

# The Externally Focused Church

*"A healthy church is a community of Christ followers who, under the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, abandon themselves to passionately pursue together the living out of God's mission to make disciples where they live, work and play."*

John M Bailey

## What Does Scripture Say?

**Acts 1:8,**<sup>8</sup> but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

**Matthew 28:18-20,**<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.<sup>19</sup> "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,<sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

**John 4:35-38,**<sup>35</sup> "Don't you say, 'There are still four more months, then comes the harvest'? Listen [to what] I'm telling you: Open your eyes and look at the fields, for they are ready for harvest.<sup>36</sup> The reaper is already receiving pay and gathering fruit for eternal life, so the sower and reaper can rejoice together.<sup>37</sup> For in this case the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.'<sup>38</sup> I sent you to reap what you didn't labor for; others have labored, and you have benefited from their labor."

**Matthew 9:35-38,**<sup>35</sup> Then Jesus went to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness.<sup>36</sup> When He saw the crowds, He felt compassion for them, because they were weary and worn out, like sheep without a shepherd.<sup>37</sup> Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

**John 9:4,**<sup>4</sup> We must do the works of Him who sent Me while it is day. Night is coming when no one can work.

**Acts 13:2-3,** As they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work that I have called them to."<sup>3</sup> Then, after they had fasted, prayed, and laid hands on them,<sup>[2]</sup> they sent them off.

**Acts 4:8,** Then Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit and said to them...

**Acts 4:13,** When they observed the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed and knew that they had been with Jesus.

**Acts 8:29,** The Spirit told Philip, "Go and join that chariot."

**Acts 10:44,** While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came down on all those who heard the message.

**Acts 12:5,** So Peter was kept in prison, but prayer was being made earnestly to God for him by the church...

**Acts 14:3,** So they stayed there for some time and spoke boldly, in reliance on the Lord, who testified to the message of His grace by granting that signs and wonders be performed through them.

**2 Timothy 2:2,** And what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

**1 Cor. 9:22,** I have become all things to all people, so that I may by all means save some.

**If your church could measure its ministry effectiveness by only one statistic, what would you count? What measurement do you think is the most important one in God's eyes? What one stat would God check more than any other?**

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**Based upon the scriptures on the previous page and any others, what are the methods or factors that enhance our ability to fulfill God's mission?**

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**What are the barriers that exist in your community that prohibit people from hearing, understanding and embracing the gospel?**

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**What are your greatest frustrations in ministry?**

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**Imagine you're having a cup of coffee with Jesus and you ask, "So... we're having a hard time fulfilling your mission. So how did you develop people to be so committed to your cause?"**

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**What Would a Missionary do to Fulfill God's Mission in Your Community?**

In the lines that follow list the activities of a missionary. What comes first?

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_

## The Missionary Practices of Paul

The New Testament is a missionary handbook containing principles that work in all cultures at all times. The Book of Acts, in particular, offers its readers an opportunity to see how the gospel spread from the city of Jerusalem throughout the known world.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul set the course for missionary work that continues today. His methods and writings have withstood the test of time and circumstances. The following scripture study will give you a glimpse into Paul's missionary activities. It will help set your course as you begin your EPOCH journey.

- Read Acts 13:2-3, 13, 15:40-41, and 18:18. Paul ministered with a team. Who are some of the people Paul took with him on his missionary journeys? Why did he take people with him on his missionary journeys? What do you think made them a good team?
- Read Acts 13:2-3 and Acts 16:6-10. Paul was led by the Holy Spirit. Why did Paul leave the church at Antioch? How did he determine where to go and where not to go?
- Read Acts 4:2, 4:31, 5:12, 8:12, 9:32-35, 9:40-42, 13:44, 14:3, 15:12, 17:17, 19:6, 20:20-21, 25:1-12, 1 Corinthians 2:3-5 and 1 Corinthians 3:5-8. What activities did Paul do in order to impact people with the gospel? How is this different from your idea of proclaiming the gospel? In what ways do you need to adjust your behaviors?
- Read Acts 14:27-28, 20:20-21, Romans 16, and Colossians 4:15. Throughout the New Testament small groups, or churches emerged. How are these similar to your idea of church? How are they different?
- Read Acts 14:21-23, 15:36, and 2 Timothy 2:1-2. Paul often followed up with care, instructions and the appointment of leaders. This provided sound doctrine and helped insure multiplication of disciples. What kinds of things did Paul teach? What was his method for making disciples?

## The Simple (but rapid) Multiplication of the Kingdom

### # 1. Accept your calling

- Am I willing to make the Great Commission my personal calling?
- Will I settle for comfort and fall short of the prize?
- Commitment to a cause attracts both cooperation and opposition.
- Movements are characterized by discontent, vision and action.

