However, that is not the pattern of the pastors Paul raised up. Paul trained his leaders to realize that if they are in fact pastoring a church its true reason for existence is to be a **global church** with a **mission purpose**. In other words, a church was not intended to be static – a place where believers are housed – but a house or cell church was intended to be a place where new disciples were trained and sent out to make more disciples.

Jesus Christ did not design His church to be a sheepfold to house the sheep; it was made to be a training ground for disciples to go out and make more disciples.

In most of the book of Acts, Luke describes Paul’s church planting ministry. Almost from the beginning, it was Paul’s design to establish **house churches** where believers and non-believers met (Acts 12:12; 16:15; 16:32; 16:40; 18:7-11; 20:20). The believers came together to pray, worship, and hear more of the teachings of Jesus. The non-believers that were invited to these meetings came to listen and many became new disciples of Jesus Christ.

Only in Ephesus does Paul move from the house church setting to the schoolhouse setting at the hall of Tyrannus. By this point in time many non-Jews were listening to the gospel. Because non-believing Jews would take offense if Gentiles mixed with Jews in their homes, Paul used a neutral setting where the many Jewish and Gentile believers could meet and interact with non-believers who came to hear the preaching of the Gospel Paul was proclaiming. In Rome Paul rented his own house: “For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ.” Acts 28:30-31 (NIV)

Once again, we learn another valuable lesson from Paul’s missionary journeys: Constructing **church buildings** does not appear in Church Planting Movements. Remember, the key to a successful CPM is rapid and exponential growth fueled by the Holy Spirit. If Paul had stopped to build church buildings and waited for theologically trained leaders to take over the leadership of each new church he planted, he never would have made it out of Pisidia and his First Missionary Journey may have been his last!

Nothing should be allowed to slow down the steady advance of the kingdom of God; as Jesus said in Luke 16:16 (ESV) “...the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it.” The vast majority of churches planted in a genuine CPM must be small, easily reproducible churches of 10-30 members meeting in homes, rented rooms or small halls. This can be done either with cell churches (small churches linked to one another and to some type of structured network – often a larger single church or denomination) or with independent house churches. Either way, **buying land** and **building structures** should not be allowed to slow up the process.

8. Churches Planting Churches

“Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.” 2 Timothy 4:2

Acts 5:42; 8:40; 9:20-22; 11:19-21; 18:8; 20:20; and 28:30 describe how these new believers immediately after being saved, were going from house to house, from synagogue to synagogue, and from town to town preaching and teaching Jesus as the long awaited Messiah (Christ). Once the initial churches are planted by the missionary or missionary-trained church leaders, the character of the movement should change to an indigenous movement of **churches planting churches**. When this change occurs, a new phase of rapid and exponential reproduction should begin naturally.

The problem with most church planting today is it seems to be hopelessly locked into a traditional method that believes it is the responsibility of professional, seminary trained missionaries to plant churches, and that without outside assistance the local, indigenous church cannot do anything. This creates a church that is static and always looking to paid clergy or a few well-financed missionary organizations to do the job of the Great Commission. It also creates “needy mentality” that makes the average Christian feel they should always be on the receiving end of everything; for them it is not about what they must do as a follower of Christ, but what Christ must do for them (John 6:26-27). This mentality has to be broken and the true biblical model demonstrated in the Book of Acts put in its place before a genuine CPM can be started.

The indigenous church must believe that reproduction is not only possible, but it is **natural**. External aid is not only unnecessary for a CPM to take off, but it can be a hindrance or stumbling block because to be successful a CPM requires sacrificial giving of **money and manpower** from the local churches as they are established. In a genuine church planting movement, nothing should deter the local believers from evangelizing the lost around them and planting new cell churches themselves. Waiting for outside funding to pay the missionaries and build new church buildings is the fastest way to stop a CPM in its tracks.

"If there is no passionate love for Christ at the center of everything, we will only jingle and jangle our way across the world, merely making a noise as we go" – William Wilberforce

9. Rapid Reproduction

“I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are

ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.” Revelation 3:1_b-3

David Garrison in his book on *Church Planting Movements* noted that “Most church planters involved in the movement contend that **rapid reproduction** is vital to the movement itself.” Why is it that when reproduction rates slow down the CPM falters? A great American poet/philosopher once said that “He not busy being born, is busy dying.” And when a church loses its vision for the harvest – when they stop looking outward and over the next horizon – they will invariably turn inward and become stagnant.

Churches that have lost the **vision and mission** of Jesus will not be busy seeking and saving the lost and giving birth to new churches. Any new members that come to their church will most likely already be saved and are just changing churches. And when a church is not looking outward, then it will naturally start looking inward. Soon the members will be looking at each other trying to find fault with each other, and then with the pastor. *Inward focused churches are more concerned with appearances – well-manicured landscaping, fresh paint, and clean carpets – than with making an impact on the lost with the Gospel of the kingdom.*

Members of the inward-looking church will quickly start to grow restless and will stop paying attention to the messages of their pastors. The inward-looking church will be like the seeds that fell among the thorns and will cease to grow spiritually as well as physically (Luke 8:14). If Christians are not reproducing, they will lose the sense of **urgency** to complete the harvest for the Lord’s Second Coming. A church that is busy reproducing will be too busy to fight over nonessential dogmas or over which worship songs should be sung on Sunday mornings. Instead, the individual members of a **missionary-minded** church will be engaged, growing spiritually, and will be empowered by the Holy Spirit to participate in one of the many great harvest fields in the world today.

“Go ye’ is as much a part of Christ’s Gospel as ‘Come unto Me.’ You are not even a Christian until you have honestly faced your responsibility in regard to the carrying of the Gospel to the ends of the earth.” – J. Stuart Holden

10. Healthy Churches

“Sometimes there is a precedent from history, but we have forgotten it. CPMs are not simply a modern-day phenomenon. All throughout church history, there have been CPM-like movements – discipleship revolutions.” Steve Smith, *T4T*

David Garrison listed **five elements** that his missionaries reported were **signs of a healthy church** that was fully participating in planting new churches. These five things are all necessary attributes for those who are moving ahead with the Vision of advancing the kingdom of God and Mission of Jesus to seek and save the lost, make disciples, and glorify God. And these same five signs of a healthy church are found in the churches Paul planted and the other missionaries in Acts.

1. **Worship** – is more than singing hymns on Sunday mornings; it is a lifestyle of giving God all praise, honor and glory in everything we do (Acts 2:47; 3:8; and Philippians 4:4).
2. **Evangelistic and Missionary Outreach** – is what the church is all about. John Stott, one of the principal authors of the Lausanne Covenant in 1974, said “Every Christian should be both conservative and radical; conservative in preserving the faith and radical in applying it.” A missionary church will be too busy going about the Father’s business to be worrying about everybody else’s business in the church. (Acts 5:42; 8:40; 9:20-22; 11:19-21; 18:8; 20:20; and 28:30).
3. **Education and Discipleship** – Jesus specifically commanded us to go and make disciples not converts. Converts do not reproduce, but disciples will. (Acts 5:42; 11:26; 15:35; 18:25; 20:20; 1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 John 2:27).
4. **Ministry** – is all about service; first to God, then to others. The gifts of ministry are given not for our own benefit, but to edify (build up) one another (Acts 26:16; Rom. 12:6-8; Eph. 4:11-13; and Col. 1:3-8).
5. **Fellowship** – without unity there can be no fellowship; without love there can be no unity. Love (agape) is the key; without it nothing we do means anything at all. We can plant a million churches using all the latest church planting strategies and marketing skills, but if we have no love for one another, all will be in vain (John 17:20-23; Rom. 12:10; 1 Cor. 13:13; Eph. 4:13, 16; Phil. 2:1-2; 2 Thes. 1:3; and 1 John 3:11).

The churches that were planted in Acts took very seriously this commandment of Jesus: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another...” (John 13:34-35).

Samuel Matthew said it very well in his book, *Formation and Development of Missiology in India* (p. 164): “A ‘missional’ church is one where its members love and talk positively about the neighborhood, speak in language that is neither filled with pious phrases nor embattled. They apply their study of the Bible to the core concerns and stories of the people of the culture. They exhibit deep concern for the poor. They are generous with their money. They value their purity and respect the opposite sex. They show humility toward people of other races and cultures. They do not bash other Christians and churches.”

The Holy Spirit moved Paul and the other church planting missionaries in Acts to make sure these elements were in place from the beginning. Today, church planters around the world know that when these elements are in place a church will be “on mission” with God and will be fulfilling the purpose for which it was created. And a church that is busy being born cannot help but reproduce and bring new life.

“Here am I, send me; send me to the ends of the earth; send me to the rough, the savage lost of the wilderness; send me from all that is called comfort on earth; send me even to death itself, if it be but in your service, and to promote your kingdom” – David Brainerd

LESSON FOUR QUESTIONS

1. Describe the church at Antioch.
2. What was the Holy Spirit doing to prepare the way for Paul’s first missionary journey?
3. How did the Holy Spirit help Paul to overcome opposition on his first missionary journey?
4. What does the book of Acts tell us about God’s intention for the Gentiles and how it was being fulfilled?
5. What are the ten elements of a CPM and how do we see them taking shape in Paul’s first missionary journey?
6. Compare Jesus’ instructions to His disciples in Luke 9:1-6 with the way most pastors, evangelists, and missionaries operate today.

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101-5

PAUL’S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY: A Church Planting Movement Takes Shape

“Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Mysia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us.’ After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.” Acts 6:6-10

Paul’s Second Missionary Journey (Acts 15:36 – 18:22) was inspired by his desire to **go back and visit** “our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing.” But the mission almost fell apart before it got started. Luke mentions the “**contention**” that arose between the brothers Paul and Barnabas over John Mark. Mark had failed to follow Paul and Barnabas all the way through their first missionary journey. We are never told the exact reason why Mark departed company with them and quickly returned to Antioch, but Barnabas felt that for whatever reason he failed to complete the first mission, Mark was ready to try again. Paul disagreed. In the end, the decision was made for Paul and Barnabas to part ways. Barnabas took Mark with him, and Silas joined Paul as “he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.”

It is very important to note that this decision to part ways was not done in a spirit of bitterness or offense. Acts 15:40 says that Paul chose Silas and departed “being **commended** by the brethren to the grace of God.” It is the sad truth that disagreements, differences in agendas, and personality conflicts will arise in the church that will threaten our unity and mission. However, in all things we must strive to settle these disagreements peacefully.

Disagreements over **foundational doctrines** have the potential to destroy the unity of the church and lead believers astray from the purity of the gospel. All disagreements over those things taught by our Lord Jesus Christ and preached by His Apostles, must be settled quickly. Those who are found to be in error or to be truly false teachers or false prophets must be rooted out or the entire mission of the church will be undermined or destroyed. This is why Paul, and the other Apostles

were adamant about dealing strongly and harshly with those who were confronted with their errors but refused accept correction (Matt. 7:15; 15:19; 2 Cor. 11:13-14; Gal. 2; Col. 2:18-23; 1 Tim. 1:3-7; 6:3-5; 2 Pet. 2:1-3; 1 John 4:1-6).

At the same time, we must remain humble, faithful to God, able to accept correction ourselves, and teachable in our spirit. We must never confuse our denominational differences with foundational doctrinal differences from the Word of God. We can accept one another and show unity in spite of those differences for the sake of the gospel and the salvation of souls. For example, a person's salvation does not depend upon whether they are *Premillennial*, *Postmillennial*, or *Amillennial* in their eschatology; so why fight and divide the church over such matters? Do not confuse preaching the gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus with such theological disputes. If souls are neglected and lost while we argue over disputable matters, may God have mercy on us.

Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit gave us the pattern for how to deal with disputable matters in the church (Romans 14:1 – 15:21). And Paul practiced what he preached – evidenced by the fact that later, Paul felt very differently toward Mark. During his first imprisonment at Rome, Paul commended Mark to Philemon as a “**fellow-laborer**” present with him. Paul also wrote to the Colossians that Mark was one who had been a great comfort to him. Paul also wrote to Timothy, “Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry...” (2 Timothy 4:11). We also know that the conflict between Barnabas and Paul over Mark quickly subsided for Paul afterward speaks respectfully of Barnabas in his first letter to the Corinthians as a brother and co-laborer preaching the gospel (1 Cor. 9:6).

To be successful a church planting movement must involve more than just a few people. When you carefully read the verses concerning Paul's second missionary journey, it becomes apparent that although Paul and Silas are central to Luke's account, many others were involved. Luke mentions just a few of the people that joined the growing effort to win the lost: Mark, Silas, Timothy, Lydia, Jason, Dionysius, Damaris, Aquila, Priscilla, Justice, Crispus, Epenetus, and Apollos. There were also some unnamed individuals (like the Philippian jailer) who played key roles in this emerging movement as well; proving that God was wanting to invite Jew and Gentile, male and female, rich and poor to join the increasing band of followers of Jesus Christ. Paul and the other missionaries had fought hard to keep the Gospel **open and available to all** (Acts 15:1-29). It was clear from the results of the Jerusalem Counsel that the Holy Spirit intended for the Gospel of salvation to be preached and given to whosoever would believe. This Second Missionary Journey was intended to **build upon the First**, but the Holy Spirit was about to show Paul

and the others that He wanted them to keep moving forward and plant churches in new regions to reach the unreached.

“Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us.’ Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.” Acts 16:6-10

Paul and Silas began their second mission with the idea of going back over the territory covered on their first mission (15:36). However, it soon became apparent that the Holy Spirit had other plans for them, and their mission changed when they reached Troas. It was at Troas that the most significant event of Paul's Second Missionary Journey happened. Known as his “**Macedonian Call**”, Paul had a vision of a Macedonian man pleading with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us” (16:9). This passage demonstrates how the Holy Spirit was directing His missionaries to leave Asia Minor and take the Gospel to the Gentiles in Macedonia (modern day Greece).

There are two things anyone can do that will quickly stop a Church Planting Movement in its tracks: the first is to **not keep moving forward** and opening new territories. It is always tempting to want to personally take care of and nurture every church that is planted, but the **local leadership** must be trusted to continue the work the church planter started. The second thing that will quickly kill a CPM is **not listening to the Holy Spirit** when He calls. Too often missionaries get caught up in their own agendas or create a “comfort zone” around them that they do not want disturbed. However, all too often the Holy Spirit calls us out of that comfort zone to minister to people in places that are strange and unfamiliar to us. William Carey, the great missionary to South Asia wrote, “*To know the will of God, we need an open Bible and an open map.*”

"In the vast plain to the north I have sometimes seen, in the morning sun, the smoke of a thousand villages where no missionary has ever been" – Robert Moffat

Paul and his fellow missionaries Silas, Timothy, and Luke were driven forward by a vision calling them to preach the Gospel to the Greeks. They quickly

advanced from Philippi to Thessalonica, Berea, and on to Athens – the very epicenter of the Hellenistic world. In Athens, Paul preached the Gospel to the elite Greek scholars at the Areopagus (Acts 17:22-34). It was a tough mission field among the Greeks because of their love for philosophical sophistry and their disdain for anything that did not originate with them. But still the Gospel was advancing, and seeds were being sown for future missions.



“Where *is* the wise? Where *is* the scribe? Where *is* the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” 1 Corinthians 1:20-25

Another very significant event from Paul’s Second Missionary Journey happened after he left Athens and while he was staying in Corinth. “When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, ‘Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.’” (Acts 18:5-6) It was here that Paul shifted the focus of his work from “the Jew first” and goes directly to the Gentiles, bypassing the Jews.

Paul’s letters demonstrate his firm belief in his divine calling to be an apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13; 1 Tim. 2:7). In his letter to the Galatians, he expressed how he was convinced that he was separated from his mother’s womb and called through God’s grace to preach Christ among the Gentiles (Galatians 1:15-16). Wherever Paul preached the Gospel on his journeys, handfuls of Gentiles believed and received the Gospel, the “dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,” (see Ephesians 3:1-2, 8-9). These Gentile believers became the firstfruits to God from Paul’s preaching and teaching among the Gentiles in the very heart of the Hellenistic World (2 Tim. 1:10-11). And it was these “first fruits” among the Gentiles that produced the church planting movements which would eventually overtake the entire Roman Empire. So, Paul’s second missionary journey securely planted the Gospel among the Gentiles, and continued the trend away from Jerusalem as the center for Christianity – thus fulfilling God’s overall plan to reach the nations with the gospel of salvation.

A CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENT TAKES SHAPE

"He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose" – Jim Elliot, missionary martyr

Like other experienced church planters around the world, David Garrison was able to identify Key Factors that all Church Planting Movements seem to share. Those same elements appear in Acts, and we can see them taking shape during Paul’s second missionary journey. When Paul reached Thessalonica, he found a synagogue of the Jews. He entered it on the Sabbath which was his strategy in every city he visited. Paul often used Sabbath days to reason from the Scriptures with his Jewish brethren, and Thessalonica was no exception. As he explained and proved “This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ” some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul (and Silas), “as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women” (Acts 17:1-4). We know from Paul’s two letters to this church that this group was quickly mentored by Paul and Silas and formed the core group of future leaders in and around Thessalonica.

Reports from contemporary CPMs may well have been written from the verses describing Paul's fruitful second missionary journey where immediate **assimilation** into the body of Christ and rapid **discipling** of new believers were key elements in the initiation and speedy rise of the early church among the Gentiles. Paul and the other church planting missionaries of Acts were implementing the components of the Holy Spirit's church planting strategy. These essential components are found in CPMs today. They are described in different ways in different CPMs around the world, but in Garrison's book they were described by Chinese missionaries by the acronym, POUCH. In both Acts and in the modern context, the five characteristics of POUCH contribute to the swift multiplication of churches in a manner that does not require them to rely upon the ongoing support of the church planting missionary.

POUCH Church Planting Movement Strategy

P= Participative

O= Obedience

U= Unpaid

C= Cell

H= Home

P = Participative Bible Study & Worship Groups

Acts 17:11-12 describes the impact Paul's preaching was having on his mission to the Greeks. By the time he reached Berea, his reasoning from the Scriptures had been convincing both Jews and Greeks that Jesus was the Son of God. Paul's audience in Berea was described by Luke as "**more fair-minded**" than those of some of the other cities Paul visited because "they received the word with all readiness, and **searched the Scriptures daily** to find out whether these things were so." In the end it was God's word that convinced "not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men" and caused them to become believers.

In Acts chapter 18, Paul's preaching had the same effect in Corinth as in the other cities. At first the Jews and God-fearing Gentiles gave Paul a hearing in their synagogue, but soon the Jews rejected Paul's message from the Scriptures that Jesus was indeed the Messiah and Savior of both Jews and Greeks. Paul was forced to move next door to the synagogue where a few of the Jews and large numbers of Gentiles came and listened to his preaching. Later, Paul would write to the believers in Corinth, "For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures..." (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Paul left a legacy in those early churches of searching and studying the Scriptures to

affirm the truth they were hearing; this is a legacy that remains in most churches to this day.

O = Obedience to God's Word as the Sole Measure of Individual's or Church's Success

The Christian songwriter and minister, Keith Green said it very well: "Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than going to McDonald's makes you a hamburger." Paul's second missionary journey was proof that the receiving, accepting, and transformation of lives by **the word of God** he was preaching was his sole measure for the success of his ministry. Acts 17:13; 18:11; and 19:18-20 reveal that it was Paul's preaching of the word of God that was stirring things up. Those who heard and believed were stirred up to repent, confess their sins, and turn to Jesus Christ for salvation. The Jews that did not believe were moved to try and stop Paul from preaching the word of God by stirring up opposition against him. The preaching and teaching of God's word was so important to Paul's mission that at one point, he stopped in Corinth for a year and six months "**teaching the word of God among them**." Later, Paul would write to the Thessalonians, confirming that attending meetings and listening to Paul's preaching did not make them Christians: "And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe." (1 Thessalonians 2:13 NIV)

U = Unpaid/Bi-Vocational Church Leaders

In many of the unreached places of the world, people are very poor by Western standards; it is not always practical for church planters to expect the poor to support them or wait for outsiders to give enough to fund their expanding ministry. House church leaders are often like **Lydia**, "a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira," that Paul met and responded to the word of God he was preaching (Acts 16:14-15). Immediately, a house church was started with Lydia and members of her household. Once the leaders were established and Paul moved on, they did not leave their trade and start soliciting donations to continue their ministry. The same was true of **Aquila and Priscilla**. Paul stayed with them in Corinth and worked alongside of them as a **tentmaker** while "Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks" (Acts 18:2-4). Corinth was not the only place where Paul did this; he reminded the Thessalonians how they "worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you" (1 Thessalonians 2:9). Paul also reminded them of admonished them to "follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day" (2 Thessalonians 3:7-8 NIV).

C= Cell Churches

Acts 15:41 informs us that this second missionary journey was undertaken for the primary purpose of revisiting places where Paul and Barnabas planted churches on their first missionary journey. Although reaching the unreached is the key factor of church planting, it does not exclude watching after and caring for the welfare of the congregations previously planted. “So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers” (Acts 16:5 NIV). Romans 16:5 and 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4 indicate that the church was growing by the regular gathering of **cell groups**. These small groups were not meeting in structures or buildings with leaders that directed and oversaw the regular gathering of these cell groups (which is the modern model). Instead, they centered on small groups meeting in home fellowships. With the Apostles’ oversight, they gathered to mutually strengthen and encourage believers that often-times faced trials and persecutions for their faith.

Paul and Silas went through Syria and Cilicia; revisited Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium; and took a circuit through Phrygia, Galatia, and Mysia, to Troas. Troas was where Paul received his call to set sail over to Europe, and plant new churches among the unreached places of Macedonia and Achaia. On their way back to Antioch to report on their mission, Paul greeted the church in Jerusalem.

Paul... “was now at the end of his circuit once more to gladden the hearts of the brethren who had ‘commended him to the favor of God,’ by rehearsing all that God had done with him, and that he had opened still wider ‘the door of faith to the Gentiles.’” J. W. McGarvey

H= Home or Storefront Churches

It is easy to see from Acts 18:7-8; 19:9; Rom. 16:5; and Phm. 1:2 that houses or other non-church-buildings were the normal gathering-places for believers in Acts. Purchasing land and building structures for believers to meet is the surest way to kill a church planting movement. Paul and the other Apostles never slowed down their work to return to Jerusalem or Antioch to raise funds to build church buildings. At one point, it became necessary for Paul to use a lecture hall for teaching and training disciples, but it never occurred to Paul to start building church buildings.

“And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Matthew 16:18 (ESV)

Clearly, Paul and the other Apostles were far more concerned with obeying the command of Jesus to build the **spiritual church** than with constructing **church buildings**. In Matthew 16:18, Jesus said His church would be built upon Jesus

himself (1 Peter 2:4-5) and the confession of faith that Peter gave. It was this same confession that all subsequent followers of Christ would give. The Book of Acts describes how the church was built on the foundation of the apostles’ proclamation of the gospel of the kingdom, with Jesus Christ as the cornerstone.

“Practicing Matt. 10:11, Paul looked for a respected man who would open his home to seekers. Can we see a little smile on Paul’s face because his new house-church is being planted right next door to the synagogue? To have a gathering-place within walking distance is an excellent principle.” Greg Livingstone

Throughout Paul’s second missionary journey we see the Holy Spirit orchestrating the events and bringing key people across Paul’s path who will not only respond to the preaching of the Gospel, but will become **partners, co-laborers, and disciples** with Paul. A Church Planting Movement is clearly taking shape as Paul first visits and encourages those churches that were the result of his first mission to West Asia. But we see that the Holy Spirit will not allow Paul to rest and build a reputation as the pastor and shepherd of these churches. Instead, Paul entrusts the leadership of these churches to local leaders and moves on and opens new territory among the unreached as the Holy Spirit led.

The key characteristics of Paul’s second missionary journey have guided – with or without their conscious understanding – every successful church planter since then. To be successful, a Church Planting Movement must experience rapid, exponential growth. And to do that it must make **disciples**. Disciples are those who are:

- Fully **Participative** in Bible Study and Worship Groups
- Completely **Obedient** to God’s Word in Word and Deed; and Use God’s Word *As the Sole Measure of An Individual’s or Church’s Success*
- Are **Unpaid/Bi-Vocational** Church Leaders Who Are Not Motivated by Money to do God’s Work.
- Willing and Able to Lead Independent **Cell Churches** Free of Denominational Agendas or Programs
- Happy to Meet in **Home or Storefront Churches** and Not Tied Down to Buying Land and Raising Large Sums of Money to Build Church Buildings

"It is possible for the most obscure person in a church, with a heart right toward God, to exercise as much power for the evangelization of the world, as it is for those who stand in the most prominent positions." – John R. Mott

LESSON FIVE QUESTIONS

1. What does Acts 15:36 – 18:22 teach us about the need for more than just a few people for a successful CPM?
2. Read HANDOUT “The Dream of a Macedonian Call: A Missional Redemptive Story.” What is the significance for Paul’s “Macedonian Call” in modern missions?
3. Whose idea was it for Paul to be the apostle to the Gentiles?
4. What does the acronym POUCH stand for and how is each element essential to CPMs?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101-6

PAUL’S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY: A Church Planting Movement Is Established

And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up and greeted the church, he went down to Antioch. After he had spent some time there, he departed and went over the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples. Acts 18:22-23

As Paul and the other missionaries crossed cultural and linguistic barriers, they saw the need to immediately mobilize the new believers to be their **co-laborers** wherever they found them. These new disciples were the key to the rapid spread of the gospel, and for planting new churches. Although he was often asked to stay with the churches he planted (Acts 18:20), Paul was obedient to his calling and did not try to interfere with the day-to-day operations of those churches. Here, Paul was demonstrating an important method that all successful church planters should follow: **Model, Assist, Watch, & Leave (MAWL)**. Paul understood that the ultimate goal of planting churches is to create independent, self-sustaining, and self-replicating churches for the purpose of rapid, exponential growth of the kingdom of God. As long as Paul remained the leader, the church would not grow and plant churches on their own because they would always be looking towards him and not to the Holy Spirit to lead and guide them.

“Only when the missionary has actually stepped away from the work is the cycle of MAWL completed. Only then is a passionate renewal of indigenous church planting assured.” David Garrison, Church Planting Movements

Acts 18:23 marks the beginning of Paul’s third missionary journey (Acts 18:23 – 21:16), which lasted from A.D. 53 to 57. After reporting all that took place on his second mission to his home church in Antioch Paul headed toward Ephesus (the ultimate destination for this mission), but along the way he revisited the churches in Galatia and Phrygia to encourage them and strengthen them spiritually.

Before Paul reached Ephesus, a Jewish believer from Alexandria in North Africa arrived in Ephesus on his own missionary journey. His name was Apollos; and there he encounters Priscilla and Aquila, the husband and wife leadership team discipled by Paul on his Second Missionary Journey. The couple remained there to

continue the work Paul started with the local churches. Priscilla and Aquila took Apollos aside and “explained to him the way of God more accurately.”

This passage from Acts is a good example of the value of the **model, assist, watch, and leave** strategy. In Acts 18:24-28 we are introduced to the believer Apollos. Luke does not tell us when, where, or how Apollos became a believer or how he came to be a missionary to Asia Minor. However, we see definite signs that a thriving church planting movement was taking place in that region. Apollos was on a mission, but it was not from Antioch alone that missionaries were being sent out. A healthy church must have existed at Alexandria at that time because Apollos, described as “an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures,” came from there to Ephesus on his own missionary journey. Apollos was someone who not only had been instructed in the way of the Lord before crossing Paul’s path but was also boldly and accurately teaching it in the local synagogue. The fact that Priscilla and Aquila were confident enough and capable enough to take Apollos aside and explain “the way of God” with greater accuracy without Paul’s presence was another indicator of the independence of the church in Ephesus.

In Acts 18:24-28 we can see the end result of Paul’s MAWL strategy when Apollos arrives in Ephesus. Priscilla, Aquila, and the elders at Ephesus followed Paul’s **model** and passed it along to Apollos. They **assisted** Apollos on his mission, they **watched** his progress while he was with them. And when it was time for Apollos to **leave** them, they encouraged him and wrote a letter for him to make sure he would be welcomed by other believers along his way.

In the modern context, reports from CPMs in places like China, India, Africa, and the Middle East are all similar to what Luke recorded in Acts 18. Cross cultural missionaries are often aware of the enormous cultural and linguistic barriers that separate them from the unreached people groups they are trying to reach. The successful church planting missionary will usually begin by mobilizing Christian **co-laborers** from across that region and then partnering these indigenous church planters with small teams of local believers.

Without Paul being directly involved, Priscilla and Aquila instructed Apollos who had already become a disciple and church planting missionary from a church created by a movement in North Africa. The church in Ephesus, without having to ask Paul, sent Apollos on his way with letters of introduction to the region of Achaia. Because Paul left the care of the churches he planted in the hands of **local leadership**, new churches were being planted throughout the region. The gospel was firmly taking root and growing everywhere Paul’s ministry was received on his first two missionary journeys without Paul being directly involved.

By the time Paul arrived in Ephesus on his third missionary journey, churches representing thousands of new believers were being planted in different regions by

indigenous workers – most of whom Paul did not have any direct involvement in discipling or sending. The modern-day church planting missionary will succeed in reaching the people groups they are trying to reach by doing the same thing. They must immediately instill in their initial disciples **a vision** for reaching their entire region with the gospel. They must share with their indigenous workers the need for others **to be saved**, and **encourage** them to join the Great Commission, while assuring them that the Lord had equipped them with all they will need to reach their entire region with the gospel without waiting for outside help.

Later, Paul would write to the Ephesians, “I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God’s grace given me through the working of his power. Although I am less than the least of all God’s people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.” (Ephesians 3:7-9 NIV).

Paul’s ministry in Ephesus also highlights the importance of the **empowerment of the Holy Spirit** for advancing the gospel of salvation. Acts 19:1-7 describes Paul’s encounter with a small group of disciples who had never heard of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. John’s baptism – the baptism for forgiveness of sins – they knew and obeyed, but the baptism of Jesus, they did not know (Matthew 3:11).

We do not know who led these men to believe and receive the gospel of salvation, but whoever it was evidently did not know or understand Holy Spirit baptism because these men had not heard of it. (It is possible, but only speculation that these men became believers in Jesus Christ sometime after the Resurrection but before Pentecost.) Paul, recognizing that the power of the Holy Spirit is essential for all those who wanted to follow Jesus Christ, baptized them in the name of Jesus. Immediately upon receiving baptism in the name of Jesus they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which was evidenced by their speaking with other tongues and prophesying. In his commentary on this passage, J. W. McGarvey wrote:

“This passage is valuable chiefly because it shows how the apostles dealt with parties who, at that time, were immersed with John’s immersion. This, no doubt, was Luke’s object in introducing it. In order to understand the case, it is necessary to keep distinctly in view the facts stated of the parties previous to and subsequent to their immersion by Paul. They are called disciples, and were known as such when Paul found them; for it is said ‘he found certain disciples.’ They were disciples, not of John, but of Jesus; for the uniform currency of the term disciple, throughout Acts, requires us to so understand it. This is further evident from Paul’s question, ‘Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?’ The term *believed* evidently refers to Jesus as its object.

They were known, then, as disciples of Jesus, and were so recognized by Paul.”

It is Luke’s intention at this point to show that Paul (and by implication the other Apostles) saw the necessity for believers to experience the same empowerment of the Holy Spirit that the Jews (Acts 2:4, 11), Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17), and the God-fearing Gentiles (Acts 10:44-46) had been experiencing since the first Pentecost (Acts 2).

Paul’s primary ministry in Ephesus was to speak “boldly” in order to persuade any who would listen “concerning things of the kingdom of God” (Acts 19:8). After meeting the same resistance from the Jews in the synagogue at Ephesus as in so many other synagogues along the way, Paul shifted his preaching/teaching ministry to a neutral lecture hall in the city (19:9). From this “**Bible and church-planting school**” Paul was able to speak freely without the constant harassment from those who refused to believe. Successful church planting requires us to focus on those who are **receptive to the gospel** and not spend our efforts arguing with or dialoging with those who refuse to believe. This is the practical application of Jesus’ instructions to His disciples in Luke 10:8-11, “Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick there, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’ But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, ‘The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless, know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.’”

Paul’s ministry in Ephesus involved extraordinary miracles from the Holy Spirit. “Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.” Luke’s use of the Greek term best translated into English “**unusual**” or “**extraordinary**” indicated that (1) these miracles were not a normal part of Paul’s ministry; and (2) that there was no command or expectation that all Holy Spirit baptized believers were expected in any way to “go and do likewise” as a normal part of their ministry.

Luke emphasized in these verses that it was **God** and not Paul that initiated these miracles. “So why is God doing this *extraordinary* thing in Ephesus that He didn’t do through Paul in other cities? The population of Ephesus was led to think that they were the special custodians of the great goddess Diana. Magic and supernatural power... was the hallmark of Ephesus. The people there felt a special pride and status, as if they were more powerful than most others. Thus, Paul’s ministry there was not unlike Elijah confronting the prophets of Baal. Most relevantly for the ministry, the *really* ‘extraordinary thing’ is in the previous verse:

‘*all who lived in Asia heard the Word of the Lord*’! That is the goal. Spiritual power is merely a means.” Greg Livingstone, *The Book of Acts*, Authentic Books, Secunderabad, India © 2005, p.281

The attempt by certain Jewish exorcists to upstage the Lord and take away from the extraordinary miracles being worked through Paul at that time ended in embarrassment and humiliation for the sons of Sceva (19:13-17). “This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. So, the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.” (Acts 19:17-20). Either in a positive way (by the extraordinary power of the Holy Spirit through Paul), or in a negative way (by the failure and humiliation of the sons of Sceva), the Lord would be magnified and glorified throughout the city of Ephesus.

The important point to be drawn from of these verses concerning the Holy Spirit’s activity during Paul’s visit to Ephesus is how the gifts of the Holy Spirit were manifested in Paul’s ministry. The extraordinary healings and exorcisms were **means to an end** and not the end result that the Holy Spirit was seeking.

Luke described the disastrous result of some Jewish exorcists who attempted to mimic the Holy Spirit by casting out demons by their own power. The stories of Paul’s unusual miracles and what happened to those who attempted to use their own magical powers to copy Paul spread quickly throughout all of Ephesus. As a result, an intense fear descended on the superstitious city, and the name of the Lord Jesus was greatly venerated. The conviction of the Holy Spirit came upon many of those who had been practicing black magic. They confessed their deeds and brought their incantation books and charms worth thousands of dollars and burned them in public. All of this indicates how deeply the whole area was stirred by God’s message delivered by Paul with the Holy Spirit’s power.

Modern-day missionaries and church planters should take note of the fact that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are given for specific reasons and as needed. The Holy Spirit is not to be trifled with or His gifts used like window-dressing or stage props for the minister to impress the unbelieving by their spiritual power. On the other hand, we see that “Too many missionaries have failed to confront professing followers of Jesus with this vital question, ‘Did you receive the Holy Spirit’? How many millions of nominal, powerless, ugly Christians discredit the Gospel to Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists because they know nothing of the cleansing, empowering dynamic of the ‘baptism of the Holy Spirit’ who transforms people by

true regeneration?” Greg Livingstone, *The Book of Acts*, Authentic Books, Secunderabad, India © 2005, pp. 276-277

One final extraordinary miracle is mentioned on this journey (Acts 20:7-12). After Paul leaves Ephesus and is on the way back to Jerusalem, he stops at Troas. Paul’s visit there was going to be brief and so he wanted to make the most of every minute. It is hard for American Christians to imagine this scene: an upstairs room packed with people sitting on the floor, standing in every corner, and leaning against the windows of a dimly lit room – all listening intently to the man of God as he teaches them deep into the night. But for the modern-day missionary in many places in the world where the Gospel has never been preached, or where little or no intensive teaching of the Word from qualified preachers has taken place, this is a much more common scene.

Suddenly, the tranquility of the whole scene was disrupted as one tired young man who had fallen asleep sitting in a window fell to the ground and died. If the Holy Spirit in Paul had not acted and raised young Eutychus back to life, the meeting would have been remembered only for having been the death of a youth who came to listen to the man of God talk about Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life. Apart from the Holy Spirit, all that could have been done is cancel the rest of the meeting and for Paul to have been quietly escorted out of Troas. But instead, the Holy Spirit presented Paul with an unforgettable “teaching moment”! No doubt Paul had told them about Jesus healing the masses; about Jesus rising from the tomb; about Jesus promising the Holy Spirit and the power and authority given to all who believed and received Him as Lord and Christ. Suddenly, all of what Paul was teaching was put to the test. Was all that Paul taught them just words? Or was there power and truth behind them? Go back to the first few verses of Acts 19 and the absolute importance of the present reality of the Holy Spirit in the life of every disciple becomes crystal-clear.

Above all, for any church planting movement to be successful it must be a **move of the Holy Spirit** from beginning to end. The Holy Spirit must **prepare the way** for the disciple/missionary even before they arrive on the scene. The Holy Spirit must **bring conviction**, and work in the consciences of those who are hungry and thirsty for the truth. “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” Jesus said in the Beatitudes, “for theirs is the kingdom of God.”

Of equal importance to be successful, a church planting movement must be led by men and women of God whose hearts, minds, and souls are totally immersed in the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. We must do more than teach and preach *about* Jesus as the way, truth and life; we must demonstrate by our own lives and actions that Jesus Christ truly *is* all we say He is.

Radical obedience to Christ is not easy... It's not comfort, not health, not wealth, and not prosperity in this world. Radical obedience to Christ risks losing all these things. But in the end, such risk finds its reward in Christ. And he is more than enough for us.” — David Platt

Therefore, we must remember that the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20 should also include what Jesus told His disciples in Mark: “And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” (Mark 16:17-18). Acts teaches us the **practical application** of what Jesus meant in Mark 16. Yes, these signs will follow all who believe, but we should not expect them to be a normal, everyday occurrence in the life of every believer. The Holy Spirit is the one who decides where, when, and how supernatural gifts are applied. They are not intended to “wow” unbelievers or to exalt the person through whom the Holy Spirit chooses to work. Spiritual gifts when properly received and used will **glorify God** and lead unbelievers to salvation in Christ. Supernatural gifts are intended to **reinforce the gospel** as it is being preached, not to replace preaching the fundamental message of salvation by the blood of Jesus. Therefore, the Holy Spirit will empower us according to what is needed in any particular setting.

OPPOSITION AND PERSECUTION

When we study Acts 8:1; 13:50; 14:22; 19:8-10 and 23-41, along with John 16:33; 1 Thess. 3:4; and 2 Tim. 3:10-11 we see that from the beginning Christians can expect to face opposition and persecution whenever they move forward and boldly proclaim the Gospel; church history certainly confirms this and even in our 21st century world, Christians remain the most persecuted religion in the world today.

It is a difficult to face, but the truth is: no great move of God will come apart from Christians suffering. Jesus warned us it would be so: “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also...” (John 15:18-20).

Jerry Rankin and Ed Stetzer wrote in their book *Spiritual Warfare and Missions: The Battle for God’s Glory Among the Nations* that “Too many Christians have embraced the myth of safety in the center of God’s will. That just doesn’t match up with reality spiritually, historically, or scripturally. Were Stephen and James, two

of the earliest martyrs in the book of Acts, not in the center of God's will? When Paul and his companions were imprisoned, or subjected to stoning and beating, was it because they were disobedient to what God was leading them to do? Of course, not! God is not primarily concerned about our comfort, safety, and prosperity. He desires to be glorified in our lives, and that often comes through faithfulness in the midst of persecution and suffering. And it often results in a powerful witness for Christ that would not otherwise occur." (p. 129).

It takes the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to stand in the face of persecution and not waver. It is only human nature to want to avoid pain and suffering. But it is a false doctrine that teaches Christians that they were saved so they can enjoy the best this world has to offer and never have to experience any cost for following Jesus as their Lord and Savior. On the other hand, we are not called to be senseless martyrs either. To deliberately throw ourselves into the fire or from the pinnacle of some temple is putting God to the test (Matt. 4:5-7). The task of the church planting missionary is to keep their eyes fixed upon Jesus and follow the Holy Spirit wherever He leads – even if that means to prison or to death (Note Acts 21:1-16).

"You can help others in proportion to what you yourself have suffered. The greater the price, the more you can help others ... As you go through the fiery trials, the testing, the affliction, the persecution, the conflict ... life will flow out to others, even the life of Christ." Watchman Nee

As Paul prepared to depart Antioch, he sent Timothy and Erastus on to Macedonia ahead of him (Acts 19:22). And when he finished his mission there, he sent others on ahead of him to meet him in Troas (Acts 20:4-6). Here we see the mindset of the church planting missionary: Paul trains and sends others ahead of him to prepare the ground for him while he remains behind and completes his training of the leadership where he is staying. When Paul arrived back in Macedonia to visit the churches planted on a previous mission to that area, his disciples had already assessed the situation there. Before Paul left Macedonia the leadership was in place there and healthy churches were growing, making disciples, and planting new churches on their own.

It is during this third missionary journey that we see the seeds sown on Paul's first and second journey maturing and being established as a fully formed church planting movement. The MAWL strategy Paul developed on his missions represents the threefold ministry that all successful church planting missionaries incorporate to this day:

1. **Making disciples**
2. From these disciples **appointing leadership** to the newly planted churches
3. **Moving on** to places where disciples have not yet been made.

David Garrison in his book on Church Planting Movements noted something that Paul learned on his missionary journeys: "New believers were immediately baptized and taught that it was normal for them to win others to Christ and lead them to form new churches. This 'high demand/high risk' reliance on new converts as evangelists and church planters contributed greatly to the rapid expansion of the movement."

The MAWL strategy of church planting came to fruition in Acts 20:13-37. Paul had gathered his leaders together because he knew that his work in Asia and Greece was complete. He had made disciples, planted churches, trained disciples to lead those churches, and now disciples were making disciples and churches were planting churches all over those regions and beyond. The church planting movement was moving full speed ahead with the Holy Spirit in the lead. Now it was time for Paul to move on to new places where church planting movements needed to be started.

In verses 18-23 of Acts chapter 20, Paul reminds the Ephesian elders how he disciplined them by modeling and mentoring them while teaching them all he could about the gospel. He urges them not to feel sorrow for him for he is going on "to finish my race with joy..." and complete the ministry which he had received from the Holy Spirit. Paul was leaving them with a clear conscience because he said, "I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God." In verses 28-38 Paul then turns his attention to give them final instructions on how to lead the flocks the Holy Spirit had given to them:

- Paul warns them to **guard the flock** against false teachers from without and within the church
- Paul **entrusts them to God** and His care. (Remember they belong to God and not to Paul.)
- Paul **set an example** for them with regard to **money** and how he refused to live off of others. And in fact they should support the weak.

"And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship." Acts 20:36-38

PAUL’S JOURNEY TO ROME: Acts 21:17 – 28:31

After his important stop to encourage the Ephesian Elders and bid them farewell, Paul set his face towards Jerusalem. Both believing and non-believing Jews dominated the religious life in Jerusalem and the rumors that Paul was turning both Jews and Greeks against the Law had them fuming with anger and just hoping to get their hands on the one they had already tried in their minds and condemned to be a seditious blasphemer against Moses.

As soon as Paul arrived in Jerusalem, he reported his work among the Gentiles to the leaders there. “And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, ‘You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law; but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs’” (20-21). Were the accusations against Paul justified? There were two accusations against Paul that he would have to defend at his trials before the Roman and Gentile judges. First the accusation was that Paul was teaching the Gentiles that they did not need to keep the Law of Moses or the oral law of the Jews (traditions) as a prerequisite to their full incorporation into the church. The second accusation – that Paul taught the Jews that they did not need to keep Mosaic Law or circumcise their children according to Jewish custom. As to the first: this issue had already been settled at the first council of the church (Acts 15). The non-believing Jews were more upset by this than were the believing Jews. But it is apparent from this text that the Jewish believers in Jerusalem were still “zealous for the law” and were at least uncomfortable with what Paul was teaching the Gentiles; the non-believing Jews were outraged over Paul’s teaching for both Jews and Gentiles.

The church leaders’ advice to Paul to placate the Jews by publicly observing the traditions of the Jews concerning the vow of the Nazarites (Numbers 6:1-21) backfires and his trip to Jerusalem turned out just as was prophesied (Acts 21:11-14). As soon as the Jews – both believers and non-believers – saw Paul at the Temple, they attacked him. The Roman authorities arrested him for causing a riot, and the drama of Paul’s arrest, trials, and shipwreck on the way to Rome close the book. Acts ends with Paul in the heart of Rome, a witness for the Gospel in chains and awaiting trial before Caesar’s court, while looking forward to taking the gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus to regions where it had yet to be heard. Paul’s heart was reflected in the words of a great champion of modern missions, Oswald J. Smith when he said, “No one has the right to hear the gospel twice, while there remains someone who has not heard it once.”

“Here is the quintessence of a great visionary mission leader. He is always looking to the ‘regions beyond’ (2 Cor. 10:16) where the church must yet start holding out ‘the word of Life’.” Greg Livingstone

LESSON SIX QUESTIONS

1. How do Apollos’ mission and his encounter with Aquila and Priscilla demonstrate a thriving CPM?
2. Explain the importance of the Holy Spirit to CPMs.
3. What can Christians expect when they move forward and boldly proclaim the Gospel?
4. What is the threefold ministry Paul passed on to leaders of the church in Acts 20:13-37?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101-7

LEARNING POINTS FOR MODERN CPMs FROM PAUL’S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

“Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance. For these reasons the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. Therefore, having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come—that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.” **Acts 26:19–23**

There are **Ten Key Points** to be learned from the successful church planting movements that Paul started on his first missionary journey, that he continued in his second, and that he firmly established in his third. The most successful Church Planting Movements today are those that follow the prototype for all successful CPMs established by Paul and described in the Book of Acts. It can be argued that the Apostle Paul was one of the most successful missionaries who ever lived. Therefore, it only makes sense that our modern Church Planters should look to him to be their supreme role model.

1. *Paul’s shift away from an institutionalized religion that depended upon the Synagogue, to house churches run by appointed leaders coincided with an enormous increase in church growth.*

Freeing the modern Church Planting Movements from the physical limitations of establishing formal churches tied to institutional restraints will allow the enterprising evangelist/church planter to take the gospel directly to the targeted unreached communities.

Of course, the ideal situation is for the local established Church to be a church planting church. When the established church is fully on board with a church planting movement, they will train their members to be **church planters** (not just church attendees) and will send them out instead of dedicating their precious resources to find ways to bring unreached people into their church and keep them in.

Paul was able to plant churches everywhere he went because he did not depend upon the resources of his home church in Antioch to support those churches. And if done right, the modern church planter should be able to do the same.

“CPMs are much messier than neat, orderly organizational charts, and much more exciting! Launch and repeat!” Steve Smith, T4T

2. *After he left the Synagogue and decided to take the Gospel directly to the Gentiles, Paul’s leadership helped to set a new direction and encouraged the house-church movements he started.*

In the modern context, even though it means a diminished measure of control for the foreign leadership, the indigenous workers who are best able to communicate and spread the Gospel witness in their communities should be the ones who take the lead while the foreign missionary should expect to take no more than a supporting role.

However, the support role of a foreign missionary should not be undervalued. Following Paul’s example in Acts, the modern-day missionary can begin a church planting movement by developing **mentoring/discipling** relationships with believers. As this small group of disciples starts to develop, it will form the nucleus around which the missionary can:

- **Develop a church planting vision** and training materials in the mother tongue of the unreached people group. Note that Paul’s letters to particular churches instructing them on a variety of issues were quickly circulated among all the churches. His “Pastoral Epistles” (1 & 2 Timothy and Titus) are particularly helpful for selecting and appointing new leadership in the churches. (see HANDOUT “The Best Way to Plant Indigenous Churches Is to Begin that Way”)

- **Teach the indigenous church planters** sound doctrine, evangelism, and church planting skills. Acts 19:1-10 describes Paul’s efforts to teach a core group of believers in Ephesus. He spent more than two years in Ephesus teaching and training them in doctrine, evangelism, and church planting skills before moving on to Macedonia and Achaia with the intention of going on to Jerusalem.

- **Inspire, provoke, and encourage church planters.** Paul’s Epistles were filled with inspiring words intended to instill in disciples a vision and passion for reaching those around them who had not yet believed the gospel. Ephesians is an excellent example of how Paul used his letters to inspire

believers. In Ephesians 3:7-11 Paul expressed how God had given him the great privilege of telling everyone about God’s plan of salvation – a mysterious plan hidden through the ages, but now revealed to the church. Paul told how he was given power and a supernatural ability to accomplish his mission. Though Paul said he did nothing to deserve it – and was in fact the “least of all the saints” – still God chose him for the privilege and joy of telling the Gentile nations the good news of the kingdom.

In Romans chapter 10 we find another fine example of Paul inspiring other disciples to preach the gospel to those who have yet to hear it. This passage is Paul’s passionate appeal for the church to reach out to both Jew and Gentile with the good news; the words of that appeal have inspired many to carry forward Paul’s work of planting churches among the unreached.

- **Build unity among believers.** Guided by the Holy Spirit’s wisdom, church planters understand the necessity for unity. The churches Paul founded were formed into an association of like-minded churches for mutual support and encouragement. Paul’s ability to form associations and cooperation between the churches he planted along his way was useful in keeping the work going while he was away. We see a very clear example of unity among believers when Paul went away from Ephesus. Apollos, a missionary from Alexandria came to Ephesus after Paul. Once he was ready to continue on his way, Paul’s representatives in Ephesus encouraged him, and wrote letters urging the churches where he was going to welcome him (Acts 18:27).

3. *It is important that from the beginning, all Christians are taught that there is a cost to following Jesus.*

If the Gospel is to reach the nations, Christians will have to give sacrificially of their time, treasures, and talents; they cannot count on others to bear the cost for them. Jesus said, in Luke 14:27-30, “And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has *enough* to finish it – lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’”

Paul said it plainly in 2 Timothy 3:12 “...all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” Persecution will always weed out those who are not serious followers of Christ. Paul suffered greatly for his part in spreading the Gospel, and every missionary will to some degree have to share in the same sufferings of Paul – and ultimately of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul played a key role in advancing the kingdom by training others to introduce the Gospel to those who had not heard it. (Paul never felt that he had to do it all by himself). From the new disciples he was making, he quickly **mobilized and trained lay leaders** and placed them over the churches that were started – others he sent out as missionaries in different directions as he moved on. Paul did all of this without relying upon outside funding to maintain the churches or support the pastors.

The churches Paul planted were **self-sufficient**, and in some cases, contributed to the welfare of Christians in other places (2 Cor. 9:1-5). Missionaries today can play a similar role by introducing the gospel; by encouraging a vision for planting new churches in unreached areas; by introducing home or cell-church methodologies, and then moving on. In the same way as Paul, they must immediately prevent the indigenous CPM from becoming dependent upon outside funds to survive and grow.