### #2. Sow the gospel in word and deed with Holy Spirit power

- Not only did Jesus preach that the Kingdom of God was near, he demonstrated it.
- You cannot effectively evangelize without power encounters with the Holy Spirit.

### #3. Invite to or create biblical community

- These are the farm systems for future leaders.
- There are many factors that influence the decision to adopt a new faith, but the most important factor is a close and positive relationship with a committed participant. Belonging precedes believing in many cases.

### #3. Make disciples who make disciples

- Every disciple is ordained for ministry at baptism.
- A person is far more likely to adopt a new faith if he witnesses a friend or family member convert to that faith.

### #4. Identify and recruit potential leaders by revelation

- We're to pray to the lord of the harvest to send out laborers.
- Nothing happens without a deep dependence upon God.

### #5. Develop leaders who make leaders

- Luke 10 was a training mission.
- Education cannot create a leader, it can only improve one.

### #6. Form simple worship gatherings

- 35 to 75 people.
- Informal, acoustic driven, conversational bible study.

### #7. Congregationalize

- No less than 75 people.
- Start with few programs.
- Maintain your emphasis upon the proliferation of disciples, small groups, leaders and churches.

## Churches That Reach the Unchurched

The chief objective of both evangelism (within a culture) and mission (across cultures) is not merely to establish a loving presence among the people, or to proclaim the gospel, or to elicit decisions; rather it is to communicate the meaning of the gospel and to make disciples, especially new disciples. We know we ought to reach people. To do so we must ask questions like, "What approaches, methods, and ministries, in what kinds of contexts, actually reach people, gather harvests, and make new disciples?"

- Only 20 out of every 100 churches are growing
- Of those 20, 17 are growing thru biological growth
- Of those 20, one is growing through conversion
- Although we have 12 churches for every 10,000 people - they are located where the people used to live (Rural, town and country)

Churches that Reach the Unchurched:

- ... are culturally and emotionally relevant
- ... have small groups that are in ministry with and to one another
- ... have an empowered and deployed laity (Eph. 4:11-13)
- ... grow through the proliferation of disciples, small groups, leaders and churches
- ... have members who reach out within their relational networks
- ... create "intersections" for their people to engage the lost
- ... embrace a holistic gospel (truth and proof) and seek to reach their Nazareth.
- ... have high expectations for their people
- ... fuse intimacy with impact
- ... are intentional in their efforts to make disciples
- ... bring beauty to their communities and would be greatly missed if they left
- ... measure not only what can be counted but also what matters most
- ... are deliberately simple
- ... create community partnerships
- ... are not limited by size, location, style or denomination
- ... are Holy Spirit dependent and empowered
- ... have a kingdom agenda

## Discovering Where God is at Work in Your Community

The world as you know it no longer exists - and the world that does exist is unlike anything we have ever dreamed of. It appears that we live in a world for which the churches of North America are woefully prepared. What used to work doesn't - what will work hasn't been discovered! Some believe that in North America less than 38% of our inhabitants are even remotely interested in checking out a church service. Our response?

- Better preachers who use technology to enhance their ability to communicate the gospel
- Modern facilities with coffee bars, living rooms for fostering community, chairs and new "environments" for worship
- Fewer but better quality age-graded programs offered at convenient times

The results? Less than 20% of our friends and neighbors attend church regularly. (It's even less in our urban centers)

### Doing God's Will

Henry Blackaby wrote in *Experiencing God*,

"What is God's will for my life?" is not the best question to ask. I think the right question is simply, "What is God's will?" Once I know God's will, then I can adjust my life to Him and His purposes. Now, that does not mean that God has no will concerning your life. He certainly does. He has a purpose and plan for your life. But the plan He has for your life is based on what He is doing in His world. His desire is for you to become involved in what He is doing. Finding out what He is doing helps you know what He will want to do through you. (pg. 18)

He goes on to say that God does not ask us to dream our dreams for Him and then ask Him to bless our plans. **Our task? To identify where God is at work.** He is at work in our community. When God reveals His work to us, that is His timing for us to begin to respond to Him - it His invitation for us to join Him.

### Expedition

([www.churchplantingvillage.net/explore](http://www.churchplantingvillage.net/explore))

An expedition is different than taking a trip or a tour. The word "expedition" is defined by Wikipedia as "a journey undertaken for a specific purpose, usually exploration and/or research." Just as we are to exegete Scripture, so we must also exegete the culture and the people who make up our community. To interpret a text of Scripture without understanding the context of the Scriptures can lead to a false interpretation of the text and mislead people in the truth. One must understand the context of the culture, as well as the people who live there, so that the truth of the gospel can be seeded properly into their lives.