4. *Paul and the other Christians in Antioch did not remain inside the church praying and waiting for the lost to come to them. At great risk to themselves (2 Cor. 11:22-33), Paul and his companions went out and evangelized where the lost were.*

Church leadership everywhere needs to encourage the same attitude among its members and start sending them out from the church buildings to where the lost are. The church was never intended to be a sheep pen to house the sheep to be sheared every Sunday, but it was intended to be a **training ground for disciples** to go and make more disciples from every nation.

Paul wrote to the Romans (10:14-15 NKJV), “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!’”

5. *Paul did not receive pay for his work, and he never expected to be paid a salary from anyone. He graciously and joyfully with thanksgiving received whatever was given to help him along his way.*

Paul lived consistently throughout his ministry:

- He trusted fully upon **God’s provision**.
- He never wanted to be a **financial burden** to anyone.
- And when necessary, he was fully prepared **to work with his own hands** to earn funds to pay his own way.

Paul's ministry depended upon multiple, **unpaid church leaders** who accompanied him on the way or were chosen and anointed by Paul to lead one of the churches he planted on his missionary journeys. Modern CPMs can ensure the availability of the growing number of leaders needed to continually begin new works in unreached villages by placing less emphasis on using "professional" pastors, evangelists, and ministry leaders. Instead, they should identify, encourage, and equip bi-vocational laymen and women who have a true missionary zeal and passion for the harvest.

Paul reminded the Ephesian elders, "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" **Acts 20:33-35**

While Paul and countless other missionaries were on their journeys, John wrote to the churches: "Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers, who have borne witness of your love before the church. If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well, because they went forth for His name's sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth." 3 John 1:5-8

6. *Paul often became the focal point of opposition to the Gospel. On a number of occasions, the persecution of Christians in a particular place started because of Paul's presence.*

"But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was preached by Paul at Berea, they came there also and stirred up the crowds. Then immediately the brethren sent Paul away, to go to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy remained there." (Acts 17:13-14)

In many countries today, foreign missionaries should be sensitive to the local conditions where they travel. Short-term missionaries in particular should not allow their zeal for having exciting and dramatic stories to tell upon their return home to leave behind indigenous workers having to deal with problems created by their visit. Deeper **hostility and the increased scrutiny** of their non-Christian neighbors often come from those who resented an invasion of foreigners upsetting the delicate balance of village life.

Foreign missionaries in closed or semi-closed nations need to be submitted to the local leadership and follow their instructions carefully. The local person understands the dynamics and complexities of their culture; they know the

intimate details of what is going on in the area the missionary is visiting and therefore can avoid any danger for the missionary. In places hostile to the gospel message, the long or short-term missionary should be willing to leave any church they started in local hands before it grows large enough to attract the scrutiny of too many government, tribal, or religious leaders. By maintaining a low profile, foreign missionaries can help a CPM avoid the appearance of foreignness in a post-colonial world where many countries are known for their nationalism and xenophobia.

7. *Paul's missionary journeys could have been subtitled by David Garrison's words, "Failure can be a prelude to success, if we are willing to learn from it and not give up."*

The story of Paul's missionary journeys in the Book of Acts is not a story of one great success after another but is the story of a man who endured **great hardships** for the sake of the Gospel (2 Corinthians 11:22-33).

"Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, 'We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.'" Acts 14:19-22

Ever since the first century A.D., efforts of evangelism and church planting among the unreached peoples of the world have often resulted in persecutions and martyrdoms; and it continues to this day. Disciples will never be able to have successful Church Planting Movements sweeping across their nation without those who are willing to pay the price and sacrifice their lives and fortunes for the sake of the Gospel. This is in part why the demands of being a true disciple of Jesus Christ are so high; one should seriously consider the words of Jesus in Luke 14:26-33 before committing themselves to be a follower of Jesus.

8. *Paul's missionary activity was focused upon making disciples not converts.*

Jesus commanded His disciples to "Go 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..."

Notice that Jesus said "disciples" and not "converts". Converts, by their very nature, believe everything is all about them; they believe that they are the center of God's universe and therefore, the recipients of all of God's blessings. Converts

do not reproduce. Only disciples will go out and make other disciples because it is in their nature to do so; as Jesus said in Luke 6:40, “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.”

Before the end of his Second Missionary Journey Paul was spending a significant amount of his time **teaching and making disciples** (note his more than two years in Ephesus). In the end, a disciple will share the *vision* and the *mission* of the Kingdom, which are to go and seek and save the lost, make disciples, and glorify God in all that he or she does.

Too many of those who are filling comfortable, safe, churches on Sunday mornings are unwilling to take the risk and step out in faith. They want to remain in their safe and secure environment on Sundays, to be filled with uplifting messages, and entertained with the best worship. For the converts, it is “all about me” and nothing about true sacrifice and obedience to the Lord’s commands to get up and “go” to the unsafe and uncomfortable places where the lost and hurting are.

Paul understood this and heard his Master’s call. At the same time, Paul boldly set himself apart for missionary service in the name of Jesus:

“Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ...” (Romans 1:1-6)

9. *By the time Paul left the mission fields he started and developed on his first three missionary journeys, he was able to go on to his next mission fields to Rome and beyond in peace knowing that everywhere he had gone, he had left behind workers who were capable of carrying on the mission of making disciples and planting new churches.*

Today’s missionary should follow the example of Paul and not bypass the step of “**passing the torch**” to the local believers until he or she is ready to retire from the mission field. Instead, they should initiate their mission with the intentional church-planting strategy of starting with the torch firmly in the hands of local disciples from the beginning. Missionaries should insist that every church planted be planted by indigenous church planters.

Of course, new leaders of freshly planted churches will have their problems, as did the church in Corinth. Paul’s model is not a guarantee of problem-free churches. Steve Smith, in his book on church planting wrote, “CPMs are much messier than neat, orderly organizational charts, and much more exciting! Launch and repeat!”

10. *By the time Paul completed his work of church planting, he had left behind a small team of leaders over a network of healthy church planting churches scattered across much of West Asia and Greece.*

The work continued to grow and strengthen without him because of Paul’s selfless devotion to those churches. He took the risk of **removing himself from direct control** of the churches he planted and trusted the Holy Spirit to fill them with mature disciples empowered by the Holy Spirit and able to stand on their own.

PAUL’S CHURCH PLANTING LEGACY

In the end, Paul was able to declare that he was “innocent of the blood of all” for he never failed to declare the **whole gospel**. Still Paul was deeply concerned and worried for the church because he knew that there were those lurking in the shadows that would twist the gospel for their own gain and strip them of their inheritance in the kingdom by preaching a false gospel to them – a gospel that would appeal to the flesh and deny the Spirit... but Paul said, “...even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed... For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ” (Galatians 1:8, 10).

Paul’s example, faithfully recorded by Luke in the book of Acts, proved that the greatest legacy any missionary can leave behind is a **growing network of vital indigenous churches** that are preaching the Gospel without compromise, making disciples, and planting churches without being dependent upon outside help.

"Tell the students to give up their small ambitions and come eastward to preach the gospel of Christ." – Francis Xavier, missionary to India, the Philippines, and Japan

Looking back on Paul’s successful church planting missions, the book of Acts describes the qualities individual churches need to possess if they are to glorify God through Jesus Christ and lead the unreached people groups to believe the gospel. In every church he planted, Paul quickly developed leaders (disciples) who understood

that disciple-making is evidence of true faith in God because a true follower of Christ makes followers of Christ by being like Christ (Matthew 10:24-33).

Apart from making disciples, it is impossible to fulfill the Great Commission the Lord commanded (Matthew 28:19-20). Paul and the other Apostles followed the same method of disciple-making that was modeled by the Lord Himself. Paul believed that a successful, God honoring church will be a disciple-making church. The model for the New Testament Church is found in Jerusalem immediately after Pentecost:

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

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, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”
(Acts 2:42–47)

The four qualities that New Testament churches must possess if they are going to be successful church planting churches are the same qualities found in the churches that were described throughout the book of Acts:

- **First of all, the early church was founded upon the Word of God and the teachings of the Apostles of Jesus Christ.** The Apostles were eyewitnesses to the life, works, and teachings of Jesus. The Apostle Paul was personally chosen by the Lord on the road to Damascus (Acts 9) “...he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.”
- **From the beginning, the intimacy and unity of all believers was stressed.** Followers of Christ need each other for mutual support and encouragement in a hostile world. (John 17:6-26). Jesus knew that it would be critical for His disciples to abide in fellowship with other believers because it is in *community* that every disciple is valued, encouraged, and challenged to live like a true believer.
- **The church of Jesus Christ exists in this world to serve the Lord and others; and to give to those in need.** Followers of Jesus will naturally desire to see the physical and spiritual needs of others being met. A disciple no

longer seeks his own welfare above others but gives unselfishly to meet the needs of others. Believers must love God above all others. Then love one another and others in need (Matthew 22:37-40; John 13:34).

- **Finally, to be a successful, self-replicating church, it needs to be a praying church.** Prayer and worship go hand-in-hand. Prayer will be the practice and focus of the church when and where the Holy Spirit is present. The fulfillment of the Great Commission depends upon the power of God. Church planters cannot succeed without God’s power. To be fully committed to the will of God requires believers to die to themselves – something that requires constant prayer. Prayer is the greatest activity disciples can do in order to complete the work God has called His church to do. Without the Holy Spirit’s power, provision, point of view, guidance and protection, we will never accomplish His command to seek and save the lost to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

LESSON SEVEN QUESTIONS

1. What are the ten Key Learning Points from Paul’s missionary journeys?
2. What are the Four Qualities of a church planting church?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101-8

DISCIPLES MAKING DISCIPLES

A Church Planting Movement Is Extended (Part One)

“Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium.” Acts 16:1-2

The Book of Acts is by no means a comprehensive description of every church planting movement that was taking place at that time. Thousands were saved on the day of Pentecost and when they returned home, they shared the gospel of salvation in Christ Jesus. So, while Luke was traveling with Paul and writing his personal account of what was happening around him, dozens, or possibly hundreds of other Church Planting Movements were springing up in places near and far from Jerusalem. We have evidence of that fact in Paul’s and the other Apostles’ encounters with believers that already existed before they came to them. Even before Paul arrived in Antioch, there was a thriving church there (11:26). As Peter traveled throughout **Galilee, Samaria, and Judea** (9:32-42) he found many believers already existing there. When Paul was staying in Asia for a time, he sent two of his disciples to **Macedonia** (Timothy and Erastus) to check on the believers there and to report on the progress of the churches being planted in that region as well (19:22). And to add to the evidence that church planting movements were spreading in other areas in addition to those described by Luke, we are told of the arrival of Apollos in Ephesus from Alexandria in **North Africa** (Acts 18:24-25; Note also Acts 2:9-12).

John R.W. Stott once pointed out that “The nations are not gathered in automatically. If God has promised to bless ‘all the families of the earth,’ he has promised to do so ‘through Abraham's seed’ (Genesis 12:3, 22:18). Now we are Abraham's seed by faith, and the earth's families will be blessed only if we go to them with the gospel. That is God's plain purpose.” When read and studied intentionally, the book of Acts provides us a roadmap for how the nations are to be gathered in. There are **Ten Common Factors** found in the church planting movements described in the book of Acts. These same factors are also identified by David Garrison in his descriptions of CPMs around the world today. Each of these factors from the book of Acts is a prototype for all successful CPMs.

1. **Worship in the Heart Language** – When we read Acts 2:6-8; 1 Corinthians 14:9-11, 21; and Revelation 7:9-10 we quickly discover how God can use any language to communicate His gospel to people. There are a number of obstacles missionaries must overcome in order to reach unreached people groups: geography, culture, language, religion, tradition, caste, and class are the major ones. But of all the obstacles missionaries face, language is often the greatest. One reason why the gospel spread so quickly throughout the Roman Empire is that the missionaries were able to use Greek and/or Latin as bridge languages to communicate with people who spoke different mother tongues from the Jews.

“Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.” John 19:19-20

In regions where literacy rates are low (often in the more remote villages and tribal areas) church planters have learned from experience that it is essential to be able to explain and communicate the Gospel through songs, stories, worship, and prayers in the mother tongue of the people involved. Worship in the common heart language of the people makes it accessible and relevant to all members of the community. Worship is the foundational tool that allows everyone to participate in a new church’s formation. So, overcoming the language barrier makes it imperative that indigenous pastors, evangelists, and lay leaders who are intimate with the language and dialect of the native population, be trained quickly and effectively and then sent out to reach the village areas.

There are approximately 6,000 languages and approximately 39,000 dialects in the world today. Fortunately, for American missionaries today, the English language serves as a bridge language in many places around the world; it was much the same for the first century missionaries to the Roman world where the Greek language served as a bridge language. English is useful for training indigenous workers with basic language skills. They can quickly take what has been learned in English and convert it to the language of the local population they are trying to reach in a much more effective way than a foreign missionary still struggling with a totally unfamiliar language or dialect.

2. **Evangelism Has Familial Implications**

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

From the beginning, Paul and the other missionaries recognized the strong cultural and social connections that bound families together. Both Jewish and Gentile families were tightly wrapped around solid parental leadership. Several verses in Acts describe how churches met in the homes of believers – especially when the head of that household was the first in the family to be saved. In Acts chapter 10, Cornelius was waiting for Peter and his companions to arrive at his household. His relatives and close friends had gathered there on Cornelius’ instructions so when they heard the Gospel from Peter and the Holy Spirit fell, the entire household was saved. Cornelius’s household quickly became a gathering place for Gentile believers in that village.

The apostle Paul had similar experiences when he arrived in Macedonia. His first Gentile convert in Philippi was the merchant, Lydia.

“And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, ‘If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.’ So she persuaded us.” **Acts 16:15**

“Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.” **Acts 16:32-34**

Centuries after Acts was written, the methodology of missionaries changed. Instead of going out and meeting in homes, foreign missionaries often stayed within their compounds. The emphasis of their work was to encourage nonbelievers from the surrounding villages to come to their church, school, or hospital where they would hear the gospel and hopefully believe, become baptized, and join the church “family”. When that strategy is applied, the institution of the church is essentially attempting to take over as the center of family life. If that happens, it will make it impossible to initiate a church planting movement. Just like the book of Acts describes, modern Church Planting Movements depend upon the natural structures of family

relationships within the culture to draw new believers into a community of faith. In many cases these churches will begin with family units that are led by the family’s head but will quickly grow as more family units are added to that overall community. Building church structures, schools, hospitals, etc. have their place and time, but they will slow the advance of the gospel into unreached areas when they take priority over planting new churches (communities of faith). Paul’s letters reveal the fruit of his church planting strategy:

“Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ.” **Romans 16:5**
(Note also 16:10, 11)

“The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.” **1 Corinthians 16:19**

In those cultures where family ties are strong, church planting movements will find a natural connection between the gospel’s declarations of adoption into God’s family. Instead of preaching conversion from one belief to another, Christians are adopted into God’s family and become part of a larger community of believers in Jesus Christ for salvation. When we read verses like the following, we begin to see the purpose for salvation in Christ Jesus being for our adoption into His family for all eternity:

“But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father!’ Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” **Galatians 4:4-7**

“For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father.’” **Romans 8:15**

“...having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will...” **Ephesians 1:5**

“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named...” **Ephesians 3:14-15**

“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs –heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.” **Romans 8:14-17**

3. Rapid Incorporation of New Christians Into The Life and Ministry of the Church

“Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.’

And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’

Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.” **Acts 2:37-42**

“Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?’ Then Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ And he answered and said, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.” **Acts 8:35-38**

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the

Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.

“Then Peter answered, ‘Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?’ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.” **Acts 10:44-48**

“And he brought them out and said, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ So they said, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.’

Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.” **Acts 16:30-34**

Beginning at Pentecost and carrying on through the Book of Acts, the rite of baptism was never delayed by lengthy discipleship requirements; once a person believed, they were almost always baptized at the same time. However, in some places in the world today, baptism is a much more complicated issue due to societal restraints, government interference, and religious intolerance that punishes Christians. In those places the decision to be baptized is not something to be taken lightly. Pastors, priests, and ordained ministers will take time with the new believers to make sure they fully understand their faith before agreeing to baptize them.

“And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.’ Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized. So when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.

Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. Then all who heard were amazed, and said, ‘Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?’

But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this Jesus is the Christ.” **Acts 9:17-22**

Paul was an extraordinary new believer. His training as a Rabbi and knowledge of God’s word were immediately transformed by the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. His personal encounter with Jesus Christ as the living God at first blinded him and then removed the spiritual scales over his eyes as surely as the physical scales were also removed. The time Saul spent with the disciples in Damascus rounded out his understanding of what he had experienced and strengthened his faith. In a very short time, Paul was able to stun and amaze the non-believing Jews in Damascus. And as the book of Acts unfolds, we see that before long, Paul had confounded opponents of the gospel he preached from one end of the Roman world to the other.

“And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.’ So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.” **Acts 14:21-23**

“Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.

And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, ‘If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.’ So she persuaded us.” **Acts 16:14-15**

“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you...” **Titus 1:5**

Because the rapid growth of Church Planting Movements often occurs among people groups with little or no knowledge of the kingdom of heaven that Jesus preached, Bible teaching often precedes full conversion. But once a person is ready to be baptized and commit themselves to Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior, nothing should prevent them from being fully incorporated into the life of the church. Those who have little or no understanding of

Christianity need to be taught and disciplined along the way, but if they are truly born again and the witness of the Holy Spirit is upon their character and conduct, then there is no reason to hold them back from exercising any of the gifts of the Spirit in leadership or evangelism that the Lord chooses to give them.

"The greatest missionary is the Bible in the mother tongue. It needs no furlough and is never considered a foreigner." – William Cameron Towns

Paul never allowed himself to be slowed down by remaining too long in one place discipling, training, and mentoring believers. His church planting mission required him to keep moving forward and not going over the same ground time and time again. It was rare for Paul to revisit the same place twice once new believers were there. The only time Paul revisited a place or sent one of his emissaries to a place where he had planted a church was when he was forced by circumstances to move on too soon and felt that the believers in that place needed more encouragement or teaching. (Note Acts 15:36; 1 Thessalonians 2:17 – 3:5).

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.” **Ephesians 4:11-16**

“Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” **1 Timothy 4:12**

It should never be forgotten that the one who calls and qualifies believers for ministry in the church is the Holy Spirit. God has given his church the enormous responsibility to carry on His vision and mission to make disciples

of every nation. This must involve every member of the church if it is to be fulfilled. Paul and the other early missionaries were not hesitant to appoint leaders in the churches they planted. As the Holy Spirit directed them, they appointed preachers, teachers, administrators, and those with various spiritual gifts to help with the task of training those who could help build the momentum of the church. “... If we had to fulfill this command as individuals, we might as well give up without trying—it would be impossible. But God calls us as members of his body. Some of us can do one task; some can do another. Together we can obey God more fully than any of us could alone. It is a human tendency to overestimate what we can do by ourselves and to underestimate what we can do as a group. But as the body of Christ, we can accomplish more together than we would dream possible working by ourselves. Working together, the church can express the fullness of Christ.” (*Life Application Study Bible* Note for Eph. 4:12-13).

“Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.” **Acts 18:24-26**

In a CPM, the discipling of new believers begins immediately upon baptism. New disciples (not converts) are the fruit of a Church Planting Movement. Converts do not reproduce; only disciples reproduce. Converts consider joining the church as their sole responsibility. However, disciples understand that they are expected to become witnesses from the beginning. Converts can be cajoled, sweet-talked, persuaded, coaxed, or enticed with promises of rewards for bringing others to church, but true disciples need no such tactics. Disciples of Jesus Christ will immediately go out and seek new disciples; they will naturally disciple others encourage them to come and join them in planting other churches. In order to keep the Church Planting Movement focused on growing outward, CPM-oriented missionaries typically encourage new believers to help start new churches, instead of simply adding more numbers to existing congregations. (see HANDOUT “Missionaries should prioritize those activities that most directly achieve their mission”)

4. Passion and Fearlessness

Luke’s book of Acts is filled with stories of the passion and bold actions of the early disciples of their risen Lord and Savior. Whether it was in front of the Jewish authorities in Jerusalem (Acts 4:13-14), or Paul’s proclamation of Jesus as Lord, beginning in Damascus and eventually reaching to the ends of the Empire (Acts 9:27-31; 14:1-3; 19:8; Ephesians 6:18-20) the disciples prayed for and received the power to speak God’s word with all boldness (Acts 4:28-31).

One short passage (Acts 9:27-31) reveals the result of a bold and uncompromising witness for Jesus Christ that is almost universally discovered. From the beginning, Paul boldness to preach the Gospel stirred up controversy – with the Jews first and then with the Gentiles. Still, Paul had the sensitivity to know when his presence was being detrimental to the advancement of the Gospel. Leaders of CPMs should also understand that their bold witness will often stir up opposition. If the evangelist/missionary becomes the focus of hostility and impairs the reception of the gospel, then they should humbly step aside and let others take his/her place.

Another important aspect of the CPMs in the book of Acts is that these early disciples did not seek more power to perform more signs and wonders but concentrated their prayers to receive more courage to preach the gospel without fear or compromise. They trusted God to bear witness to His word and to grant (allow or permit) signs and wonders to be done (Acts 14:3). Although many evangelists desire more power to perform a miracle that is able to convince the world that Jesus is Lord, the evidence is that there are always those who will remain unconvinced. There are times when God gives certain people the power to do great things, but the Holy Spirit never gives His gifts to anyone who will use that gift to glorify themselves. The ability to perform miracles remains with the Holy Spirit; the human being is the instrument through which the Holy Spirit works. “God gave these men power to do great wonders as confirmation of the message of grace, but people were still divided. Don’t spend your time and energy wishing for miracles. Sow your seeds of the Good News on the best ground you can find in the best way you can, and leave the convincing to the Holy Spirit.”

Life Application Study Bible

“And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God.”
Acts 19:8

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.” **Ephesians 6:10**

“...praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints – and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.” **Ephesians 6:18-20**

THE GREAT COMMISSION

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. **Matthew 28:19-20**

“And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.’” **Mark 16:15-18**

Those who are content to be only converts will fail to understand the true purpose for which they have been saved. For the convert, it is all about them: Jesus died for them, and it is His desire for them to live happy, carefree lives – all they have to do is go to church on Sundays and pay their tithes, and God will do everything else. However, that is not at all what this Christian life is all about. Jesus died so that we might become His disciples; and being a disciple, we must obey the Master’s commission to “Go and make disciples of all nations...”

"I have but one passion: It is He, it is He alone. The world is the field and the field is the world; and henceforth that country shall be my home where I can be most used in winning souls for Christ." – Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf

Disciples will truly share the passion of their Lord for the lost and will be motivated by the same sense of urgency that attests to the Lord’s desire that all are saved. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten

Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life...” (John 3:16).

Those who follow in the Master’s footsteps and seek to obey His Great Commission must exhibit the same boldness in the face of opposition as Paul who declared to his young disciple Timothy, “...for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control” (2 Timothy 1:7). The boldness necessary to fuel a CPM may invite opposition and persecution, but a spirit of timidity or fear will quench it. However, God will not abandon His church and will give grace to those who put their trust in him (Joshua 1:6 and Acts 18:9-11).

Missions is not about “What can I spare?” The question is “What’s it going to take?” Risk. Abandon. Sacrifice. Radical dependence on Christ. Everything. Are you passionately committed to God’s glory among all peoples? Asia Link Worker

5. A price to pay to become a Christian.

“But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake.” **Luke 21:12-17**

Shortly before His arrest and crucifixion, Jesus warned His disciples, “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you” (**John 15:18-19**). At the same time, Jesus encouraged them, “Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say” (**Luke 12:11-12**).

In many ways, the book of Acts is a record of the beginning of the fulfillment of Jesus’ prophecies concerning the treatment of His apostles, prophets, evangelists, and missionaries. As Acts traces the advancement of the gospel by

Paul and the other missionaries to the Roman world, it also records the persecution that followed in their footsteps:

“And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.” **Acts 5:40**

"But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. But they shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit." **Acts 13:50-52**

“Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods... But Paul said to them, ‘They have beaten us openly, uncondemned Romans, and have thrown us into prison. And now do they put us out secretly? No indeed! Let them come themselves and get us out.’” **Acts 16:22, 37**

“Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things.” **Acts 18:17**

“Now when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, crying out, ‘Men of Israel, help! This is the man who teaches all men everywhere against the people, the law, and this place; and furthermore he also brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.’ (For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.) And all the city was disturbed; and the people ran together, seized Paul, and dragged him out of the temple; and immediately the doors were shut. Now as they were seeking to kill him, news came to the commander of the garrison that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. He immediately took soldiers and centurions and ran down to them. And when they saw the commander and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. Then the commander came near and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and he asked who he was and what he had done.” **Acts 21:27-33**

Paul and the other Apostles mentioned in their letters that Christians should expect to pay a price for following Jesus. Paul never reveled in his sufferings for Christ (2 Corinthians 11:24-28), but spoke of his tribulations only in order to encourage others to keep the faith in their various trials:

“We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer...” **2 Thessalonians 1:3-5**

There is no doubt that Christians are a persecuted minority in many places around the world (www.persecution.org); for the most part, they are left alone as long as they stay to themselves, but once they act upon the Lord’s command to preach the Gospel and make disciples, trouble will follow. As the day of the Lord’s return draws near, the persecution will only increase. So-called, anti-conversion laws against Christians are on the increase in many countries where Christians are a minority; and missionaries who openly preach the Gospel in these countries are threatened with prison or deportation.

“Church Planting Movements often emerge in difficult settings where conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ is not a popular or socially advantageous thing to do.” David Garrison

From the beginning, preaching the gospel has led to severe persecution or even death for countless Christians, but the church has survived and grown for 2,000 years and will remain until the Lord’s Second Coming. Around the world, the saying, “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church” has been proven right.

In the face of daily opposition, believers can find strong encouragement from the examples of Paul and the other Apostles in Acts. The Apostles were the first Christian martyrs and after them came countless missionaries who with little or no recognition, gave their lives and fortunes for the sake of the Gospel. Church Planting Movements will have to proceed in the face of this kind of persecution; and believers will have to be taught that they will have to pay a personal price and sacrifice their time, talents, and treasure if the kingdom of God is going to continue to advance and reach the unreached people groups around the world until the Lord’s return. But the way of the cross tends to screen out the

uncommitted (Matt. 13:21) and ensures that a highly dedicated group of disciples are following the Lord of the harvest into the mission fields around the world. So if they share the Lord’s Vision and Mission, they will also joyfully share in His sufferings; but if they share in His sufferings, they will also share in His glory at the end of the Age.

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 8:35-39

"Some wish to live within the sound of a chapel bell; I wish to run a rescue mission within a yard of hell." – C.T. Studd

LESSON EIGHT QUESTIONS

1. Worship in the “heart language” is essential for the gospel to be fully incorporated into the life of the unreached people group. Can English serve a role? If so, what role can it play?
2. In what ways do Church Planting Movements depend upon the natural structures of family relationships within the culture to draw new believers into a community of faith?
3. Is it important is it to incorporate new Christians into the life and ministry of the church in CPMs? Why?
4. Explain the importance of passion and fearlessness for a successful CPM.
5. In many places around the world there is a price to pay for being a Christian. Should we confront the subject of suffering and the Christian in CPMs?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101-9

DISCIPLES MAKING DISCIPLES

A Church Planting Movement Is Extended (Part Two)

In Lesson 8, we studied the first five of the **Ten Common Factors** found in the church planting movements described in the book of Acts. In this lesson we will complete our study of these factors which are identified by David Garrison in his descriptions of CPMs around the world today. Each of these factors from the book of Acts is a prototype for all successful CPMs.

6. Perceived Leadership Crisis or Spiritual Vacuum in Society

There is no time in a study like this one to go into detail about the historical background of Acts. It is enough to point out that there were three competing forces that controlled the region where Jesus was born and where the church began: the local religious leaders (Jewish or Pagan), the Greek Hellenists that dominated Western philosophy, arts, and sciences, and the Roman civil authorities who controlled the economic and political systems. The clashes between these three competing worldviews kept the local populations in a constant state of uncertainty as to who controlled their destinies and who they needed to fear the most.

Jesus warned his disciples, “You will be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles” (Matthew 10:18). And in John 19:10-16 we see the conflicts between Jewish and Gentile rulers swirling around Jesus during the trials that led to His crucifixion.

“Then Pilate said to Him, ‘Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?’

Jesus answered, ‘You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.’

From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, ‘If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.’

When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, ‘Behold your King!’ But they cried out, ‘Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!’ Pilate said to them, ‘Shall I crucify your King?’ The chief priests answered, ‘We have no king but Caesar!’ Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus and led Him away.” **John 19:10-16**

Paul was often in the eye of the storm between Hellenist, Roman, and Jewish schools of thought. The Romans were primarily concerned with civil law and order and stayed out of religious arguments unless they spilled over into the streets and threatened the general peace. Paul’s encounter with the philosophers of Athens (the focal point in the ancient world for all things Greek) is recorded in Acts 17:16-21. The ancient world was adrift in a sea of competing and often contradictory ideas. The Gospel Paul and the other apostles preached threatened to turn that world upside down by proclaiming Jesus Christ as the way, truth, and life; and by proclaiming the resurrection as proof of that life.

Social, political, and religious conflicts followed Paul on his missionary journeys from Damascus (Acts 9:23), to Jerusalem (Acts 9:29), and onward to Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13:50), Iconium (Acts 14:5), Lystra (Acts 14:19), Thessalonica (Acts 17:5), Berea (Acts 17:13), Corinth (Acts 18:12), and back to Jerusalem where he was arrested and placed under Roman guard for his own protection (Acts 22:25-29). The conflicts that followed Paul reflected the deep enmity the Jews felt for the Gospel of salvation in Christ alone, along with fear and suspicion that Pagans often felt toward any idea that threatened to overturn their belief systems.

“And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, ‘Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?’ When the centurion heard that, he went and told the commander, saying, ‘Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman.’ Then the commander came and said to him, ‘Tell me, are you a Roman?’ He said, ‘Yes.’ The commander answered, ‘With a large sum I obtained this citizenship.’ And Paul said, ‘But I was born a citizen.’ Then immediately those who were about to examine him withdrew from him; and the commander was also

afraid after he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.” **Acts 22:25-29**

But in the end, Paul would remind his young protégé to encourage the church to “be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men” (Titus 3:1-2).

"Unless there is the element of extreme risk in our exploits for God, there is no need for faith". –Hudson Taylor

Our modern world has similar conflicts between religious, secular, and cultural interests that compete for peoples’ loyalties and attentions. Globalization, materialism, and postmodern skepticism pose a threat not only to modern-day Christians but are creating societal disintegration and destabilization among the general populations in many nations around the world. Many developing nations are experiencing an increasing generational gap between the modern, upwardly mobile and educated classes and the previous generations that adhere to traditional values and ways of doing things. Young people who are fortunate enough to find work with Internet-connected, highly technical, or global commercial hubs of our globalized societies are able to earn incomes and live lifestyles that far outstrip their parents’ mode of living. Modern youths are much more independent and less tied to traditions than their parents’ generation. At the same time, in developing nations there is an increasing social and material gap between those who live in rural farming villages and those who can find jobs in one of the world’s major metropolises.

"God is pursuing with omnipotent passion a worldwide purpose of gathering joyful worshipers for Himself from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. He has an inexhaustible enthusiasm for the supremacy of His name among the nations. Therefore, let us bring our affections into line with His, and, for the sake of His name, let us renounce the quest for worldly comforts and join His global purpose."
– John Piper

With the arrival of the “Information Age” which is now being driven by Artificial Intelligence, the educated classes are wired into the World Wide Web. People are saturated with images of money, sex, and power from around the world; and many want to have it all for themselves as well. Advertisers

beat their drums 24-7 to convince the youth market that if they drive this vehicle, or wear this perfume, that cologne, wear certain clothes, or use this or that product they will be seen as beautiful, powerful, and irresistible to the opposite sex. The world’s major film industries are copying those in the West by pushing the limits of what is acceptable behavior for their young audiences – many of whom are turning away in droves from traditional religious values that shaped their parents’ generation. Pop music videos are filled with images of young women gyrating and pumping their bodies in sexually provocative poses, while the male stars all project images of virility and potency. All of it is unrealistic, but as has been proven so true in the West: sex sells – and it sells very well everywhere.

“Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.” **James 4:1-3**

While all of this is going on, politicians and corporate leaders around the world are rife with corruption and inefficiency. Every week a new scandal of some kind is being reported in one of the world’s newspapers as the rich and powerful use any means necessary to gain more money and power for themselves. In developing nations people often suffer with poor infrastructures run by inefficient and corrupt officials; the cities are choked by traffic and uncollected waste; they cannot get a good supply pure drinking water or electricity. Access to good, affordable healthcare is limited in many of the same places where horrible sanitation and hygienic conditions leave numerous people sick and suffering from all kinds of preventable diseases. Every election the politicians promise improvements, and after every election, conditions remain unchanged. The world’s social safety nets are in tatters as millions of the very old and very young are left in the streets helpless and defenseless. Social reformers have tried for centuries to bring an end to this human suffering, but the divisions between rich and poor, the powerful and powerless, remain.

All of this adds up to a world where caste, class, religion, or cultural conflicts can break out at any time or any place. The world today is very much like the world when the gospel was introduced some 2,000 years ago. In the

Roman Empire, the fragile peace between different and competing groups was often shattered by communal violence or war as populations fought for control of the wealthy trade routes that brought the food and goods necessary to maintain their Empires. Today, nations fight over the world’s limited resources – resources that are stretched to the limit to meet the growing needs of an explosive global population.

As it was in the days of Rome, it is the same today: the purity of the Gospel message offers people the greatest hope to overcome today and in the future. Jesus Christ, the Prince of peace, reminded His followers that, “In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33b).

The truth is that we are a fallen race, living in a fallen world. Therefore, nothing we can do will ever make this world the paradise it was intended to be. The cross of Christ is the only hope for mankind (John 3:16). “And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.” (**Matthew 24:12-14**).

7. On-the-job Training for Church Leadership

There is no evidence that Paul or any of the other Apostles insisted that leaders should have special training before they were appointed to a position of leadership. The qualifications the Apostles looked for in leaders had nothing to do with any formal religious training (Acts 4:13). Acts 1:21-26 describes the selection of two men to replace the fallen Judas Iscariot: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. Their qualifications were that they had accompanied the apostles “all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us.” Rather than examine the credentials of these candidates, they prayed. They trusted the Lord to show them which of the two He had chosen for ministry and apostleship. Then they cast their lots to see which one the Lord chose (Note: Keep in mind that this decision was made before the Holy Spirit empowered the church at Pentecost. Since that day, the church has been equipped with the spiritual gifts and does not need devices like drawing lots to make such decisions.)

The practice of allowing the Lord to choose elders in the churches they had founded continued as the church grew and expanded. “So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed...” (Acts 14:23). However, this

practice did not exclude the need to carefully teach them how to correctly handle the Scriptures and prepare them for leadership by modeling the Christlike leadership they needed to follow. John-Mark had failed to complete his first missionary journey with Paul and Barnabas. And although it created a difference of opinion between the two leaders, Barnabas was willing to take a chance and allow Mark to accompany him on his second mission, while Paul chose Silas to join him (Acts 15:36-41). Later on, Paul was to choose another young man to disciple, named Timothy (Acts 16:1-3). We know from some of Paul's other letters – and especially from his letters addressed to Timothy – that this disciple grew under Paul's tutelage and became someone Paul could rely upon. Later, Timothy became one of the important leaders of the early church.

“Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.” 1 Timothy 5:17

Men were not the only ones chosen for leadership. Lydia was a person of influence and became a leader of the house church founded by Paul on his first mission to Macedonia (Acts 16:14-15, 40). The husband-and-wife team of Aquila and Priscilla became important leaders trained by Paul. Paul met them in Corinth and took them to Ephesus with him; Paul left them there in positions of authority while he continued his journey (Acts 18:2, 18-19). After Paul departed, another missionary from Alexandria “an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures,” arrived in Ephesus. When Aquila and Priscilla heard Apollos, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.” Later, they sent Apollos on his way to Achaia with instructions for the disciples there to receive him (Acts 18:24-28).

Paul's third journey may have been launched by the need to correct misunderstandings that were disturbing the unity of some in the churches Paul planted on his first two missionary journeys. Paul hurried north, then west, returning to many of the cities he had previously visited. Because he felt the need to be back in Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost, he stayed on a more direct westward route toward Ephesus on this trip.

By the time Paul was ready to return to Jerusalem, there were appointed elders of the church in Ephesus and all the other churches in Asia Minor Paul founded. Paul testified from Miletus to the elders of the churches that came to meet him there, “You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; how

I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Acts 20:17:21).

The evidence from Acts shows that Paul and the other Apostles relied upon the Holy Spirit for the appointment of leaders; Paul acknowledged as much when addressing the elders at Miletus: “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.” (Acts 20:28).

Bro Bakht Singh, the founder of a church planting movement in India that has birthed some 10,000 churches in India and around the world, never made a Seminary education a requirement for leading one of his churches. He said,

“Do not think it is an easy task to serve God. Some people think that by going to a Bible School they are made ready to serve Him. Some people think that by carrying a Bible under the arm they can serve Him. You cannot serve God that way. There is no such short cut. The holy anointing oil was a symbol of the kind of service that God wants. God has made a divine plan by which all of us can serve Him acceptably with reverence and godly fear, for service which is thus acceptable to God, there must be the preparation which He has appointed.” (God's Dwelling Place)

Although the primary qualification for leadership looked for by the Apostles was the Holy Spirit's anointing and choice, it did not mean that training in the Word and in leadership skills are unnecessary. In fact, the rapid increase in the number of churches in a CPM makes effective leadership training – including Bible training – even more critical if the movement is going to be sustained over the long-term. Village pastors and lay leaders involved in church planting are already involved in full-time ministry. So, even if they had the finances to go to a Seminary, they would have to leave their place of ministry and remain for extended periods of time in one of the urban centers where the Bible colleges and seminaries are located. Very few of these leaders are willing to leave their congregations behind without any pastoral care. In addition to that, if church leaders left their churches for extended periods of time for theological training, the momentum of the movement would dissipate.

The anointing of the Holy Spirit for ministry must remain of primary importance for church leadership in CPMs. However, ongoing theological and leadership training is still a vital component of church planting. The training

of new pastors and lay leaders that are teaching and preaching in the villages must not be overlooked. The most effective way to provide training for these workers is to bring the training as close to them as possible. Short-term training modules in the Scriptures and in leadership that are specifically designed to meet the needs of village pastors (not Seminary degrees) have proven to be the most powerful tools to strengthen those who are on the frontlines of church planting. On-the-job training with an emphasis on practical learning interspersed with ongoing ministry has proven to be the best model for Church Planting Movements because they will not impede the most important tasks of evangelism, church planting and pastoral leadership that are essential to the growth and rapid progress of a village Church Planting Movement.

“The nations are not gathered in automatically. If God has promised to bless ‘all the families of the earth,’ he has promised to do so ‘through Abraham's seed’ (Genesis 12:3, 22:18). Now we are Abraham's seed by faith, and the earth's families will be blessed only if we go to them with the gospel. That is God's plain purpose.” – John R.W. Stott

8. Leadership Authority is Decentralized

David Garrison's report on church planting movements concluded that denominations and organized church administrations tend to impose top-down, hierarchical authority and bureaucratic decision-making. When they do, they are unable to cope with the independence and dynamism of those leaders who spearhead genuine CPMs. The Holy Spirit teaches us in Acts that in order to succeed, every cell or house church leader engaged in a CPM must have the freedom and authority necessary to put into motion whatever needs to be done in terms of evangelism, ministry, and new church planting without having to stop and wait for the approval from a church authority who is not intimately involved on the local level.

As we have already seen, almost from the beginning, Paul did not hesitate to appoint leaders in the churches he planted; and with prayer and fasting committed them to the Lord (Acts 14:23). It is clear from verses like Acts 15:36-41 that Paul and Barnabas were able to maintain their independence from each other and make their own decisions about how best to proceed on their missions.

We can see how the decision of the organized church structure of the early church (Acts 15) almost brought the Church Planting Movements among the

Gentiles to an end. Paul and the other missionaries had started a movement which included Gentiles on his First Missionary Journey (Acts 13 – 14). If Paul and Barnabas had stopped moving forward on their first missionary journey and waited for the leaders in Jerusalem to make up their minds, their mission would have stalled. After the missionaries returned from their first trip, if the counsel at Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-29) had not listened to the Holy Spirit and imposed a process that demanded the Gentiles become circumcised Jews according to their religious laws, then the movement would have stopped in its tracks because Gentiles would have hesitated from believing in Jesus Christ for salvation if they had to become circumcised Jews first. But the Holy Spirit spoke; the counsel wisely obeyed, and the movement continued to spread rapidly throughout the world.

The Life Application Study Bible note on the Introduction to Titus states the negative effects a spiritual leadership vacuum has on the forward progress of the church:

“The vacuum produced when a strong leader departs can devastate a movement, organization, or institution. Having been dependent on his or her skill, style, and personality, associates and subordinates flounder or vie for control. Soon efficiency and vitality are lost, and decline and demise follow. Often this pattern is repeated in churches. A great speaker or teacher gathers a following, and soon a church is flourishing. It is alive, vital, and effective. Lives are being changed and people led into the Kingdom. But when this person leaves or dies, with him or her goes the drive and the heart of the organization.”

We see this process happening over and over again when a strong leader of a movement goes to be with the Lord and those he left behind engage in a power struggle for control over the organization the leader started. Once the leaders' focus of the ministry shifts from advancing the kingdom of God to building their own kingdoms, the spiritual life and strength of the movement will fade away and it will fall apart.

As Paul and the other missionaries pushed ahead, they did not ignore the leaders in churches that were planted, but stayed in contact with them, answering any questions they had and encouraging them to live holy lives worthy of their calling (Eph. 4:1; 2 Thess. 1:11). In Lystra, Paul met a young disciple named Timothy and was impressed enough with him to invite him to accompany him (Acts 16:1-3). After crossing over from Asia to Europe, Paul quickly appointed Lydia, a new believer, to start a house church (Acts 16:14-15, 40). Later, Paul chose Priscilla and Aquila to join him and made them leaders in Ephesus (Acts 18:2, 18-19; 18:24-28). These leaders were not

treated as Paul’s inferiors but were treated as equals – co-laborers with Christ for the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 6:1; 1 Thess. 1:5-8). On his final journey back to Jerusalem, Paul called the elders of the churches he planted to encourage them to carry on without his direct supervision (Acts 20:17-21). Paul wrote to the believers in Thessalonica, “Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing. And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11-13).

“I wasn’t God’s first choice for what I’ve done for China. I don’t know who it was. It must have been a man—a well-educated man. I don’t know what happened. Perhaps he died. Perhaps he wasn’t willing. And God looked down... and saw Gladys Aylward. And God said, ‘Well, she’s willing.’” – Gladys Aylward

9. Outsiders keep a low profile

On Paul’s second missionary journey, he and Silas met increased opposition from the Jews who resented Paul’s work among the Gentiles. Acts 17:1-15 describes the disturbances Paul’s presence caused in Thessalonica and Berea. At one point, it was necessary for Paul to separate himself from his companions so that the gospel could be peacefully preached in those cities. Acts 19:28-31 describes the riot the Christian missionaries caused in Ephesus. Paul wanted to address the crowds personally: “And when Paul wanted to go in to the people, the disciples would not allow him” (Acts 19:30) believing his prominent position would only make things worse. “After the uproar had ceased, Paul called the disciples to himself, embraced them, and departed to go to Macedonia” (Acts 20:1).

Many countries in the world today are particularly sensitive to the issue of foreign missionaries’ involvement in any proselytizing activities in their country. Things have changed dramatically since the middle of the 20th century when Americans were the envy of the world. Missionaries from the USA were welcomed in most of the world. Today, the United States is viewed in a totally different negative light. In many nations of the world today, Western missionaries are no longer welcome. In these countries it is always especially important for missionaries involved in evangelism and Church Planting Movements to keep a low personal profile. Paul never sought fame and did not want to be known everywhere he went. It is essential at this time

that churches in hostile nations minimize foreignness and allow indigenous leaders to take front-and-center in CPMs.

“We are debtors to every man to give him the gospel in the same measure in which we have received it” – P.F. Bresee, founder of the Church of the Nazarene

In those areas of the world that have a long history of foreign missionary involvement, but little progress towards completing the Great Commission, it is past time for foreign missionaries to allow the local leadership to take charge. The church in most of the developing nations of the world is more than capable at this time to send out indigenous missionaries from their flocks and draw in new believers – they may want, but do not need the money that churches in wealthy Christian nations can provide. In fact, too often the money that foreign missionary organizations provide has a corrupting influence and can create jealousy and infighting between indigenous “have” and “have not” churches.

Foreign missionaries can still provide an essential support role by helping to “initiate and nurture” the movement; they can provide Bibles and help make the latest study materials available; and they work behind the scenes to help teach and mentor new pastors and lay leaders. Missionaries can also help by conducting leadership and discipleship training for the village pastors, evangelists, and lay leaders. But once the missionary becomes a lightning rod for persecution or dissent, they must consider moving on quickly. It is important to always keep in mind the fact that for a CPM to be successful it must be self-supporting and self-sustaining, or it will quickly fall apart.

10. Missionaries Suffer

“From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness – besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation? If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity.

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.” 2 Corinthians 11:24-33

This passage of Scripture recounts much of what Paul personally suffered on his missionary journeys. Add to this verse the verses from point 5 above (“A price to pay to become a Christian”) and ask yourself if those who are fully engaged in a CPM not expect to pay a price for leading a movement that will cause many become a Christian?

"If missions languish, it is because the whole life of godliness is feeble. The command to go everywhere and preach to everybody is not obeyed until the will is lost by self-surrender in the will of God. Living, praying, giving and going will always be found together." – Arthur T. Pierson

Anyone who goes as a missionary to any of the unreached people groups in this world must be prepared to suffer. Unless you intend to live in a secluded, wealthy area of one of world’s major cities where Christians are at least tolerated, life on the mission field is far from easy by any Western standards. However, few missionaries have that kind of desire, and even if they did, if their heart is right and they are truly on mission with God, they will want to live much closer to way the people live that they have come to serve.

Very few missionaries are willing to talk much about the hardships of the life they have chosen; it is just part of what they have signed up for (Paul considered it “foolishness” to even talk about it). Only a fool would leave their life behind in America or some other Western country, and live a missionary’s life in some remote, hostile place without seriously counting the cost of what that decision means. But the truth is – and this truth is rarely preached from American pulpits – there is a high, high cost for anyone who wants to follow Jesus, and especially for those who give their lives totally to the one of the mission fields where most of the unreached live. But Paul’s words to the

church at Corinth was a reminder that living the life of a follower of Christ is not the way of wealth and fame in this world:

“For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. And our hope for you is steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation.” 2 Corinthians 1:5-7

Surely, there are risks for being a missionary; and those risks vary from country to country depending upon the political, economic, social, and religious conditions of each country. But no matter who you are, or where you are from the same high cost is to be paid if you are going to live like a true disciple of Jesus Christ. Any gospel that does not mention the cost involved in following Jesus is an incomplete and inadequate Gospel. An inadequate Gospel message is one that contains absolutely no explanation of the radical nature of conversion and the whole life change that must follow; and has no understanding conveyed to those present that their decision to ask Jesus to forgive them of their sins means total submission to Him as the Lord of their lives (1 Corinthians 16:19-20).

Certainly, our suffering should not be the result of our own self-destructive behavior, or foolish decisions. It is important to seek wise counsel and spiritual confirmation before jumping onto a plane and heading to a remote mission field for what we think will be an exciting “missionary adventure.” The decision should be weighed carefully for not only how it will affect us, but also how it will affect others who are close to us. The enemy will not allow anyone to enter his strongholds and set captives free without a fight; missionaries must engage in some serious spiritual warfare before, during, and after they enter the enemy’s spiritual territory. Paul knew this lesson well and wrote to the Ephesians to put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20) because “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

“And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation, but as it is written: ‘To whom He was not announced, they shall see; And those who have not heard shall understand.’” Romans 15:20-21

LESSON NINE QUESTIONS

1. Think about the social, political, and religious conflicts that formed the historical background of the book of Acts. How can the perceived leadership crisis or spiritual vacuum in a society contribute to the advance of the gospel?
2. How does on-the-job training for Christian leaders affect CPMs?
3. How does a decentralized leadership contribute to the rapid growth of a CPM?
4. When, where, and why is it best for foreign leadership to take a low profile in modern CPMs?
5. Should missionaries expect to suffer when they go out on the mission field? Why?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101-10

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS: THE APOSTLE PAUL’S MISSIONARY STRATEGY (PART ONE)

THE BOOK OF ACTS AND MODERN CPMS

“We have no evidence that Paul and Barnabas sat down and developed a detailed strategy before departing on their first missionary journey. However, it is clear that over time Paul developed a pattern of ministry that could be described as a strategy. In other words, he developed a set of principles that characterized his ministry.

“This is hardly surprising. Most veteran missionaries develop a pattern that they employ in their work. Those who study the pattern would describe it as a strategy, even though the missionary probably did not begin with that pattern in mind.” *Developing a Strategy for Missions*, © 2013, John Mark Terry and J.D. Payne, pub. Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, p.55

Ten Applications from The Book of Acts for Modern CPMS

David Garrison said, “Church Planting Movements are sovereign acts of God, but in His sovereign grace and mercy He has chosen to partner with us.” God gives His disciples the freedom and creativity to fulfill the mission He gave us. When we model the same leadership style as our Lord Jesus, then we will give the same freedom to those we assign to go and preach the Word and plant churches. When we approach the Book of Acts not as ancient church history but as a handbook for contemporary church planters, then, as David Garrison noted, ten practical helps for the modern missionary will emerge from its pages and when applied, they will help the modern-day missionary initiate and nurture a genuine CPM strategy. (See HANDOUT “Developing a Strategy for an Effective Missions Program”)

In this lesson we will examine the first five of these of these helps; in the following lesson we will examine the last five.

1. Pursue a CPM Orientation from the Beginning

“Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.” **Acts 9:31**

A Church Planting Movement does not happen on its own; it is first and foremost an act of the Holy Spirit. The pastor, evangelist, or lay leader must begin to move in that same direction as the Holy Spirit from the day their work begins. The vision and mission of being a church planting church should start with the core group of believers who are taught that their responsibility as followers of Jesus Christ is to model a Church planting church and reproduce itself.

In Paul’s letters, we see evidence of this model (Rom 16:1-5, 23; 1 Cor 1:2; 4:17; 7:17; 16:19; Gal 1:2, 22). Rarely do Christians come to this conclusion themselves, but from the start, the leadership of the church must instill in them the heart for evangelism (seeking and saving the lost); the commitment to be disciples who then go and make other disciples, so that the CPM will grow and multiply. All of this is to the Lord’s glory as those who are lost in sin and darkness come to the light of salvation in Jesus Christ. So that churches will be strengthened in the faith and will increase in number daily (Acts 16:5).