A healthy expedition requires that two domains be explored. First, you need to explore your community in an effort to discover where, and how, God is at work. Second, we believe that God will speak to those conducting the expedition – especially about their personal role in advancing His kingdom. Issues like calling and personal ministry may be examined and even challenged. Our desire is to unlock the community’s cultural code. This will aid churches in being a better neighbor, in saturating the community with the gospel, and in the possible planting of new churches. While doing this we believe that God will speak to individuals about their role in meeting the needs they discovered.

To exegete or explore a community, you are ultimately trying to answer seven main questions:

1. Who are the people that live here?
2. What are they like? Beliefs? Values? Behaviors?
3. Who is not being reached with the gospel? Why?
4. How can they be reached with the gospel?
5. What physical and emotional needs are prevalent in our community? (Poverty, crime, hunger, orphans, widows, literacy, mental health, etc.)
6. Who is seeking to meet these needs? How effective are they? What are their greatest needs?
7. What needs are not being met?

Caution! As you conduct your expedition you will bring with you a set of values, experiences, and cultural norms with you as well as an understanding of how to reach people with the gospel and how a church should operate. Set those aside. Be careful not to answer these questions, especially the last one, without engaging the community, culture, and people you meet. Remember, this is a spiritual exercise. Allow God to reveal Himself and His ways to reach these people to you before you answer the questions. Your insights are important.

## **EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES**

### ***1. Research***

Prior to conducting your expedition it would be profitable for a team of individuals to conduct some research on your community or portion of the city which you are exploring. This type of research should not replace engaging people in your community - it should supplement that work by providing your teams with some general things to look for. Here are a few areas I would study:

- Basic demographic information, trying to attain it at a level lower than zip codes. (Census tracts, etc.)
- Statistics on crime, poverty, literacy, hunger, mental health, etc.
- Statistics on church attendance and the ministries of churches within specific areas of your community
- Non-profits that are addressing the physical and emotional needs of those living in your community

- A history of church planting in your community and their effectiveness
- Immigration and migration trends in your community. Who's moving into or around your community and where.

## **2. *Vision Tour and Prayerwalking***

You will receive a map of the community with a section highlighted. This will be the portion of the city which you and your team will prayerwalk or drive. As you travel, you will be asked to identify churches, businesses, schools, restaurants, government buildings, etc. A workbook will be provided to guide your expedition. It will contain your instructions and the forms you will need for capturing the information you gather. (See Appendix A)

## **3. *Interviews and Photographing the Community***

We want you to involve all five senses of your being as you scout this community. This will be fun! We want you to collect photographs of the community that represent the cultures, people, and customs of its inhabitants. (See Appendix B)

- Photograph items or locations that reflect the community's values and what is important here. (Bring a digital camera if you have one and a way to unload your pictures.)
- Photograph the people you see, noting their differences and uniqueness. What types of recreation do they enjoy and what kind of toys do they own? Photograph them! Do they represent a large or small number of people?
- What does the housing in the community tell you about those that live there? Take photographs. Collect brochures that describe the homes that are for sale in your area of the city, if they are available.
- All cultures have restaurants that reflect the values of the community. Select those restaurants that are unique, local, and not chains. Engage waitresses in conversation. Taste the food. Note how people interact and the environment created by the owners.
- Most communities are served by community service organizations like senior adult centers, head start programs, public health departments, food banks, shelters, etc. When you locate one, interview the director, if possible, to learn about the needs in the community. Be sure to gather any information they may have on the community and the needs they meet.
- Interview as many people as you can. Ask them several questions (A guide will be provided). Here are some examples:
  - What do you like best about living here?
  - Describe for us the kind of people who live here.
  - What are the community's greatest needs?
  - How could a church help meet the needs of this community? How could a church be a better neighbor?
- Many sociologists believe that people in today's environments hunger for community—that we are basically lonely people. As you travel in your assigned area, seek to identify where people gather to experience community. Photograph those

locations. Interview the owners and participants. Who frequents the location? What do they have in common? How could a follower of Christ engage people in this environment, seeking to build relationships and to become a part of the community?

- We believe that God is at work in this community and in many cases, in non-Southern Baptist Churches. Part of our quest is to identify those churches that God is blessing and to identify their audiences and methodologies. When you identify a church in your assigned region, make every effort to interview the pastor or staff member. Photograph their exterior. Bring back a copy of their newsletter if they have one or materials that describe the ministries of the church.