What distinguishes the leadership training of a CPM from traditional methods taught in most seminary colleges is that the training of leaders does not follow a sequential pattern; the training in evangelism, discipleship, church planting, etc. all take place simultaneously while the new leader is already in the field and moving forward. Again, the purpose of Church Planting Movements is rapid, exponential growth. One of the key deficits that slow or stop the forward movement of a CPM is a lack of trained leaders. On-the-job training of those who are called by and anointed by the Holy Spirit to lead is not a terrible thing; it is just different from the more traditional methods. Both methods have their strengths and weaknesses, but the traditional model cannot deliver new leaders fast enough once the CPM is up to speed.

2. Develop and Implement Comprehensive Strategies

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” **Acts 1:8**

In Acts 1:8 Jesus cast the vision for the Gospel of the kingdom to be preached to the world. But it was five years after the empowerment of believers at Pentecost before Barnabas and Saul were sent out from the church at Antioch on

their first missionary journey (Acts 13:2). Once they returned to Antioch, they were able to report “all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts 14:26-27). “Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, ‘Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing.’” (Acts 15:36, 41; 16:5).

When Paul and the others set out on their second journey, they were ready to implement a more comprehensive plan of visiting the churches planted on the first mission to see how they were progressing and to strengthen them however needed. By the end of that second journey, Paul had decided to stay in Corinth for 18 months because the Gentile believers there needed more teaching in the word of God (Acts 18:11). In Acts 18:23, Paul started his third journey with the same intention of strengthening all the disciples he met along the way in the regions of Galatia and Phrygia. Paul traveled to Ephesus on his third journey where he remained for two years, teaching and strengthening believers there, “so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 19:10). Paul’s second and third journeys were motivated by the need to reinforce the gospel message in the places where he first delivered it, and to correct any misunderstandings in the churches he had planted. Paul fulfilled his strategy of making return trips to the churches he founded on previous missions despite the great hardships and opposition he faced (Acts 20:1-3).

By the time Paul was ready to end his third missionary journey, he was able to gather the elders from the church at Ephesus to give them final instructions and encouragement to stay on course with the gospel they heard Paul preach (Acts 20:17-38).

“I am ready to burn out for God. I am ready to endure any hardship, if by any means I might save some. The longing of my heart is to make known my glorious Redeemer to those who have never heard.” – William Burns

Although the disciples heard Jesus casting the vision for His kingdom in the very first chapter of Acts (1:8), as is often true with any new thing God is doing, people are slow to catch up. In the first few chapters of Acts, the Holy Spirit is moving the action forward and it appears that the Apostles are running to catch up. It is not until Acts 13:2 that we see His disciples cooperating with the Holy Spirit and working alongside Him as they move forward. When the missionaries Paul and Barnabas returned from that first journey, they reported to their home church in Antioch how the Holy Spirit was with them and helped them complete their first mission (14:26-27).

When Paul and the others set out on their second journey, it required an adjustment in strategy to take whatever time was necessary to complete the training of new disciples; so, by the time Paul started his third missionary journey, a fully formed Church Planting Movement was in place. Churches were expanding rapidly, and the network of leaders had grown to the point that Paul's direct involvement was no longer needed. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, Paul had implemented a comprehensive strategy that created a movement that had outgrown him. He remained two years in Ephesus and oversaw a movement that was rapidly spreading throughout Asia Minor. Paul then made one final visit to the maturing churches in Macedonia and Greece before leaving them to stand on their own. Before leaving behind the Church Planting Movement that he started and developed on his first three missionary journeys, he called from Ephesus the elders he put in place to lead the movement forward. There he gave them their final instructions and went on his way Jerusalem which would eventually lead him to Rome to stand trial.

In the modern context of Church Planting Movements, Paul's experiences provide the pattern to follow. Like Paul, before anyone is willing to enter the mission field, they must first catch the vision for the Great Commission. Jesus provides the inspiration, and the Holy Spirit empowers and gives direction. If the Holy Spirit is not involved, it is best for the believer to stay at home! As Paul said, "For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect." (1 Corinthians 1:17)

"Believers who have the gospel keep mumbling it over and over to themselves. Meanwhile, millions who have never heard it once fall into the flames of eternal hell without ever hearing the salvation story." – K.P. Yohannan, founder of Gospel for Asia Bible Society

Immediately upon entering the mission field, the worker usually feels a sensation of being overwhelmed with the task ahead of them; and will no doubt feel inadequate for the job (Paul often expressed in his letters his own sense of inadequacy). Take India for example: according to the 2001 census in India, there are approximately 638,000 villages in India. The task of planting one church in each village is beyond the ability of a single missionary – or even a single church – to accomplish. As David Garrison said, "Missionaries who address the scope of all that is required for initiating and nurturing a Church Planting Movement quickly realize that the job is far beyond their personal limitations of time, talent and resources." It requires a deliberate and comprehensive strategy for the worker

to stay "on mission" and complete the task God has given them to complete. Otherwise, they are likely to become overwhelmed, overworked, and get off track never completing what they had been called to do. Paul left the mission fields of Asia and Greece knowing his work was completed and he was clear to move on to the next place where God was calling him: Rome.

In his book on CPMs, David Garrison identified four strong pillars upon which any effective church planting strategy will stand; each of these pillars are found in Paul's church planting strategy. The details of how these four pillars will be shaped depend upon the particulars of the people, place, and resources started with, but they should include: (1) **prayer** (2) **God's word** (3) **evangelism** and (4) **deliberate church planting**.

3. **Evaluate Everything to Achieve the End-vision**

"If the Great Commission is true, our plans are not too big; they are too small." – Pat Morley

When Paul spoke to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:17-38, he stated the end-vision for everything he had been doing on his missionary journeys. In his final words to his elders, Paul revealed how his ministry closely paralleled Jesus' commission to the church found in Matthew 28:19-20. The role of the leader/coordinator of the Church Planting Movement is to keep everyone focused on the vision and mission of the Great Commission, evaluating everything in light of the goals of that mission, and keeping everyone moving forward with that vision. The leader needs to give those under their direction encouragement, support, and help when needed, but NOT micro-manage their ministries. The wrong kind of leader can be a hindrance to a successful Church Planting Movement.

Paul provided the model for the right kind of leader in that he remained independent of them (Acts 20:33-35). At the same time, Paul encouraged them to be independent and build up their own ministries among the people they were shepherding (verses 28 & 32). Paul understood that it would be a mistake to make everything he started with them depend upon him to survive. What would be the end of everything Paul worked so hard to achieve if he made everything depend upon his personal involvement? Paul said of himself, "For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." (1 Corinthians 15:9-10)

Paul warned his leaders that after his departure, others would come along who did not share their passion and commitment to the Great Commission of the Lord. “Therefore, take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.” (Acts 20:28-30)

David Garrison was quick to discover that effective strategy coordinators must be ruthless in evaluating all they do in light of the end-vision, which is creating and sustaining a Church Planting Movement. There are many honorable and well-intentioned ministries that are necessary to take care of needy people: hospitals, schools, programs to feed and clothe the poor widows, and orphans. However, when a CPM is the goal, things that do not or will not lead to the rapid, exponential growth of the Church must take second place. In India, for example, many thousands of children were educated at Christian schools, and thousands more were treated in Christian hospitals. But in the end, these humanitarian efforts did not produce a single Church Planting Movement. Yes, we should show compassion and take care of the less fortunate along the way (Matthew 25:31-46), but if that becomes our focus, church planting will be side-tracked.

“Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.” (James 1:27)

4. Employ Precision Harvesting

Paul’s strategy for every city he visited on each of his missionary journeys was to seek out the synagogue there and preach the word of God concerning Jesus the Messiah (Acts 13:5, 14; 14:1; 17:1, 10, 17; 18:1, 4, 19; 19:8). As long as Paul found a willing audience, ready to hear the good news of the kingdom of God, he would use the synagogue as his base of ministry.

In modern terms, Paul’s strategy of entering the synagogue in every new place he came to is a method of evangelism known as Precision Harvesting. This is a method of evangelism that relies upon a promotional tool called “response filtering.” Response filtering is used identify and locate people who have already responded to a Gospel message heard on TV programs, radio broadcasts, or some other form of mass evangelism. The idea is for the missionary or church planter to glean from another’s sowing ministry; to go where seekers or new believers

are likely to be found but are not being discipled and start working in that area. Turning back to Paul, we see what he was doing. By entering the Synagogue, Paul found a ready audience of Jews and “God fearing” Gentiles who at least had a basic understanding of the word of God and were looking for the coming of the promised Messiah.

“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.” **Romans 10:1-4**

Village pastors, evangelists, and ministry leaders often employ “response filtering” when they discover a person or persons from a village who are open to the gospel and make use of their influence in that village as an opening to share with others. The characteristics of village life in many areas of the world today where unreached people groups live make personal evangelism more effective than mass media marketing. Gathering the people of the village together for a gospel meeting or to show a gospel film will be more effective than television broadcasts or inviting them to mass gospel meetings in big cities that few can manage to attend. This makes the personal evangelism of the indigenous lay leader involved the Church Planting Movement much more effective than any mass media marketing strategy.

5. Prepare New Believers for Persecution

"A little while, we are in eternity; before we find ourselves there, let us do much for Christ." - Ann Judson

An important part of the Acts narrative is the great hardships and suffering the early missionaries faced along the way. Beginning with the first Apostles to preach the gospel in Jerusalem (Acts 5:27-33, 40), threats of violence and persecution were made against anyone who openly proclaimed Jesus to be Lord and Messiah of both Jews and Gentiles. The persecution intensified until it resulted in the martyrdom of Stephen and the scattering of the church from Jerusalem (7:54-60; 8:1-3). The fanatical Pharisee Saul (who after his conversion would become the Apostle Paul) “...made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison” (8:3).

After it became known that Saul had not only become a follower of Jesus, but was back in Jerusalem boldly proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah, the Jews sought to kill him at the first opportunity. For his own safety, Paul was urged to leave Jerusalem and return to his hometown of Tarsus (Acts 9:29-30). After Paul's departure, the persecution of believers continued. James, the brother of John was killed, and Peter was targeted to be next in line for execution (Acts 12:1-4).

The persecution of Paul and the other missionaries of the early church followed them on their journeys (Acts 13:49; 14:1-2, 5; 16:20-23; 17:5-9; and 23:12-15). Acts makes it very clear that from the beginning, the church grew in the face of great opposition and persecution. And the history of the church through the centuries confirms that the growth and expansion of the kingdom of God to the ends of the earth did not come without the same opposition and persecution.

"The concern for world evangelization is not something tacked on to a man's personal Christianity, which he may take or leave as he chooses. It is rooted in the character of the God who has come to us in Christ Jesus. Thus, it can never be the province of a few enthusiasts, a sideline, or a specialty of those who happen to have a bent that way. It is the distinctive mark of being a Christian." – James S. Stewart

Jesus was never deceptive about what it would cost to follow Him. Regardless of what the TV evangelists might preach, the life of discipleship is not the way to wealth and comfort. "Whoever desires to come after Me," Jesus said, "let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it" (Mark 8:34b, 35).

The call to discipleship is a call to self-denial. Jesus would not allow anyone to follow Him on their own terms (Luke 9:57-62). Jesus is Lord, and that means *He alone* sets the terms and conditions for His disciples. So often we have heard it said in evangelistic messages that "Christianity is not a religion but is a relationship" – and it is true – but the relationship we enter into with Jesus Christ requires a personal allegiance to Him that transcends all other relationships. (Luke 14:25-27). It is not until the new believer has settled these things in their heart that they can begin to understand the radical nature of their calling to follow Jesus Christ and "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15).

As part of the final preparation of His disciples for His departure, Jesus warned them of the world's hatred for them:

"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me." **John 15:18-21**

A study of the history of the church cannot be separated from the stories of those who were martyred for the sake of the gospel. It has been lost in much of the church today, but it should be remembered that after the Bible itself, no book so profoundly influenced early Protestant movement as *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. In the early days of the printing press, the common people had almost no other reading material except the Bible and Foxe's book; the deep impression that this book produced gave the Protestants the courage they needed to face the wrath of the Papacy. Early Protestants fought against those who claimed the divine rights of kings to tell them what religion to follow. At the risk of death or imprisonment, they declared themselves free men and women under God with His Word as their only guide. For almost two centuries the Book of Martyrs served to mold the character of Protestantism.

However, we see in the church today a far different attitude. Except in those places of the world where persecution is a way of life for most Christians, we hear from pulpits around the world a steady message that Jesus paid it all so that we can live happy, healthy, prosperous lives. All that is required of us is that we say a simple prayer (with every head bowed, and every eye closed so as not to embarrass anyone), attend church regularly, and pay our tithe. And for that Jesus will solve all of our problems, heal all of our sicknesses, and provide for all of our material comforts. Instead of being our "marching orders" the Bible becomes our business guide, our guide to count our Father's blessings; and Jesus is reduced to some kind of pop psychologist to help us feel good about ourselves and others through a gospel of "I'm Ok, You're Ok."

"No sound system. No band. No guitar. No entertainment. No cushioned chairs. No heating or air-con. Nothing but the people of God and the word of God. And strangely, that's enough. God's Word is enough for millions of believers who gather in house churches..."

Jungles... Rainforests, and middle eastern cities. But is his Word enough for us?” – David Platt, Radical

In far too many places in the world, the main reason why the church is not advancing rapidly on all fronts is not because people are unresponsive to the gospel of Salvation in Jesus Christ. (In fact, all evidence is that the people are spiritually hungry and will respond in large numbers when they hear the gospel clearly preached.) The real reason is that far too many are unwilling to move forward and proclaim the gospel because of a fear of persecution or death. However, the victory of the church will come only “by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony” (Revelation 12:11). The promise of rapid and exponential growth of church planting movements will never materialize apart from the great sacrifices of the church in time, finances, reputations, freedoms, and lives. From the beginning, new believers must be taught that there is a price to be paid for being a Christian and for the church to advance the kingdom of heaven it will require some sacrifice from everyone.

LESSON TEN QUESTIONS

The first five of ten applications from the Book of Acts for successful CPMs are discussed in this chapter.

1. What is the importance of pursuing a church planting strategy from the beginning?
2. Should the church planting missionary develop and implement a comprehensive and unchanging strategy for their mission? Explain your answer.
3. The missionary should evaluate everything to achieve the end-vision. What is that end-vision?
4. What is Precision Harvesting? Give an example of how it can be employed.
5. Why must new believers be prepared for persecution?

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101-11

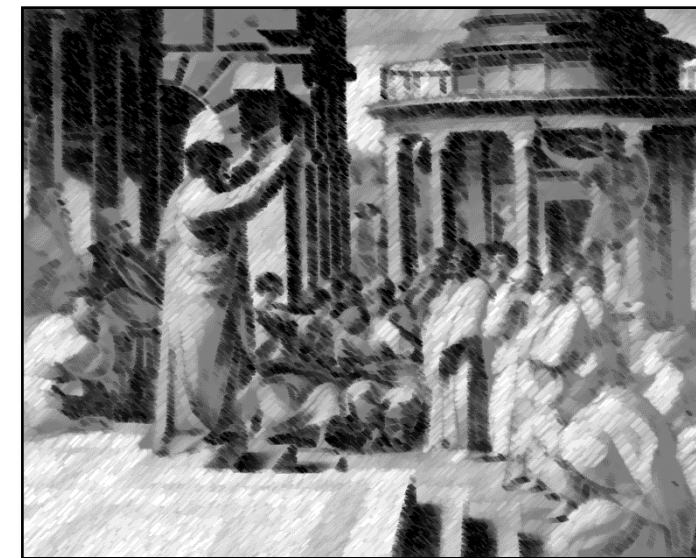
DEVELOPING A STRATEGY FOR CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS: THE APOSTLE PAUL’S MISSIONARY STRATEGY (PART TWO)

In the previous lesson, we studied the first five of ten applications from the Book of Acts for successful CPMs. In part two of ‘Developing A Strategy for Church Planting Movements,’ we will study the last five applications of the Apostle Paul’s missionary strategy.

6. Gather Them, Then Win Them

“Church Planting Movements are acts of God, but it’s amazing how much mankind is capable of interfering with them.” David Garrison

The Apostle Paul in Athens



When Paul arrived in Athens on his second missionary journey, the city was considered the intellectual center of the world (Acts 17:16-34). All great thinkers had to pass the test of Athens’ philosophers, or they would be sent to the back of the class to sit and learn some more before anyone would take them seriously. Paul was a highly educated man, and as such, would have been familiar with the major

philosophical schools of his day. It is obvious from Paul’s address at the Areopagus that he was able to use his knowledge of the Greek schools of philosophy and his observations of his surroundings in Athens to gain a hearing by the leading intellectuals of the city.

"If the Church is 'in Christ,' she is involved in mission. Her whole existence then has a missionary character. Her conduct as well as her words will convince the unbelievers and put their ignorance and stupidity to silence." – David Bosch

The idea of promoting inter-faith dialog between Christians and believers of other faiths can be a source of tension within the church. The strategy of having meaningful interactions to seek common ground with neighbors of other faiths sounds wonderful on the surface. However, we can see in some dialogs, wording that seems offensive to evangelists. When believers speak of inviting “not-yet-Christians,” “lost seekers,” or the “unsaved” into the group not to win them and bring them into the family of faith but only to find common-ground, the gospel of salvation must be stripped of its power.

The idea that Christians can learn from other faiths is presented by Dr. C.V. Rao: “I was taught that all my neighbors are damned to hell since they do not belong to the Christian fold. Friendship with such neighbors of other faiths was interpreted as being unequally yoked. Interest in their sacred literature was discouraged as being only Satanic. It took a long time to unlearn such things and learn positive attitudes. I ask myself today: How come such things were part of the Christian mission? Is it not possible to preach Jesus without a reference to the others? Should Jesus be taught in comparison and contrast with others? Should the unique gospel of Jesus Christ be relativized? We who want others to hear from us should we also not be open to hearing from them and learning to appreciate the good that they possess? Tolerance breeds tolerance, openness breeds openness and respect breeds respect. Particularistic understanding of one’s own religion leads to intolerance and disrespect for the other religions closing oneself to the wider work of God through the ages of human history all over the world amongst all other peoples.” (C.V. Rao Heads and Tales, p. 102-103)

On this point we see must seek a balance between both sides of the spectrum and come to unity. But not without a note of caution for the Christian missionary/evangelist who seeks to push ahead with inter-faith dialog as a means of evangelism. In our zeal to pronounce the gospel to the world, we should be culturally and religiously sensitive to those around us and learn to understand more about their beliefs in order to find the good in them. All this can be done in such a way for us to have a more sympathetic approach to unreached people. Love (agape) is the key, and without the love of God in us and working through us, our message will fall flat. We must with all sincerity find those points of

commonality and exhibit mutual respect for others’ beliefs. However, in the process of understanding other faiths, we must never end up devaluing our own faith and eroding our confidence in the absoluteness of the truth we profess in Jesus’ name in order to not risk offending someone else.

It is our love and compassion for the lost (those who are separated from our loving, heavenly Father) that compels us to gather groups of people to preach the gospel to them and lead them to Jesus Christ who is the only way, truth, and life (John 3:16; 14:1-3). If we compromise the core truths upon which our faith is built, then we have nothing to offer, and our mission is in vain. Without agape, Christianity is just another religion, and Jesus is just another god among gods. But we believe, know, and confess that the blood of Jesus is the only acceptable payment (atonement) for the sins of mankind, and therefore it is the love of God that provided the only means through which sinful men can find their way back into the eternal presence of the living God of all mankind.

7. Try a POUCH Methodology

“It is not sufficient for men and women to be redeemed. They must become trustees – depositories of the Word of God, effectively imparting it to others.” Greg Livingstone

As we already studied in a previous lesson, in his Second Missionary Journey, Paul demonstrated the POUCH method of church planting. Because it is the biblical model, it is therefore, workable in almost every CPM setting. Every pastor, evangelist, or lay leader should be creative and implement each element of the POUCH methodology in ways that are appropriate for their setting. Acts demonstrates how, and if every element is in place, the end results should produce good success:

P= participative Bible study/worship groups (Acts 17:11, 12)

O= obedience to God’s Word as sole measure of the individual’s or church’s success (Acts 19:18-20)

U= unpaid/bi-vocational church leaders (Acts 16:15; 18:2, 3)

C= cell churches (Acts 16:5; 18:22)

H= home or storefront churches (Acts 18:7, 8; 19:9)

8. Develop Multiple Leaders Within Each Cell Church

“Knowing that they didn’t have long with each of these new churches, Paul and Barnabas took a risk to commend them to the Spirit of God rather than stay on and commend these leaders to themselves. They lived out the counter-intuitive ways of the kingdom. They took a risk to trust that the Spirit would remain on as Teacher, and He would do a much better job of controlling the movement than Paul and Barnabas.” Steve Smith, T4T

From the very beginning, there have been many obstacles to the church’s advancement. The last command Jesus gave His disciples “...you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8), was delayed as the disciples remained in and around Jerusalem even after Pentecost. It was not until Steven’s martyrdom and the persecution that followed that the disciples were forced to move away from Jerusalem in large numbers. Even after that, most of the church leadership remained in Jerusalem while others like Philip, and Barnabas broke new ground for gospel seeds to be sown.

The Book of Acts can be understood as the Holy Spirit’s prodding and pushing of the Apostles to break through the religious, social, and ethnic barriers that confronted them and go on with their mandate to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth and make disciples of all nations. Reading Acts, it sometimes seems that Paul was the only Apostle who really got the message (Gal. 2:11-14) because his story seems to be just the opposite of Peter, James, and the others mentioned in Acts in that they were saying, “not so fast, Paul” while Paul was blazing new frontiers, opening new horizons, and planting churches left and right among the Gentile nations. Paul was constantly pushing the limits of where, when, and to whom the gospel was for – and finding that there were no limits. The only time Paul felt restrained by the Holy Spirit was when he was going over ground already covered and not pushing on to the next fresh field (Acts 16:6-10).

Wherever Paul and his companion missionaries planted a church, they quickly appointed elders with prayer and fasting and commended them to the Lord (Acts 14:23; 20:17). Paul instructed Titus to “set in order the things that are lacking and appoint elders in every city” (Titus 1:5); and no doubt, he instructed Timothy and other leaders he trained to do the same. For this reason, Paul was

never hindered from advancing the gospel to new territory by a lack of leaders in the churches he had planted along the way.

The church today needs hundreds and thousands like Paul, crisscrossing the nations and starting Church Planting Movements everywhere they go. Nothing could stop Paul (2 Corinthians 11:23-29). And yet Church Planting Movements often fail to start or quickly stall for lack of leaders who are willing to take the risks or suffer any hardships to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. It is not that there are so few willing to answer the call, but often those who are most inspired and restless to move forward are restrained by the “professional” clergy that convince them they need years of training in a seminary to be able to be a missionary or evangelist. Only God knows how many missionaries never made it to the field after receiving a “proper” seminary education. The most promising and highly trained, graduates are often offered less challenging and more lucrative assignments pastoring an established church closer to home.

At a meeting of Baptist leaders in the late 1700s, a newly ordained, untrained, minister who was a cobbler by trade, stood to argue for the value of overseas missions. He was abruptly interrupted by an older minister who said, “Young man, sit down! You are an enthusiast. When God pleases to convert the heathen, he’ll do it without consulting you or me.” That young man turned out to be one of the greatest missionaries to South Asia, William Carey.

In his book, *Brother Bakht Singh of India*, T.E. Koshy described how Paul’s ministry model in Acts works in a modern context:

“As Assemblies began to multiply, the need for shepherds after God’s own heart became a pressing necessity. Every local church needed shepherds to live among them and be one of them to help them on to maturity. The Lord answered their prayers for the need of shepherds in two ways. There were small groups of local churches which had come into being through the labors of one or two brethren living there who, by preaching the gospel and expounding the Word, had brought souls together and built them up and they gave the necessary shepherding. A number of churches had come into existence and grown under the ministry and care of very ordinary local brothers whom the Lord had gifted and who had a shepherd’s heart to care for and to feed the flock of God. But then there were other places where a few believers had begun to seek the Lord together, but with no manifest gifts for shepherding or ministering present among them. Such had appealed to Bakht Singh saying, ‘Please send us some to help us.’ They asked the Lord to call and set apart for His service those who could, for a short or

long period of time meet the need of these churches where there was no evidence of local gifts present. The Lord again had been faithful in providing such servants and has sent them to meet the need in many places.” (OM Books, Secunderabad, IN, © 2003, pp.442-3)

9. Use On-the-job Training

“As a missionary living and working in India, it saddens me when I see so many Indian Christians living in safety, comfort, and ease in the US while tens of thousands are dying every day in India without ever having heard the gospel. Truly, Jesus could be standing on any high place in India today and looking in any direction could be saying these same words spoken in Luke 10:2 ‘The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.’”

The present model of leadership training used by most denominations is to pull candidates for church leadership away from their places of ministry for years of training in one of their educational institutions. This model is a way for the administration to maintain control of its members and determines where, when, and how new churches are established. However, this tends to obstruct rapid church growth as the unreached villages wait for someone to come and preach the gospel to them. New leaders trained in the traditional method tend to find placement in already established churches rather than go to remote areas where there is greater risk and less support.

The method of Church Planting demonstrated in Acts is the exact opposite of what is considered standard procedure today. CPMs require a decentralized theological education that does not depend upon established theological institutions. Basic biblical training alongside practical experience, added to ongoing discipleship training is all that is required for teaching and preaching the gospel in tribal and village areas where the vast majority of unreached people live today. An education in ancient Hebrew, biblical Greek, hermeneutics, and exegesis may benefit leaders who fill the pulpits in mainline established churches, but this kind of higher education can only hinder a church planting movement. The best model is to give practical biblical training to church planting pastors as close as possible to the villages where they are working, keeping the modules short (measured weeks not years), and taking only one or two days per week in seminar settings with practical, on-the-job training. This model will maintain an ongoing discipleship relationship between the village pastors and lay leaders and

the church planting leadership that provides the teaching, training, and skill upgrades.

Acts 18:1-4 and 24-28 describe how Paul’s use of on-the-job training worked with Aquila and Priscilla. Paul had met the husband-and-wife team when he arrived in Corinth. Paul personally took them under his wing and trained them to become leaders in the church. Later, after Paul departed for Syria, a missionary named Apollos arrived from Alexandria. The instruction Paul had given them was instrumental to help Aquila and Priscilla give Apollos further instruction in the Word of God.

Turning again to T.E. Koshy’s book, we see how well this worked for the indigenous church planting movement founded by Brother Bakht Singh:

“From the earliest days in Madras, there had been those who had left all because they felt a call to serve the Lord full-time. Some of them seemed very unpromising for such important or responsible work, being often young and immature. They had much to learn and it would certainly take time. But God gave faith and patience to all concerned. They came trusting in the Lord with no promise of salaries or human security. They lived together, suffered together, learned together and experienced the Lord together. The result has been a very strong and real bonding between those whom the Lord put together for His testimony and work. The ‘supernatural’ was with them every day. The ‘miraculous’ was with them in that despite such diversity and variety in the many brothers and sisters working together and coming from vastly different backgrounds, they continued together in harmony and co-operation in the most difficult and exacting of all work from the beginning, thus bearing witness that this was of God. In the early years, God’s servant and the local believers worked together in unity and in harmony without any distinction.” (ibid. p.443)

To be successful, the church planter must give attention to those who have been chosen for leadership. Rapid reproduction of churches planting churches will fall apart if leaderless churches are left behind after the church planting missionary moves on. In his missionary journeys, Paul never failed to appoint leaders with prayer and fasting, for the churches he planted.

“The motive is this, ‘Oh! that God could be glorified, that Jesus might see the reward of his sufferings! Oh! that sinners might be saved, so that

God might have new tongues to praise him, new hearts to love him! Oh! that sin was put an end to, that the holiness, righteousness, mercy, and power of God might be magnified!’ This is the way to pray; when thy prayers seek God’s glory, it is God’s glory to answer thy prayers.” C. H. Spurgeon

10. Model, Assist, Watch, & Leave (MAWL)

"If God calls you to be a missionary, don't stoop to be a king" – Jordan Grooms

It is normal for parents to want to be deeply involved in every aspect of their children’s lives. In some cultures, parents routinely decide for their children what kind of education they will receive, what will be their career path, and when and whom to marry. Pastors who tend to see their church plants like their children will have the same tendency and will not know when, where and how to let go.

When we read Acts 20:17-37, we can see how difficult it was for Paul to bid farewell to his leaders and how difficult it was for them to bid farewell to their leader and mentor. Paul saw the challenges those leaders would have to face and overcome in the days and years ahead of them; he knew it would not be easy for those Elders to lead their churches through the dark and troubled world around them. And so, we can feel the anguish and heartache of Paul for his elders and they for him in their final moments together. Later, Paul would write to his disciple, Timothy the need to be diligent and to contend for the faith he learned from Paul: “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.” (1 Timothy 6:12)

By nature, leaders tend to be “take charge” kind of people and therefore have the attitude that they can do it themselves or do it better than anyone else. The Apostle Paul’s success demonstrates that from the beginning the best method for church planting pastors is for them to share the responsibility for the new church with those they are leading with the thought of releasing full control to their leaders as soon as they are ready. Remember, the ultimate goal of the Church Planting Movement is different from traditional church plants. The CPM is designed to create independent, self-sustaining, and self-replicating churches for the purpose of rapid, exponential growth of the kingdom of God. The first church is established and shaped by the Vision and Mission of Jesus to be the model of a worshipful, missionary-minded church for the second and third generation of churches to follow in rapid succession. The first generation of church leadership

is there to assist (disciple and train) the next generation, not to baby or control them (2 Timothy 2:2).

It would be a mistake to emphasize quantity over quality in CPMs. Rapid, exponential growth of *healthy* churches can only be sustained when mature disciples, full of the Holy Spirit, are strengthening the faith of new believers as they come into the church (Acts 16:5).

In Corinth, Paul’s strategy of planting a new church in a city, quickly choosing leaders for those churches, and then moving on was modified to meet the need for more trained leaders. After eighteen months in Corinth, Paul visited churches in Asia Minor to check on their progress. He landed in Ephesus where he spent two years teaching new believers the word of God (19:1-10). However, Paul never lost focus for his primary purpose: the rapid, exponential growth of the church by churches planting churches. So, by the time he departed Ephesus “...all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (19:10).

“How shall I feel at the Judgement, if multitudes of missed opportunities pass before me in full review, and all my excuses prove to be disguises of my cowardice and pride” – Dr. W. E. Sangster

LESSON ELEVEN QUESTIONS

Applications 6 – 10 of the Apostle Paul’s missionary strategies for successful CPMs from the Book of Acts were discussed in this chapter.

1. Explain the “Gather Them, Then Win Them” Handle.
2. What is the POUCH methodology?
3. What is the impact on a CPM of developing multiple leaders within each cell church?
4. What is the impact on a CPM of on-the-job training for church planting missionaries?
5. Describe the Model, Assist, Watch, & Leave (MAWL) handle.

SGM EVANGELISM AND CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS DISCIPLESHIP 101-12

OBSTACLES TO CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS

“You have been called out, prayed over, trained, underwritten, packed up, and sent off. So, what happens now? In a word: adjustment – to a new role, on a new team, in a new place, among a new people with a new culture. And that’s just for starters. Even after you’ve been there for a while, you still will have ongoing personal, family, strategic, cultural, and relational issues to deal with. ‘You mean this is not going to be easy?’ Than’s right, this is not going to be easy – but it can be done. God’s grace is sufficient for you, just as you have already experienced, and just as it has always been for the thousands upon thousands who preceded you.” *Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical survey*, © 2004, 2015, Pub. Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, p.191

Our study of the Book of Acts has revealed several Key Characteristics of CPMs:

- **The rapid Growth and expansion of the church.** This rapid growth is all the doing of the Holy Spirit, driving the church forward, and opening the doors of salvation to the Gentiles.

"Two distinguishing marks of the early church were: 1) Poverty 2) Power." – T.J. Bach

- **The increasing hostility against church planting missionaries** and the attempts by religious and political leaders to prevent the spread of the Gospel cannot stop or sidetrack a genuine CPM.

Once the Holy Spirit fell on the church at Pentecost, God quickly breached the walls that separated the Jews and Gentiles. The Council at Jerusalem confirmed what the Holy Spirit was doing amongst the Gentiles, and then Paul and the other missionaries were set free by the Holy Spirit to preach to the Gospel unfettered to the ends of the earth. The book of Acts closes with a prophetic foreshadowing of hostility Christian missionaries would face as it spread to the ends of the earth. “Therefore, let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will

hear it!’ And when he had said these words, the Jews departed and had a great dispute among themselves. Then Paul dwelt two whole years in his own rented house, and received all who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him.” Acts 28:28-31

Missionaries in the modern world face all kinds of dangers, troubles, and conflicts – much the same as the Apostle Paul and the other early missionaries in Acts. Today, missionaries on distant fields are likely to face terrorism, ethnic violence, religious wars, drug smuggling, human trafficking, and gang violence. Many countries in the world do not welcome missionary activity and missionaries may be arrested and deported for not having the proper permission from the host country. Certainly, as the time draws closer and closer for the Lord’s return, persecution of Christians and opposition to the preaching of the Gospel will only intensify. Church planters in the 21st century must be prepared to handle the increasing hostility to the spread of the gospel message that Jesus Christ is LORD.

- **Acts ends abruptly; the story was not finished, and it is still being written to this very day.** The Church throughout history was and still is a part of the story that Luke started to tell in Acts. The story of Acts is the story of the beginning of Church Planting Movements that will eventually reach around the world. In every case, a genuine CPM begins when the missionary, evangelist, pastor, ministry leader, etc. catches Christ’s vision of the Kingdom of God and conforms their work to the mission of Jesus: to (1) seek and save the lost, (2) make disciples, and (3) bring glory to God in all they do. As this same vision and mission spreads to other disciples in the churches, a CPM will be produced because they will be motivated to look beyond the four walls of their church on Sunday mornings and will obey the Lord’s command to go out onto the highways and byways and invite the lost to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb – thus bearing much fruit and reproducing themselves without waiting for the “professional” church planters to do the job they themselves are capable of doing.

"The best remedy for a sick church is to put it on a missionary diet." – Unknown

After the book of Acts was written and included into the Christian Canon, it slowly came to be considered a work of early church history. When that happened – and as the center of Christian power and leadership shifted from the East to the West – other methods of church planting and leadership development evolved

that did not allow decentralized, independent, bi-vocational, indigenous lay leaders to start CPMs.

By the late 20th century “traditional” methods of church planting and leadership development had become nothing at all like what we see in Acts. Adequate leadership needed to evangelize and plant new churches among the unreached had become a big problem. Indigenous missions were largely static because they were tied down to top-down leadership structures of Christian denominations that for the most part had left outsiders in control. Any promising indigenous converts would be required to endure years of Western-style training in Christian doctrines and church polity before would then be injected back into their place of origin (if they ever returned). It was not until late in the 20th century that the focus of missions shifted away from foreign domination and the “new” idea of raising and training indigenous leaders in the field, allowing them to work independently of any direct foreign control emerged. One of the best examples of that method was India’s Brother Bakht Singh. The great success of Hebron’s indigenous church planting movement was due largely to the fact that it was founded squarely on the foundation of the New Testament model described in the Book of Acts.

“The Gospel is not an old, old story, freshly told. It is a fire in the Spirit, fed by the flame of Immortal Love; and woe unto us, if through our negligence to stir up the Gift of God which is within us, that fire burns low.” – Dr. R. Moffat Gautrey

Today, the Western dominance of the church is fading and is seen in many areas around the world as a hindrance to local Christians being accepted as a part of their birth nation’s life, contributing to its unique cultural identity. (See HANDOUTs “3 Lessons the Majority World Wants to Teach Western Missionaries” and “Surfing the Third Wave of Missions in India”). This problem was seen as the era of Europe’s colonization of the world was ending; attempts were made early in the last century to create or encourage the formation of indigenous-led missionary societies in many areas of the world. But it was not until after WWII, in the atmosphere of post-colonialism that the work of indigenous believers began to take front-and-center of world missions. By the dawn of the 21st century, the idea of “A self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating church” had replaced traditional Western-led missions around the world. Today, few Western churches send out full-time missionaries to the field; and the few who do go, will more often work along-side or under the indigenous church instead of starting and leading it.

Today it is considered a good sign that foreign Mission efforts – though still present and still relied upon for major funding – have receded into the background and the foreground of the picture is dominated by the native Church. More than ever before, local clergy, teachers, businessmen, doctors, etc. are taking up positions of leadership and responsibility in the indigenous Christian communities around the world.

Still, the evidence from most places around the world indicates that the home-grown leadership is not raising and sending anywhere near the numbers of missionaries needed to evangelize the unreached of their own nation. The Western legacy of missions has created a process of making the work of evangelism of the unreached people groups “church-centered” (that is, building church buildings and making converts tied to denominations) instead of “mission-centered” (expanding the Kingdom of God by making disciples tied to Jesus Christ). This legacy has bogged-down the church leadership in many nations with constitutional and administrative matters concerned too much with perpetuating and maintaining their own power and control, and less on the evangelism and rapid, exponential growth that Church Planting Movements promise.

"The reason some folks don't believe in missions is that the brand of religion they have isn't worth propagating." – Unknown

No one would argue that the emphasis of the present leadership of the indigenous church to “strengthen the communities of faithful men and women living by the Word and the Sacraments” is a bad thing. The church certainly needs to be the genuine, local manifestation of the Body of Christ, and the place where the building up of the people of God should be happening. However, if the church is truly functioning as the church, it must also be reproducing and expanding, and not just holding its own. (The truth is: a church that is just “holding its own” will sooner or later be a church in retreat – losing rather than gaining members.) That means Christians must be sacrificially sending and going to every part of their nation and beyond, proclaiming the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ and making disciples. This can only be done when the present indigenous leadership of the church allows multiple lay leaders the opportunity to start Church Planting Movements in the thousands of unreached villages and regions where there the gospel has yet to be preached.

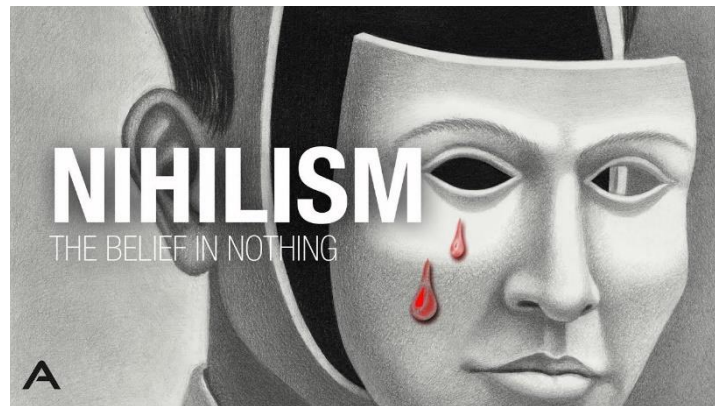
Obstacles to Church Planting Movements

It is true that there are many external obstacles facing the church that can hinder and obstruct missionaries from reaching every tribe and tongue before the Lord's Second Coming. Globalization, Modernization, and technology-driven Materialism are just three of the massive social changes that are affecting large populations of the unreached today; and in many of those populations, Christianity is viewed as "Westernization" and is therefore thought of as something to be resisted. Militant religious movements, internal social prejudices, and ancient conflicts between groups often pose another great obstacle for effective church planting movements to take shape in some areas of the world.

Questions of Truth. In major cities around the world, 21st century technologies have delivered postmodern relativism, pluralism, and nihilism to a generation of tech savvy individuals who have broken with traditional ideas of truth. The idea expressed by Roland Allen that "Missionary zeal does not grow out of intellectual beliefs, nor out of theological arguments, but out of love" fails to address the needs of a generation of globalists who have lost all sense of absolutes. In a culture where a minority of people no longer accept the idea of absolute moral truth, Christian missionaries need to find new ways to present the gospel, which is found on the truth that all people need to believe in and follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

Tribalism presents another major obstacle to CPMs. In rural communities and villages untouched by postmodernism, cultural and religious systems opposed to Christianity are often entrenched. A "tribe" is an extended kin, group, or clan with a common ancestor. According to the United Nations, there are over 476 million indigenous people living in 90 countries across the world. There are more than 5,000 distinct groups (tribes) which account for 6.2 per cent of the global population. Indigenous people speak an overwhelming majority of the world's estimated 7,000 languages.

Indigenous tribes living in isolated geographic regions share common pursuits of mutual survival. Preservation of their common culture by sharing unique traditions, celebrations, food, language, etc. are essential for the mutual survival of both the individual members of the tribe and for the tribe itself. For example,



in India, there are more than 700 tribes scattered throughout the nation that are officially recognized in their Constitution. Because these *Scheduled Tribes* are given a special status guaranteeing political representation, preference in promotion, quota in universities, free education, scholarships, banking services, and various other government benefits, it is of the utmost importance for the members of these tribes to keep their tribal status. This system also has the disadvantage of maintaining divisions, rivalries, and conflicts between groups in India that cause them to be discriminated against by majority non-tribal groups within the country. These tensions often explode into violence between Scheduled and non-scheduled tribal groups and non-scheduled castes.

The African continent is another major region of the world where ethnic and tribal groups are valued. Most of the thousands of ethnic groups in Africa have their own language or dialect, and culture. The social structures of tribes in Africa can vary greatly from place to place. The relatively small size of some tribes results in a social life which involves very few significant civil or economic distinctions between individual members of that tribe. However, larger tribes, which may extend over several countries in Africa, can lessen the social hierarchy and deep bonds made between individuals in smaller, more isolated tribal groups.

Tribes that use their own language and distinguish themselves from other, neighboring tribes in the same geo-political country often struggle for dominance over the other tribes. This can lead to violent ethnic conflicts between groups within the same country (See HANDOUT "African Continent Tormented by Tribal Conflicts: Problem Has Triggered Wars, Toppled Governments and Wrecked Courtships").

Church planting missionaries in areas dominated by tribalism must be acutely aware of the unseen and underlying cultural forces at work and adjust their methodologies to the groups they encounter. The gospel may not be seen by tribals as "good news," but may be viewed as an unwelcome intrusion by outsiders who are upsetting the balance of the group.

Packaged approaches that may work well on paper and may be successful in developed Western nations, often do not work when applied to regions dominated by tribalism. "Within this same outlook many missions agencies focus their efforts on developing churches comprising a single demographic group. Such an approach can result in churches isolated from diversity and insulated by their ethnicity." *Introducing World Missions*, © 2004, 2015, Pub. Baker Academic, Grand Rapids, p.15

A lack of understanding for the need of CPMs in unreached areas of the world. One of the greatest obstacles a church planting missionary faces often comes from the home church itself. In most Western countries, where the gospel has been sown in abundance for centuries, the largely uncharted non-Christian

nations of the world remain a mystery. Christians in North America have no idea how privileged they are to have churches everywhere, an abundance of Bible teachers, commentaries, Christian broadcasts, and gospel-oriented media of every kind at their disposal. The saturation of the Gospel in the West has made most Christians complacent and lukewarm on the subject of missions because the assumption is made that person-to-person contact with the unreached people groups around the world is unnecessary. Most Western Christians would rather just send their money and forget about the rest.

Short-term missions are very popular with churches in North America because they require little or no long-term commitments. Short-term missions are designed for short-term results with very little return for the time, money and effort spent to send teams from home to visit a church or ministry being supported by them. Construction projects, remodeling, painting the walls of a church building or ministry center, handing out candy and small gifts to orphaned children are all good and anyone can do them, but their long-term impact on the community is questionable. Internal obstacles to Church Planting Movements often are the result of well-meaning, but wrong ideas about what is required to fulfill the Great Commission.

Denominations often require long periods of training and seminary teaching before allowing anyone to go and plant a church. The average Christian who faithfully attends church and pays their tithes has been conditioned to believe that fulltime service on the mission field is beyond their reach. In addition to the restrictions on credentialing, there are those who insist that unless land is obtained and a church building is built, registered, and led by a paid member of the clergy, they cannot be called a “church.” When we read about Jesus’ selection of His disciples (Matthew 4:18-22) and Paul’s instructions to his young leaders Timothy and Titus – and in particular his criteria for bishops and deacons (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9) – we find that a moral character and a willingness to follow Christ without hesitation are given much greater weight than academics or official credentials. Paul’s word and the confirmation of the Holy Spirit was all they needed to be qualified. These internal, extra-biblical requirements quickly become roadblocks and detours that derail Church Planting Movements before they can even start.

Bad Examples and Poor Models. When asked what he thought of Christianity, the great Hindu saint, Mahatma Gandhi said, “I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians. Your Christians are so unlike your Christ.” In many ways Gandhi is like many of those around the world who have heard the gospel but rejected it because they do not understand that no one is born “Christian”, but that a Christian is someone who is like Christ. As Jesus said, “you must be born

again.” A person may be born a Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, or tribal but no one is born Christian. So, when someone with a Christian name, from a “Christian” country, whose parents were Christian visits a place, they are almost always viewed as a Christian. So, when that person is observed drinking, smoking, swearing, or acting immorally, the assumption is made that that’s the way Christians behave.

Missionaries often have to contend with the fact, one of their greatest obstacles to planting churches are the bad examples and poor models of so-called Christians that have that too often preceded them. In our satellite-connected, digital world, people around the world can see the moral and spiritual decay that is destroying what they perceive as Christian countries. The result is, that in many places around the world, people reject Christ because of Christians. Sadly, Christians have too often been poor examples of the new life that should be the result of the faith they profess. If established churches in an area have non-regenerate, worldly members who engage in immoral behavior and set bad examples in their family and business affairs, it will be difficult for new leadership in the area to convince those outside the church that the Christian faith is genuine and will produce the new life of love, joy, peace, and righteousness in the Spirit.

In a place where the local church is need for repentance and revival, it may be necessary for the Spirit-led leaders of the church to revive their members before a successful Church Planting Movement is possible. Hopefully, the local pastor would be open to leading a revival that brings correction, but if not, a Church Planting Movement is still possible, but may face greater opposition – not only from outsiders, but also from the local pastor (Note 2 Timothy 1:13-15; 3:8-9; and 4:16).

There are two passages of Scripture every believer should know by heart from the moment of their salvation: John 3:16 and Matthew 28:19-20. The one is meaningless without the other.

A Dependency on Foreigners. Church Planting Movements that depend upon outside funding and manpower to keep going are not sustainable; as the movement grows, they will be overwhelmed with requests for more funds and trained leadership. Naturally, whenever the gospel is introduced to a new area or people group, some external financing may be required at the start but there is always the danger of building expectations from the indigenous church planters that a steady and increasing level of funds will flow to them as the numbers grow.

But the book of Acts shows us that the prototype church for the movement that is started should be easily reproduced by indigenous pastors and lay leaders.

Any element of the CPM that cannot be reproduced by the local believers should be discarded. From day-one new believers must be taught that they have two responsibilities that go along with their faith in Christ as their Savior:

1. To share their faith with everyone, every day
2. To give sacrificially of their time, treasure, and talents to advance the Great Commission in their area by “going” or “sending” missionaries from their church

May God go with you to the ends of the earth!
Amen

Recommended Reading Assignment:

Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Survey (Second Edition), © 2004, 2015, A. Scott Moreau, Gary R. Corwin, and Gary N. McGee, Published by Baker Academic, Grand Rapids

QUESTIONS FOR LESSON TWELVE

1. What are the several Key Characteristics of a CPM that our study of the Book of Acts revealed?

Review the Obstacles to Church Planting Movements:

2. Of those obstacles discussed in this lesson, which ones are you most likely to face in your ministry?
3. What strategy will you employ to overcome any of those obstacles?



Rev. Dr. Frederick Osborn traveled the world teaching and preaching the Word of God. His first trip to South Asia was in 2001, and since 2005 he has been fully involved in ministry. Currently he volunteers his time on the mission fields of South Asia and around the world as a speaker and lecturer, distributing Bibles and biblical resources to pastors, evangelists, and ministry leaders. His books and study guides have been used in classrooms by hundreds of students.

In 2013 he earned his M.Div. from Andhra Christian Theological College in Hyderabad, India and in that same year was officially ordained into the ministry in a holy convocation administered by Indian pastors representing AG, CSA, and other independent ministries. In 2017 he completed his D.Min. from Covenant Bible College & Seminary, Florida, USA. He and his wife, Deena, now live near Atlanta, GA where he continues to preach, teach, write, and publish his books and study guides.

Books Written by Frederick Osborn

1. *Church Planting Movements – India*
2. *Daniel: Kingdoms in Conflict*
3. *Deceived! Overcoming the Age of Mass Deception*
4. *Disciple-to-Disciple: Making Disciples Like Jesus*
5. *Disciple- to-Disciple: Making Disciples Like Jesus, Study Guide*
6. *Exploring the New Testament*
7. *Exploring the Old Testament: Vol. One – The Pentateuch*
8. *Following Christ on the Indian Road: A Missionary’s Story of Discipleship*
9. *From Genesis to Revelation: Interpreting the Book of Revelation Through the Old Testament Scriptures*
10. *Healing Miracles of the Bible*
11. *Jesus Over India: A 52 Week Spiritual Journey Through the Heart of India*
12. *Judges: A 21st Century Prophetic Commentary*
13. *Keys to Effective Faith: Living by a Faith that Can Move Mountains*
14. *Kingdom Discipleship: Becoming Like Jesus*
15. *Kingdom Discipleship: Becoming a Disciple Like Jesus, Study Guide*

16. *Kingdom Economics*
17. *Living in Dystopia: A Christian Guide Victory in an Orwellian World*
18. *Messiah: The Mission of Jesus of Nazareth*
19. *One Holy Passion: A Daily Devotional Guide for 40 Days of Prayer and Fasting for the 1040 Nations*
20. *Our Jehovah Rapha: A Christ Centered Holistic Approach to Wellness*
21. *Reviving A Nation*
22. *Seven Laws of Dying to Self*
23. *Spiritual Lessons for the Grafted-In*
24. *The Apocalyptic Vision: Understanding the Apocalyptic Writings of the Bible*
25. *The Blood*
26. *The Book of Acts: The Holy Spirit's Handbook for Church Planting Movements*
27. *The Book of Acts: The Holy Spirit's Handbook for Church Planting Movements- Study Guide*
28. *The Gospel of John: Speaking Truth to Power*
29. *The Gospel of Salvation*
30. *The Gospel of Salvation: Study Guide*
31. *The Healthy Heart*
32. *The Holy Spirit in You: Nourishing the Life of Holiness and power in You*
33. *The Keys to Effective Prayer*
34. *The LGBTQI Community and the Church*
35. *The Legacy of Women in the Bible – Study Guide*
36. *The New Reformation: An Assessment of the New Apostolic Reformation from Toronto to Redding*
37. *The Physics of Heaven: The Theology of the New Apostolic Reformation*
38. *The Revelation of Jesus Christ: John the Apostle's Heavenly Vision of Christ the King*
39. *The Spirit of Religion*
40. *The Way, the Truth, and the Life: the Teachings and Ministry of Jesus the Messiah*
41. *This Gospel of the Kingdom*
42. *This Gospel of the Kingdom – Study Guide*
43. *To the Heart of the Nations – Prayer Journal*
44. *Twelve Woes*

Supplemental Handout Materials

HANDOUT DISCIPLESHIP 101-1

5 Ways Christianity Spread Through Ancient Rome

Sure, there was that extensive road system. But it helped that Christianity didn't paint itself as an exclusive club.

<https://www.history.com/news/5-ways-christianity-spread-through-ancient-rome>

By: Becky Little

Published: July 27, 2022



Prisma/UIIG/Getty Images

How did Christianity go from a small sect in a corner of the Roman Empire in the first century, to the religion that the emperor converted to in the early fourth century? Its spread was greatly aided by the empire's political unification and extensive road system, as well as the belief among many Christians that the religion was something anyone could adopt, regardless of regional or religious background.

1. Everyday Citizens Spread the Word

Missionaries like Paul, a major figure in the Bible's New Testament, traveled around the empire with the intention to spread Christianity. However, most of the people who helped spread the religion did so just by talking about it with their neighbors, friends and family members, says Edward Watts, a history professor at the University of California San Diego and author of *The Final Pagan Generation: Rome's Unexpected Path to Christianity*.

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“Missionaries are a part of the story, but most of the story is about regular Christians talking to regular people,” he says. “And that, I think, is the most important reason that Christianity emerges in the way that it does in the Roman world. It's not mission activity by people like Paul so much as it is people whose name we don't know.”

2. Early On, Christianity Coexisted With ‘Paganism’

At the Roman Empire's height in the second century, it stretched into Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. One key reason Christianity was able to spread throughout this vast empire was that many people viewed the new religion as something they could easily adopt without having to change their existing cultural and religious practices.

In the first and second centuries, most people in the Roman Empire worshiped multiple gods at once. When they heard about Christianity, they didn't necessarily think that worshiping Jesus Christ meant they had to stop worshiping their other gods, like Jupiter, Apollo and Venus. Rather, many adopted Christianity by adding Jesus to the group of gods they already worshiped, Watts says.

The belief that Christianity was compatible with what we now call paganism helped Christianity spread through the Roman Empire. Although some Christians argued there was only one god and Christians shouldn't worship any others, this wasn't how many people in the Roman Empire understood Christianity at the time, Watts says.

3. Christianity Didn't Present Itself as an Exclusive Club

Christianity also got a boost from the idea that it was a religion for anyone—not just people in a certain region with a specific religious background. Though some Christians debated this point, missionaries like Paul preached that a person didn't have to obey Jewish laws around circumcision and kosher food practices to become Christians.

“This is a key change because it makes the bar to entry much lower,” Watts says. “If you are a male who wants to convert to Christianity, and there's an assumption that first you have to convert to Judaism, it's literally physically painful and dangerous for you to convert.”

In addition, the translation of Christian gospels from their original Aramaic to Greek made them accessible to more people in the empire. Unlike Aramaic, a regional language spoken in Judea, Greek was spoken throughout the Roman Empire.

4. Early Persecution Wasn't Widespread

During the first and second centuries, persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire was sporadic and regionally-specific rather than empire-wide. The persecution of Christian martyrs like Ignatius of Antioch, who died in the second century, did not represent the experiences of most Christians.

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This didn't change until the middle of the third century, when the emperors Decius, who ruled from 249 to 251, and Valerian, who ruled from 253 to 260, launched campaigns to promote traditional Roman values and customs like sacrificing animals to pagan gods. Officials documented these sacrifices with papyrus receipts for people to keep as a record of their sacrifice. Those who didn't have these receipts and refused to sacrifice could be arrested and killed.

Decius's campaign didn't target Christians, specifically, but rather anyone who wasn't practicing pagan sacrifice. In contrast, Valerian's campaign targeted Christians more directly. After this, the next major campaign against Christians was the Great Persecution. Beginning in 303 under the Emperor Diocletian, it led to the death of many Christian religious leaders and the seizure of Christian property.

5. An Emperor Converted—and Officially Recognized the Faith

Flavius Valerius Constantinus (c. AD 280- 337) was the first Roman emperor to embrace Christianity, turning the empire into a Christian state.

The Great Persecution was the Roman Empire's most severe persecution of Christians—and also its last. This is because after this persecution, in 312, Emperor Constantine I became the first Roman emperor to convert to Christianity. A year later, he helped enact the Edict of Milan, which ended government persecution of Christians and made Christianity a recognized, legal religion within the empire.

Constantine's rule didn't mark an immediate shift in the Roman Empire from pagan to Christian. However, "he starts a process that, by the end of the fourth century, will lead to the explicit restriction of pagan practices and the explicit promotion of Christian practices by the imperial government," Watts says.

Christianity continued to spread through the territories of the western Roman Empire after its fall in 476. Over the next several centuries, it became the dominant religion in the city of Rome as well as the European regions over which the Roman Empire had ruled. The Roman Colosseum, once the site of deadly gladiator battles, even became a sacred Christian site where, in the 17th century, an artist painted an image of ancient Jerusalem.

By: Becky Little

Becky Little is a journalist based in Washington, D.C. Follow her on Twitter at @MsBeckyLittle.

HANDOUT DISCIPLESHIP 101-2

Apostles of Christ Spread the Church

Posted on February 9, 2015, by Amy

According to historians, Christianity started in the Eastern Mediterranean, and this stretched towards the Roman Empire and up to India and is recorded to spread on the Bible Timeline starting around 500 AD. The rapid growth of the Church to these areas was related to the growing belief in Christianity that was evident in the Jewish diaspora, the Holy Land and in several Jewish centers. The Jewish Christians were considered as the very first believers and followers of early Christianity.

Spread of the Church through the Apostles of Christ

The Apostles of Jesus traveled from Jerusalem to other parts of the world after the crucifixion of Christ. Their main purpose was to spread the teachings of Jesus when he was still alive. Some of them also founded the Apostolic Sees, and they led early Christians in their religious gatherings in private homes referred to as house churches. The entire community of Christians was called a "church", originating from a Greek word that means congregation, gathering or assembly.

A large population of Early Christians were travelers or merchants, and they went to various places including Asia Minor,

Africa, Greece, and Arabia. By the year 100 AD, there were more than 40 communities of Early Christians established, and most of these were in Anatolia. This place was also regarded as Asia Minor, and it was where the Seven Churches of Asia was found. Afterward, Christianity spread in other places including Syria, Greece, Armenia, India and Rome. These places served as the foundations for the spread of Christianity.

In Caesarea, Peter, one of Jesus' apostles, baptized Cornelius who was a centurion and a gentile. He soon converted to Christianity, with the help of Peter. Paul, another apostle of Jesus, also stayed in Caesarea for a while. It was also in that place where he was imprisoned.

Antioch, one of the Roman Empire's most significant cities, became another place in the world where several people converted into Christianity. It was also the site where an early church was formed, and Peter was its founder and first bishop. The Apostolic Constitutions and the Gospel of Matthew were believed to have been written in Antioch.

Based on the Book of Acts, Jerusalem became known as the site of the very first church of the Christians. Here, the apostles of Jesus taught and remained after the Pentecost. James became the leader in this first church, and several other kinsmen also had leadership positions after the city of Jerusalem was destroyed and until the rebuilding.

In 50 AD, Paul and Barnabas traveled to Jerusalem to meet with John, Peter and James, who were considered as the pillars of the church. Eventually, this meeting was referred to as the Council of Jerusalem. During this meeting, various subjects were discussed including the mission of Paul and Barnabas to the gentiles, as well as the freedom of converts from Mosaic law.

Peter decided to leave Jerusalem as Herod Agrippa I made attempts to kill him. At this point, James became the new principal authority of the early Church in Jerusalem.

References:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Early_centers_of_Christianity

<http://biblescripture.net/Acts.html>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_in_the_1st_century

HANDOUT
DISCIPLESHIP 101-4

How God Sovereignly Guided His People In Acts

MEANS	SCRIPTURE REFERENCES
Through direct revelation	1:4-5, 11; 8:29; 10:19; 13:2; 16:6-7; 20:23
Through Scripture	1:20
Through the casting of lots	1:23-26
Through unexpected, supernatural acts	2:1-41
Through the apostles' teaching	2:42
Through judgment	5:1-11
Through church "growing pains"	6:1-7
Through persecution and evil opposition	7:54-8:1; 14:5-7; 20:3
Through angelic messengers	8:26; 10:3-8; 27:22-26
Through miraculous relocation	8:39
Through direct, life-altering encounters with the risen Lord	9:3-9
Through visions	9:10; 10:3-8, 9-16; 11:5; 16:9-10; 18:9-11; 23:11
Through human instruments / messengers	9:17-19, 27-28
Through times of intense prayer	10:9; 13:2-3
Through bringing to their minds the words of the Lord	11:16
Through prophetic utterances	11:28; 21:4, 10-12
Through God-honoring, Spirit-led discussions among church leaders	15:1-31
Through promptings by the Spirit	15:28; 19:21; 20:22
Through closed doors	16:6-7
Through favorable circumstances	19:8-11
Through having them take advantage of civil / legal / political rights	25:10-12
Source: <i>Tyndale Handbook of Bible Charts and Maps</i> , Neil S. Wilson and Linda K. Taylor-Tyndale, © 2001 by Tyndale House Publishers. Database © 2007 WORDsearch Corp.	

HANDOUT DISCIPLESHIP 101-5

The Dream of a Macedonian Call: A Missional Redemptive Story



Carl Johnson Church Planting | Leadership | Ministry

<https://seminarynow.com/pages/blog?p=macedonian-call>

When we first think about church planting, we may not immediately consider the deep connection of place and people. Many of those in church planting receive a “Macedonian call” – a place and people where we sense God is calling us to serve.

Sometimes, this looks like going to a place we have never been before and teaching others. I have friends who run disciple-making movements. One of the first things they do is to look for local leaders who are familiar with the place and the people – indigenous leaders. Where I live in St. Paul, MN, I am the indigenous leader; I know this place and these people.

All pastors and church leaders will, at some point, develop a lens of indigenous calling – an understanding of why place and people cannot be separated. Sometimes, our call will put us in close proximity with those who are broken, vulnerable, destitute, rich poor, isolated, and lonely. When this happens, we must adapt and see those we serve as through the lens of Christ. Here in St. Paul, we have adopted the saying “Every Follower a Leader and Every Leader a Change Maker.”

Faith in the City

But how do you come into a city with a focus on people in pain and still share the gospel? I live in a place where people protest, and theology is a philosophy. Meeting people and building disciple-making relationships often happen in a third place like a coffee shop or a grocery store.

In November 2019, we opened Storehouse Grocers as a stand-alone market that would meet people with affordable and accessible groceries. We didn’t anticipate that by 2020 we would be in the center of a pandemic and a racial powder keg. We made disciples in the midst of that. Our mission was focused and our methods yielded fruit.

I remember the day we saw the civil unrest move from one part of the city to my neighborhood. Five men came and boarded up the windows to our small storefront to protect it. Our relationships there had led to change, camaraderie, and light in the darkness.

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From Church Plant to Cultural Center

Through Storehouse Grocers and seeking to be changemakers in our community, our influence began to grow. One day, we saw a corner street sign that read: 7th and Hope. We knew that would be our corner – a hub for all the work we could do. The birth of the G.W. Carver Cultural Center for Innovation would be a place for the community to meet, where disciples would be made, and where innovation would be sparked.

We took over an old convenient store and turned it into a storefront that would house a micro grocery store and coffee bar. The church is starting a workforce development fellowship for youth. We also have an art residency program led by our youth leadership council. We are still working on the inception of the art residency.

We have seen the start of quartile meetings with local black business owners, parent advocacy groups, and birthday parties. We are excited to be a place for redemptive change.

Why Place Matters

Being missional means considering local ecclesiology, context, and missiology. In our case, we needed to consider people, place, and pain.

Our people were the working-class poor who were food insecure. We focused on feeding families and disciplining them. We knew it would be a long road, but we became redemptive agents. We served families hot meals and groceries. We saw the fullness of our hearts and God’s in the heart of those around us. We focused on missional practices that made disciples, community development, and human flourishing our purpose.

God has given us a big vision for our community. We are excited that he has grown us with that vision through faith. Our focus has always been on making disciples and building community – not on program development. This strong community focus brought transparency and vulnerability – and this is how our vision has come to fruition. When we plant and lead churches, people, and place matter most. With those at the heart of our ministry, God will grow his Church. This is “Macedonian call” at its best.

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HANDOUT DISCIPLESHIP 101-7

This is an article from the September-October 2016 issue: Slaying the Dependency Dragon
August 31, 2016 by Jean Johnson

<https://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/the-best-way-to-plant-indigenous-churches>

The Best Way to Plant Indigenous Churches Is to Begin that Way

I once had the opportunity to dialogue with a group of leaders in South Asia about their church planting strategies. A church planting team among them shared about some of the barriers to their effectiveness. One of those barriers related to hosting short-term teams from other countries. These teams had visited and conducted outreaches in the communities where they were planting churches. When the short-term teams departed from these communities, there were numerous negative consequences. The foreign presence, repeated injection of money into these outreaches, free benevolent services, handouts and salaries were a recipe for jealousy, confusion and misunderstandings.

The weightiest negative impact was that the community assumed that the church planters were involved in Christian work for the perks, rather than experiencing a sincere conversion and faith in Jesus. Thus, their testimony came across as less credible and believable among their fellow citizens. My next natural question was, “Why do you continue to host short-term mission teams if it is counterproductive?” They responded, “Because we depend on the support of these teams that we host.” Unfortunately, the church planting team deemed they needed to stay locked into a pattern that was counterproductive to their church planting effort.

Thankfully, this story doesn’t stop here. After several days of reading the Bible and discussing the benefits of self-supporting, self-giving and local interdependency, the church planting team and their fellow colleagues prayed about their role in making a sincere effort to share and support their own church planting efforts. One by one, their fellow teammates committed to either give money, skills or services to support the church planters. The leader of the overall team shared the following, “While we were praying, I saw a field of snakes. Little by little, the snakes fled. I believe we are being set free from unhealthy dependency.”

Understanding the root causes of unhealthy dependency can lead to employing empowerment strategies rather than dependency-producing strategies. In this article, we will focus on two main dependency-producing strategies and then two alternative empowerment-producing strategies.

Dependency-Producing Strategies

First, Christian cross-cultural workers often conceptualize and organize mission efforts based on their own culture, church experiences, formulas and standards of living. In this case, we end up paying for it and managing it because we introduce something quite foreign and expensive. In a way, we create a deficit and then need to make up the deficit through our funding, status and

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expertise. As a missionary, I often discovered that when I needed to subsidize an effort, it was because I introduced foreign forms and extra-biblical requirements or nonessentials. Nonessentials and extra-biblical requirements refer to customs, conditions and approaches that are not mandated or even modeled in the Bible, but rather are man-made traditions and preferences added on to the Christian experience from one’s own cultural milieu and preferences. I am sure you can think of many examples such as Sunday school classrooms, professional-style worship teams, pulpits and so forth.

Second, Christian cross-cultural workers often implement a model that includes paying for local workers and local efforts during the first stages, with the intention to wean away funds as local people grow to be responsible and give. Unfortunately, these actions — that are supposedly meant to empower and advance — end up conditioning the recipients or onlookers into a dependency mindset. For example, if someone came to your neighborhood, introduced you to a new experience outside of your everyday context and started paying for the process, wouldn’t you develop certain perceptions and expectations? The bottom line is while the outsiders are organizing and paying, the insiders develop certain perceptions and expectations that economic dependency on foreign funds is normal and should continue from generation to generation of new churches and ministries. Here are a few of those “conditioned” perceptions that seep into the church or movement launched and sustained by outside funding:

- They started it and they should pay for it.
- If this doesn’t work, it is really their problem.
- I deserve what I receive from the mission society.
- Our leaders are getting paid with foreign funding, and that should somehow trickle down to us.
- Why should we feel obligated to contribute?

Allow me to underscore once again — these harmful attitudes are not the result of the recipients’ wrongdoing, but rather the impact of outsiders trying to underwrite that which should be driven and sustained by insiders at their own pace. By the time the cross-cultural Christian worker wants to wean away subsidies, a dependency mindset has already taken root, affecting the church and their influence on communities around them. Jonathan Martin wrote in his book *Giving Wisely*, “If a church or ministry starts dependent on western money — western money will eventually end it.”

Empowerment-Producing Strategies

How does a cross-cultural Christian worker avoid this dependency trap? First, an empowering way to plant indigenous churches, ministries or movements is to begin that way. If we keep in mind that people managed their own spiritual path and religion before we came along as missionaries, we will be more resolved to believe that this will be the case for those who choose to follow Christ as well. If we envision a model of doing church as exemplified in the book of Acts, we will discover that *the resources for the harvest are already in the harvest*. Donald McGavran summarized this concept in a saying, “In every apple there is an orchard.”^[2] In this case, the cross-cultural worker should be a catalyst for mobilizing local resources by urging and

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encouraging insiders to conceptualize and organize the church based on their own culture, essentials of Scripture and creative usage of their own local resources.

Second, plant indigenous churches and movements by encouraging forms of healthy dependency on family, friends and community from the beginning. This type of healthy reliance was modeled in the early church and was written down for our benefit in Acts 2:42-47, Acts 6:1-7 and Timothy 5:1-5. The problem is that if outsiders replace local interdependency with global interdependency through subsidizing, we break down the economic engine of the church—the local people's motives and capacity to give, share and create. Instead, let's do the absolute opposite: stay out of the way and rather urge and encourage healthy sharing, giving and serving in local families, faith communities and communities at large.

Most people would agree that self-reliance and local interdependence are core characteristics necessary for building healthy families and communities, so why wouldn't this be true for the church as well? We would no more connect the world's faith in Jesus to a few rich nations than we would connect the world's electricity to the grid of one or two nations. **Every local faith community deserves the opportunity to sustain, flourish and multiply while on their own spiritual journey.** The cross-cultural worker can fan into flame this journey in the same way Paul did with Timothy — to urge and encourage. “For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.” (2 Timothy 1:6-7 NIV)

The best way to plant indigenous churches and movements is to begin that way. Then, we don't have to discover mid-stream that it is too late — that an unhealthy mindset has settled in like cement. Keep in mind that in every apple, there is an orchard. In every people group, an Acts 2-type church is already there; we just need to believe it.

HANDOUT DISCIPLESHIP 101-8

Missionaries should prioritize those activities that most directly achieve their mission.

<https://www.tmai.org/biblical-principles-for-an-effective-missions-program/>

The core task of the Great Commission is to make disciples. A missionary, therefore, prioritizes those activities that most directly achieve this end. By observing what activities Paul and his associates were involved in we can draw principles as to what should be the highest priorities today. The primary activities in which we see Paul engaged are:

- Preaching the gospel publicly (Acts 9:20, 28; 13:5, 16-49; 14:1, 7, 21; 16:10, 13; 17:2, 10, 17, 22-34; 18:4-6; 19:8; 20:20; 28:30-31): Paul preached in synagogues, from house to house, in an academic gathering on the Areopagus, and in the marketplace to all who would listen. The evidence shows that Paul took every opportunity to speak the gospel, whether to individuals or to groups and in every possible setting. Missionaries, therefore, are ideally those who are most able to faithfully proclaim the gospel and unfold its riches in any and every circumstance.
- Planting churches: After people were converted to Christ, they were not left scattered, but were gathered into churches and leaders were appointed (Acts 14:23). This priority explains why there were churches in Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, and Thessalonica to receive Paul's letters! It is important, then, that missionaries be qualified and able to establish churches for new converts.
- Strengthening churches through teaching and encouragement (Acts 14:21-23; 15:41; 16:4-5; 18:11, 23; 20:2; cf. the Epistles): Related to planting churches is the need for their continued support and pastoral care. It is irresponsible to win people to Christ and yet leave them to languish apart from the necessary nourishment of God's word. Missionaries should be involved in shepherding, strengthening, encouraging, and teaching all that Christ commanded to fledgling churches.
- Training leaders (Acts 14:23; 19:8; 20:17-35; 2 Tim 2:2; letters to Timothy and Titus): The New Testament associates up to 100 names with Paul, of which around 36 could be considered close partners and fellow laborers in gospel ministry. Church leaders and “co-workers” seemed to spring up around him wherever he went. Paul knew the ministry had to be passed on before he died, and so he trained a new generation of leaders to replace him. Missionaries should engage not only in planting churches and helping them start, but also in training up local leaders to replace them and carry on the gospel work.
- Mercy ministry (Acts 11:29-30; 19:12; 28:9): Though a more minor part of Paul's ministry, it was certainly part of it. The purpose was either to provide relief to fellow Christians in difficult times or to authenticate the truth of Paul's message as coming from God.

This post was adapted from the booklet, *How to Build an Effective Missions Program*.

HANDOUT
DISCIPLESHIP 101-10

September 8, 2017
Article By TMAI

Developing a Strategy for an Effective Missions Program

<https://www.tmai.org/developing-a-strategy-for-an-effective-missions-program/>

In previous posts, we’ve traced the biblical motivation for missions and some of the broad principles that should govern a church’s missions activities. This post is intended to help you devise your church’s strategy within that biblical framework. To do this, we recommend constructing a Missions Strategy and Policy document (MSP). This is a simple yet exceedingly helpful document that will provide both a foundation for your church’s missions effort and guidance for future related decisions. The end goal of the MSP is to provide a list of how your church wants to invest its missions budget, assigning percentages to each activity that your leadership agrees on. We believe these efforts, when done prayerfully, and when motivated by God’s glory, will produce fruit for years and even decades to come. Such a document will help keep God’s mission in focus, and will provide an objective basis from which to make adjustments to your church’s missions effort. A well-written MSP will also provide continuity as you go forward, allowing for consistency in decisions and practice.

A well-written Missionary Strategy and Policy document will also provide continuity as you go forward, allowing for consistency in decisions and practice.

There are many questions that must be considered when developing your church’s MSP. In the end, the answers to these questions will form the skeleton of your MSP, so it is important to work through them in a deliberate and thoughtful manner, looking to God’s word and seeking God’s direction at every point along the way. To begin the process of drafting your MSP, you may start with some of the large, foundational questions that shape the majority of your missions support, such as:

What major activities comprise biblical “missions”? (see our post on Biblical Principles for a list)

Which of these activities does our church deem most strategic and important? In deciding this question, it will be helpful to assign each activity type a relative

priority in the form of a percent value of overall resources. For example, Activity A: 50%, Activity B: 30% and Activity C: 20%. This will facilitate future resource allocation decisions.

From there, you may wish to wrestle through some of the more particular questions that will shape your missions program, such as:

How should our efforts be distributed between local and global activities? Local efforts should be a priority because God placed your church in a particular place among a particular people, but the needs are also very great. It is often the case that more manpower can be devoted to local activities, but more financial resources will be required for missions elsewhere in the world.

Should our church focus on particular geographical regions or people groups? Focus on particular regions may facilitate a congregation’s sense of connection with the missions effort but choosing not to focus may facilitate a broader perspective on what God is doing around the world.

Do we want to conduct our missions efforts primarily through missionaries we have sent out or are well known to our church, or do we want to send resources to support another organization? A local church most directly takes ownership of the Great Commission task by sending out its own missionaries but it is also the case that financially supporting a missions organization can be exceptionally strategic with a broad impact.

A local church most directly takes ownership of the Great Commission task by sending out its own missionaries.

Do we want to favor any particular modes of missionary activity such as career missionaries, bi-vocational missionaries (tentmakers), short term missionaries, or national missionaries? Historically the greatest gains in making disciples of the nations have been through career and national missionaries—those with deep, long-term commitment to a work. However, other modes of activity, when done well, can contribute significantly to the missions effort.

Do we want to support a large number of missionaries with small dollar amounts, or do we want to support a smaller number of missionaries, but in higher amounts? While the broader approach may allow your church to participate and rejoice in ministry successes from all over the world, the narrower approach enables a better relationship between your church and supported missionaries. Being the sending church and the majority financial provider for a missionary communicates commitment and facilitates mutual participation, care, and accountability.

As you work through these questions together, document your answers. With the results, you can form budgetary goals that are guided by your answers and reflect your priorities. As an example, after all the options are weighed by your leadership team, you may decide that in your MSP, you want your church missions budget allocation to look as follows:

Evangelistic outreach/Church planting: 40%

Leadership training: 30%

Mercy ministry: 20%

Ministry administration and support activities: 10%

HANDOUT DISCIPLESHIP 101-12

International Mission News

3 Lessons the Majority World Wants to Teach Western Missionaries

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/majority-teach-western-missionaries/>
April 6, 2022 | Josh Irby © Lightstock

“I don’t want to step on anyone’s toes.” Two colleagues and I had asked a Majority World mission leader, “If you could speak to a room full of Western Christians who want to be involved in global missions, what would you say?” Initially, he was concerned he might offend us. But I assured him our toes were ready. They’d already been stepped on many times in the past nine months.

Over this period, my colleagues and I have been talking to mission mobilizers, practitioners, and leaders from Asia, Africa, and South America, asking how Western missions needs to change. We’ve had almost 60 conversations. We believe their voices of encouragement, challenge, and direction are worth hearing.

‘Thank You. Stay Involved.’

Every Majority World leader we spoke with expressed gratitude for the sacrifice of Western missionaries. Dr. Lazarus Phiri, vice chancellor of the Evangelical University in Zambia, described what it took to bring the gospel to his country: “There are graveyards of the pioneer missionaries who led their lives so that I might hear the gospel. An aunt of my wife packed a coffin in the boat coming to Africa. We’re indebted to the church in the global North,” he continued, “a debt we cannot pay.”

We’re indebted to the church in the global North, a debt we cannot pay.

The Western missionary effort—despite its association with colonialism and the accusations of cultural imperialism—advanced the gospel around the world. Through their sacrifice and commitment, national churches have taken root in most countries. Leaders from these countries aren’t ignorant of this. Many came to Christ through the work of foreign missionaries.

And although Christianity is declining in Europe and America, these global leaders want the Western church to stay involved. “We still need American minds,” Dela Adadevoh, a Ghanaian and the vice president of Global Leadership for Cru, told us. “We need American spirit, resources, and leadership.”

However, as Adrian de Visser, a Sri Lankan pastor and the vice president of Asian Access, points out, Western involvement won’t be like it was before.

God has blessed you . . . to be a blessing to the nations. I want to celebrate what God has done in you and through you. But now, I also believe that it's a new era. I wouldn't want the church in the West left out of what's happening today.

'Go in New Ways'

In 1910, when evangelicals gathered in Edinburgh to discuss the Great Commission, there were only nine million Christians in Africa. Today, there are almost 700 million—three times the number of Christians in the United States. Missions is no longer the West to the rest. It's now from everywhere to everywhere.

Missions is no longer the West to the rest. It's now from everywhere to everywhere.

According to Pastor Adrian, this changing landscape suggests a change in the West's role.

It's like you've given birth to us, and we are your children. When the children are thriving, we don't want parents out of the scene. . . . We want the West to recognize that we're no longer infants but welcome us to the table to share a meal with you.

Multiple leaders shared this sentiment. The Majority World church is ready not only to receive missionaries but to shape missiology. They're ready not only to receive theological instruction but to shape theology.

This desire, however, is complicated by the power difference between the Global North and Global South. As Lazarus Phiri explained, "The center of Christianity seems to have shifted to the Global South." Yet much of the intellectual, economic, and political power remains in the North. So, what should missions look like in this new world?

These leaders believe Western missionaries must go in new ways. Carlos Abarca, director of the Costa Rican Missionary Federation, suggested one form Western missions could take: "I think the most beautiful contribution is to be a traveling partner. We help each other with no pretension other than to be collaborative servants of our Lord in a world full of needs." Pastor Adrian agreed. "My desire is this: Can someone come alongside, understand the needs of my country, and work with me to achieve those objectives?"

'Come Alongside'

As global Christianity has shifted south, the Majority World church has taken up the banner of the Great Commission. According to Phiri, "Those people who were once a mission field are now looking like a mission force."

Those people who were once a mission field are now looking like a mission force.

This doesn't mean it's time to pass the baton to the Global South while Western Christians focus on domestic issues. Instead, we should work together. As Dela Adadevoh expressed, Our working assumption is that the Great Commission is given to every people. . . . Every culture has bright spots and blind spots. No one culture is adequate to carry the complex, comprehensive, holistic message of Christ to the diverse world.

This idea is echoed by Adegbite Olanimum, a leader in the Nigerian Evangelical Mission Association who hopes to send 50,000 missionaries over the next 15 years. "I believe the Americans and Europeans still have a place in the global agenda. Every one of us has something to bring to the table. It should not be a paternalistic approach." He believes the complementary

strengths of North American and Nigerian Christians should be leveraged together for the sake of the gospel.

The challenge will be for Western Christians who often have social and economic strength to come alongside our brothers and sisters in the Majority World without standing above them.

Moment of Decision

With the ascendance of Christianity in the Global South, the Western church faces a decisive moment. We can continue with business as usual. We can withdraw. Or we can humbly play the part God has for us today.

As Phiri reminded us, Christ became like us to serve us. We should be willing to follow his humble example. But Carlos Abarca wonders if the Western church is ready to leave behind our power and prejudices "to genuinely meet a brother." To have a relationship, to stay engaged, and to work side by side for the glory of God.

HANDOUT DISCIPLESHP 101-12

Lausanne Global Analysis • March 2017 • Volume 6 / Issue 2

Surfing the Third Wave of Missions in India

Contextual Challenges and Creative Responses

Prabhu Singh

<https://lausanne.org/content/lga/2017-03/surfing-the-third-wave-of-missions-in-india>

‘The singular thing about India is that you can only speak of it in the plural’, writes Indian scholar Shashi Tharoor.^[1] This quote highlights the diversity as well as the complexity involved in trying to decipher contemporary India, as the nation is going through seismic changes and tectonic shifts.

‘The singular thing about India is that you can only speak of it in the plural’, writes Indian scholar Shashi Tharoor.^[1] This quote highlights the diversity as well as the complexity involved in trying to decipher contemporary India, as the nation is going through seismic changes and tectonic shifts.

Three waves of Protestant missions

While Christianity in India is as old as Christianity itself, the Protestant Christian missions in India—spanning three centuries—can be broadly classified into three waves:^[2] the foreign cross-cultural era during the colonial period (1706–1946); the Indian cross-cultural era in post-independence India (1947–90); and the indigenous era^[3] in post-liberalization India (1991–).

First wave

Indians too played a crucial and catalytic role in the rapid spread of the gospel.

The first wave started with the arrival of the first Protestant missionary, Bartholomew Ziegenbalg, in 1706 to Tamil Nadu in South India. The next 250 years saw a steady influx of missionaries from different parts of Europe and America to India, which was then under the colonial rule. This wave began to ebb by the early decades of the twentieth century and lost its thrust by the mid-twentieth century. While mission was primarily understood as uni-directional—West to Rest of the World—during this period, new studies show that Indians too played a crucial and catalytic role in the rapid spread of the gospel.

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Second wave

After independence in 1947, resistance to the presence of foreign missionaries resulted in their phased withdrawal in the 1950s and 1960s. While many wondered what would happen to Christianity in India (a similar apprehension to that in China after Mao’s ascendancy to power), a new wave of Indian cross-cultural mission movements started, particularly from the 1960s onwards in the South and Northeast, with a specific focus on taking the gospel to the unreached in North and Central India, particularly among the *Adivasis*.^[4] This wave began to ebb by the 1990s as India underwent cataclysmic changes during that decade.

While this wave had a significant impact, there were serious limitations as well:

- Mission was confined primarily to tribal and rural settings, resulting in serious neglect of missions among the urban.
- Too much focus on ‘numbers’ resulted in a lack of discipleship and falling away among new believers.
- Uncritical importation of South Indian (Tamil/Kerala) cultures and worship patterns was inappropriate among the *Adivasis* and others in North India.

Third wave

The third wave began in the 1990s as India liberalized its economy unleashing a new era of globalization. This period also saw the ascendancy of Hindu nationalism and its targeted persecution of the Christian community. However, Christianity continues to grow in fresh ways, particularly in parts of North India.

I shall briefly highlight five key themes that define this third wave and the missional challenges during this period:

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1. Glocal complex connectivity

India liberalized its economy in 1991, ushering in a new era of glocal (global and local) complex connectivity. The current iteration of globalization and its ramifications are felt in various realms: the rapid dissemination and consumption of information; the rise of the new middle class(es), along with rampant materialism and consumerism; massive urbanization and migration; and a new sense of interconnectedness and interdependency at the global and local levels. The younger generation (more than half the population is under 25) is often dubbed the ‘Google generation’ and ‘Twitter teens’. They are huge consumers of global popular culture, particularly those in the urban areas.



2. Heightened cultural sensitivity

India is an ancient civilization known for its rich heritage of cultural diversity and religious plurality. The Anthropological Survey of India’s *People of India* project has identified 4,693 communities in India.^[5] It claims that Indian diversity is marked by linguistic heterogeneity, ecological diversity, biological variation and cultural pluralism.

While some scholars claim that globalization is inevitably shaping the world into a homogenized Western mould, in India, globalization and economic liberalization have also led to the fragmentation and tribalization of society, with each community attempting to assert its identity. This is evidenced by the formation of numerous caste organizations, regional political parties, and religious movements in the last two decades. This heightened cultural sensitivity seems to be one of the key factors in the rise of religious fundamentalism and terrorism during this third wave.



3. Exciting gospel receptivity

The Spirit of God is blowing across the land in fresh ways as many ‘Christward movements’^[6] are occurring, not only among the tribal and Dalit communities but also among other faith communities that are historically resistant to the gospel. This is empirically verified by the one of the largest ongoing research initiatives in the Majority World—an exploratory study of the new Christward movements in North India that I lead at SAIACS (South Asia Institute for Advanced Christian Studies). This exciting fresh wave of movements also challenges our conventional methodologies and motivates us to rethink our traditional mission models.^[7]



4. Alarming religious animosity

While India has always had a religiously plural ethos, contemporary India has been polarized along religious lines with the advent of the Hindu nationalist political party to power in 2014 with an absolute majority. Hindu nationalism is an ideology that seeks to create a Hindu *rashtra* (nation) by redefining ‘Indianness’ on the basis of religion and culture. It is a hegemonic attempt to essentialize and homogenize India as a Hindu nation. Even though the origin of Hindu nationalism can be traced back more than a century, the systematic sowing of hatred and targeted violence against the Christian communities, particularly in Gujarat and Orissa, happened during this third wave.^[8]



5. Widening economic disparity

Post-liberalized India has grown richer, but the gap between the rich and the poor also seems to be widening. Amartya Sen, Nobel Laureate Indian economist, claims that the twenty-year span (1991–2011) of economic liberalization and globalization has seen GDP grow, but that many of the benefits have not reached the poor.^[9] While the number of billionaires has dramatically increased, there is also the tragic fact that in the last fifteen years, 250,000 poverty-stricken farmers have committed suicide, which is probably the largest wave of suicide in human history. While disparity has always existed between rich and poor, the gap is more pronounced in this period.

How do we surf this third wave?

Failure to understand the times, as well as the people in their cultural contexts, renders us ineffective in our missional endeavors

In Madurai in Tamil Nadu, a Christian evangelistic outreach was organized some years back. As part of an advertisement blitz, some Christians wrote on the street walls the slogan, ‘Jesus is the answer’. However, the next day, some perceptive Hindus wrote underneath the words, ‘What is the question?’^[10] Failure to understand the times, as well as the people in their cultural contexts, renders us ineffective in our missional endeavors, as we end up answering questions that people are not asking and not answering those that they are actually asking.^[11]

During this third wave, it is imperative for Christians, cross-cultural witnesses, and missional leaders in India and abroad to recognize that Christian mission in India is different from previous eras, as the contexts and conditions have dramatically changed in many places. Perpetuating uncritically the mindset and methodologies of previous eras will be detrimental to the cause of Christ.

The Bible clearly exhorts God’s people to understand and appropriate the times in which they live. I believe the need of the hour is to ‘understand the times’ (I Chron 12:32), carefully ‘interpret the times’ (Luke 12:56), and serve appropriately in ‘such a time as this’ (Esth 4:14).

Christian mission in this third wave needs to show three characteristics:



1. Creativity

In contemporary Indian missions, there is a welcome shift from the tribal/rural focus to urban settings. There is a creative surge of innovative approaches in ministry in an urban context, particularly among young people and professionals. Exciting missional ventures through arts, sports, business, and electronic media are being explored, and cutting-edge technology is being employed for missional purposes. Calvary Temple in Hyderabad, South India, with more than 100,000 members, is the largest church in India and probably the fastest growing church in the world. As the church struggled to follow up their members for pastoral care due to the influx of so many new people, they came up with an innovative idea. Members have been provided with smart cards and are encouraged to swipe them in machines placed at the entrances of the church building. The data is stored and analyzed for the church leadership team to engage in follow-up on members who were not able to attend the worship service.



2. Contextualization

Sadhu Sunder Singh, the famous Indian evangelist from a Sikh background, gave a succinct description of contextualization in the Indian context. He said, ‘It is giving the water of life in an Indian cup.’ As mentioned earlier, there are at least 4,693 cups within India that need the water of life. While there have been sporadic attempts to contextualize the faith, the need for cultural relevance and sensitivity in missions has gained greater salience in the third wave, particularly due to the rise of Hindu nationalism and growing attrition among new believers. Contemporary studies on attrition among new believers reveal that one of the major reasons is lack of cultural fit. As a trained missiological anthropologist, it is refreshing for me to see a new sense of openness among mission leaders and practitioners to contextualizing the gospel among peoples of different cultures and faiths in this new era.^[12] For instance, a southern Indian agency, serving in Punjab for many years, had earlier encouraged new believers from a Sikh background to cut their long hair and shave their beards as an evidence of their new faith. However, during a recent visit, I saw many followers of Jesus wearing their turban, as the agency seems to be more open to indigenous cultural forms. Perhaps this is one of the reasons for the exponential growth of the church in that region, as locals begin to realize that a Punjabi need not become a ‘*madarasi*’ (colloquial term for South Indian) in order to be a follower of Jesus.



3. Courage

it is imperative to recognize that Christian mission in India is different from previous eras.

The missional community that incarnates the gospel must exhibit the life of Christ and embody the love of Christ in a context that is increasingly becoming hostile to missional endeavours. Authentic Christian mission is prophetic and it involves sacrificial service, no matter which era we live in. As Latin American scholar Rene Padilla rightly points out, ‘The missiology the church needs today ought to be perceiving the people of God not as a quotation that simply reflects the society of which it is a part but as “an embodied question mark” that challenges the values of the world.’^[13]

Even as we are sensitive to the contextual realities of our times, may we never be reduced to a mere ‘quotation mark’ that uncritically reflects the views and values of the society, but let us be emboldened to be an ‘embodied question mark’ during this era of missions in India.

May our Lord give us grace to be creative, contextual, and courageous ‘fishers of men and women’ in this third wave!

Endnotes

1. Shashi Tharoor, *India: From Midnight to the Millennium* (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2000), 8. ↑
2. ‘Wave’ as an analogy has been employed by scholars and historians – like Kenneth Latourette, Alvin Toffler and Robert Schreiter – to categorize and periodize history. Waves are a suitable analogy for periodization as they represent the ebb and flow of time, people, and events in a particular period. More importantly, it also reminds us that the periodizations are not watertight compartments, as they tend to overlap with each other. ↑
3. The term ‘indigenous’ is used here to mean ‘local’ and not ‘primal’. ↑
4. *Adivasi* is a term often used to denote the various indigenous tribal communities in different parts of India. It means original, primal inhabitants (‘Adi’ – first, ‘Vasi’ – inhabitant). ↑
5. K.S. Singh, *People of India: Introduction* (New Delhi: Anthropological Survey of India/Oxford University Press, 2003, Revised Edition), 289. ↑
6. By Christward Movement, I mean a movement of a significant number of people from a particular cultural community towards Christ, within a relatively short span of time. These movements are Spirit-enabled, indigenously facilitated, and often result in fresh cultural expressions of faith. The focus is more on ‘Christ’ than the ‘church’ as we know it traditionally (although they meet together as small groups) or the religion ‘Christianity’. ↑
7. There are at least five empirical PhD studies among these groups that deal with various aspects of the new expressions of faith. ↑

8. *Editor's Note:* See article by Tehmina Arora entitled 'The Spread of Anti-conversion Laws from India' in the May 2016 issue of *Lausanne Global Analysis*. ↑
9. Jean Dreze & Amartya Sen, *An Uncertain Glory: India and Its Contradictions* (London: Penguin Books, 2013). ↑
10. Cited in Dayanand Bharati, *Living Water and Indian Bowl* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2001), 2. ↑
11. *Editors' Note:* See article by Tom Price entitled 'Evangelism and Apologetics Confusion' in the September 2016 issue of *Lausanne Global Analysis*. ↑
12. There has been exciting response from mission leaders and practitioners across the country for participation in our training event '*Christ & Cultures Seminar*', initiated by Centre for Intercultural Studies at SAIACS, which seeks to deal specifically with issues related to gospel and culture in the Indian context. *Editor's Note:* See article by Rabbi Jayakaran entitled 'Delivering the Good News to Hindus' in the July 2014 issue of *Lausanne Global Analysis*. ↑
13. Quoted in Samuel Escobar, *The New Global Mission: The Gospel from Everywhere to Everyone* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press), 168. ↑



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HANDOUT DISCIPLESHIP 101-12

5 Dangers of Tribalism

by Ryan Huguley May 18, 2015

<https://ftc.co/resource-library/blog-entries/5-dangers-of-tribalism/>



Since the beginning of human history people have lived in tribes. Tribes have provided us with the protection, provision, and personal relationships we need as people created for community. While the make-up of tribes has changed over time, the essence has remained the same.

Seth Godin insightfully defines a tribe as “a group of people connected to one another, connected to a leader, and connected to an idea.” Each of us participates in a number of “tribes.” This may be especially true for those of us who claim the name of Christ and are connected to a church. We have preachers we listen to, blogs we read, and conferences we attend.

There's an ever-growing number of tribes in the Church. Denominations, coalitions, and networks all serve as tribes within the Tribe of Christian faith. These tribes we participate in each play a vital role in connecting us to one another and catalyzing us for mission. Despite their many benefits, our tribalism is not without inherent dangers.

1. We major on the minors.

Many of our tribes gather around secondary issues. This is not bad, nor is it to be discouraged. We can do more and get further together than we can apart. The danger is when we make a minor thing, the main thing. Some things are simply more important than others. Paul said the centrality of the gospel is of first importance (1 Cor.15:3). So it matters if your convictions run more Arminian than Reformed, more complementarian than egalitarian, more Baptist than Presbyterian, more incarnational than attractional, more charismatic than cessationist. It all matters – just not as much as the gospel of Jesus Christ. We should hold deep convictions regarding all issues the Bible speaks to, but we should not make secondary things the main thing.

2. We hinder the mission.

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The mission of the church is to make disciples who then make disciples (Matt.28:19-20). The mission of the church is not to grow our tribes, increase our platforms, or enlarge our visibility. Our tribes, platforms, and visibility are mere means to the end of making much of Jesus. Though we would all say our tribes exist for the glory and fame of Jesus' name, it's easy to experience the subtle shift toward existing for the glory and fame of our own tribes. Just because we write about, talk about, and preach about the mission doesn't mean we're on it. When our tribes turn in on themselves we hinder the mission Jesus has called us to.

3. We confuse the world.

While I believe denominations and networks are good and necessary, it can cause a watching world to wonder why we can't get on the same page. When we aren't charitable toward one another and the world around us, we cloud the message of the gospel for people in our lives who don't know Jesus. When we bicker and divide rather than unify around the person and work of Christ, we dissolve the very heart of the message we're called to herald (John 17:21). We should thank God for any church that makes much of Jesus and be careful how we think about, talk about, and relate with the various tribes within the Tribe.

4. We compete rather than connect.

We all have something to learn from everyone. It's not compromise to learn from those we differ with – it's wisdom. James 1:19 says we should be "quick to hear." That has to imply a learning posture, doesn't it? Sadly, we tend to compete with one another, which makes it impossible for us to connect and learn from one another. I have deep theological convictions concerning God's sovereignty, gender, mission, church leadership, and mode of baptism. Yet, the more I want my convictions or my tribe to "win", the less I have the ears necessary to learn from the tribes around me.

5. We demonize those we differ with.

Just because a Christian holds a contrary position to us doesn't mean that they don't love Jesus, prize Scripture as highest authority, or have a passion for the lost. They just might disagree with us. That's okay. The Bible charges us to refute false teaching (1 Tim.1:3), so we must contend for the faith (Jude 3). We should discuss, debate, and even disagree, but we should do so without assuming motive and condemning character.

I'm praying that every network, denomination and coalition that preaches the name of Jesus continues to grow and thrive. WHAT these tribes are is not the problem, but HOW we relate, behave, and steward our interaction with one another must be kept in careful view. Each of our tribes should strive to know Jesus and make Him known and all we do should be done in love (1 Cor.6:14).

HANDOUT DISCIPLESHIP 101-12

African Continent Tormented by Tribal Conflicts: Problem Has Triggered Wars, Toppled Governments and Wrecked Courtships

By DAVID CRARY
March 23, 1986 12 AM PT
NAIROBI, Kenya —

<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1986-03-23-mn-5583-story.html>

From Sudan to South Africa, on shantytown streets and desert battlefields, tribal conflicts are fragmenting Africa's nations and tormenting its peoples.

Even the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa often is beset by tribal rivalry that in recent months has seen black groups fighting each other, sometimes shattering black unity in the battle against the white government.

African tribalism has triggered wars and toppled governments, just as it has wrecked courtships and thwarted job seekers.

Shopper Turned Away

In Kenya, a woman of the Luhya tribe trying to buy cornmeal during a drought-induced food shortage is turned away by a shop-owner selling only to his fellow Kikuyus.

In Uganda, where the guerrillas who took power in January are preaching national unity, tribal affiliation has cost more than half a million lives during two decades of chaos. "It is common knowledge that tribalism is a killer," said Willie Masururwa, a political commentator in Zimbabwe, where the Ndebele and Shona tribes have been sparring for 150 years. "Anybody who has been hanging around since Africa began to rule itself has seen tribalism butchering many people on our continent."

Before colonialism, the tribes functioned as distinct nationalities. They sometimes warred with one another but were rarely locked in the day-to-day friction that began when they were lumped together by Europeans who drew the borders of their possessions without regard for the peoples, languages, and cultures within them.

Divide and Rule

The Kenyan sociologist Katama Mkangi wrote in a recent article that colonial powers encouraged tribal jealousies as part of a divide-and-rule strategy. He said the divisions have been maintained since independence by Africans with a stake in preserving the status quo on a continent with not enough to go around.

"It is very safe to say that the producers, sustainers and purveyors of tribalism in Africa are the rich, the powerful and the educated," Mkangi wrote.

In South Africa, most anti-apartheid activists accuse the government of exacerbating tribal differences through the establishment of 10 black homelands.

Recent fighting in Natal between Zulus and Pondos is considered tribal conflict by the South African government, but critics say that the homeland system aggravated the problem. Zulus living in the Kwazulu homeland felt threatened by Pondo squatters, who came illegally to the fringes of Durban to compete for scarce jobs since there are far fewer opportunities in their homeland of Transkei

Factor in Civil Wars

Tribal divisions are a factor also in current civil wars in Chad, Angola and Sudan, as they were in the devastating Biafran war in Nigeria in the 1960s.

Tens of thousands of people were slaughtered during power struggles between the Tutsi and Hutu tribes of Burundi and Rwanda in the 1960s and early 1970s, and the toll continues to climb across the continent.

Despite the awkwardness of the colonial boundaries, today's African leaders have repeatedly endorsed their validity in the quarter-century since much of the continent became independent.

The late Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, among others, argued that redrawing borders along ethnic lines would produce a continent composed of hundreds of small tribal states.

One-Party System

Many African countries have adopted one-party political systems in an effort to blunt the influence of ethnic factions, and many leaders denounce tribalism as an obstacle to national development. But their words often go unheeded.

In Kenya, where the largest of roughly 40 tribes comprises less than 20% of the population, President Daniel Arap Moi describes tribalism as a cancer and "the foundation of all evil." He has ordered employers to stop hiring on a tribal basis and urged teachers to counter ethnic prejudices among their pupils.

But in spite of Moi's appeals, the lonely hearts ads in Kenya's Express magazine carry such strictures as "partner should not be a Luo" or "Kikuyu--prefers same."

Uganda's new president, guerrilla commander Yoweri Museveni, says his National Resistance Army is committed to ending tribal conflicts.

Tranquility in Tanzania

Julius Nyerere, who recently retired as president of Tanzania, was relatively successful in creating a sense of national identity in his country, which has more than 100 tribes. One of his tactics was to encourage the use of Swahili as the national language.

Burundi's President Jean-Baptiste Bagaza has sought to heal the rift between his minority Tutsi tribe and the majority Hutus who were slaughtered by the tens of thousands in 1972. He now says there are no Tutsis or Hutus, only Burundians, and he has brought Hutus into the government for the first time.

But some aspects of tribalism are beneficial. Tribal links often create an informal welfare system, helping people in the big, polyglot cities obtain food and financial support through tribal connections. In an alien metropolis, contact with a fellow tribesman is a powerful antidote to homesickness.

Africans cling to their tribes for the same reasons other people adhere to their own ethnic groups--a sense of belonging to an extended family, shared traditions and language, resentment toward groups perceived as economic or political rivals.

Patriotism a New Concept

Africa's main distinctions are the high number of tribes and the relative newness of its nations. National identity and patriotism are relatively unfamiliar to many Africans, although in most cases they are becoming steadily stronger.

Many Africans resent the contentions of others that tribalism is exclusively an African problem. They contend that their ethnic conflicts are not essentially different from those that have sparked wars and violence in Europe and elsewhere for centuries.

The European drive for formal political control of Africa did not start in earnest until the 1880s, even though commercial contacts and slave trading began almost four centuries earlier.

An international conference in Berlin in 1884-85--often described as the forum where Africa was carved up--did not in itself partition Africa but set guidelines for the Europeans to do so without major squabbling among themselves. The participants were the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Belgium, Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United States.

The conference secured free trade in the Congo Basin, free navigation on the Congo and Niger rivers, and bound the 14 signatories to respect any annexation of coastal Africa if accompanied by effective occupation.

Proof