#### **4. Focus Groups**

One of the most fascinating ways to learn about a community and her people is to gather together a group who represent a particular segment of the population or people group and interview the group as a whole. Their interaction with you and themselves can provide a wealth of information. On this expedition, not all of you may have this opportunity scheduled for you, but we would encourage you to explore ways to gather a group of people as you do your vision tour. (See Appendix D)

#### **5. S.C.O.U.T.**

The data collected by you and your team will be processed and written in a report which captures your impressions and findings in the following areas (See Appendix C) as a team and as an individual:

**Setting** of your portion of the community

**Cultural** profiles of the groups of people you met

**Opportunities & Obstacles** for sharing the gospel among the people you met

**Uniqueness** of this place and its people

The writing of a **Tapestry** or snapshot of the community

To be "fishers of men," which is the heart and basis for reaching people with the gospel, one must understand what kind of fish we have, how these fish think, what's important to them and what activities make up the rhythms of their lives. The goal of your expedition is to identify the types of people who live in your community and learn all you can about them—to know how to pray for them, how to effectively communicate the gospel, and reach them for the kingdom. Barriers that obstruct effective communication must be identified, as well. It is important however that you see that this is only the beginning – much more work will be needed.

## The Spiritually Mature Disciple

*“You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: love your neighbor as yourself.”*

Matthew 22:37-39

A disciple is not someone who stays the same. A disciple is someone struggling to live a life of heartfelt love and obedience to the father, living and dying for the higher purposes of God's Kingdom. Disciples are called out of their selfish ambitions, and they understand that the longer they follow Jesus, the more uncomfortable they will be and the more sacrifice and effort it will require.

The spiritually mature disciple demonstrates an increasing love for God and people by:

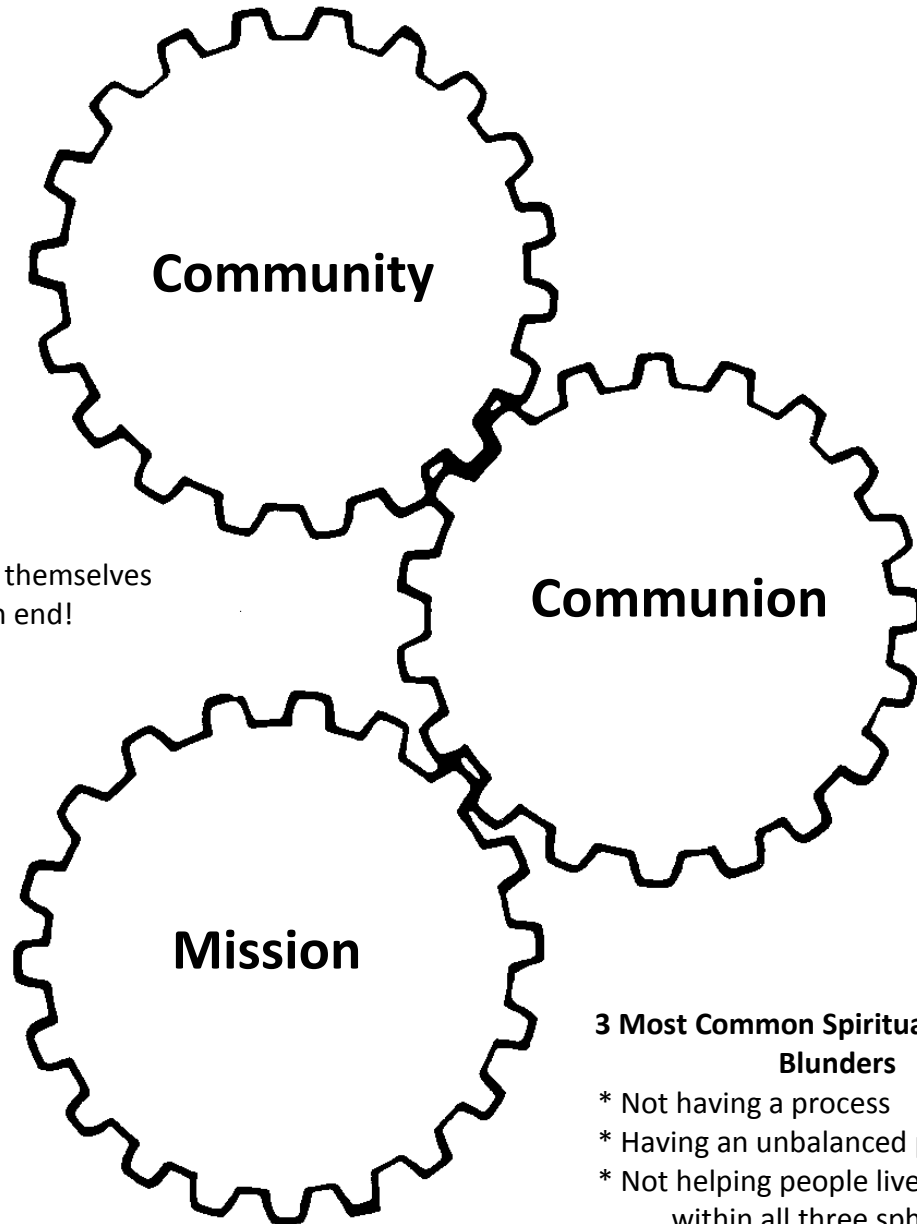
- Drawing others to \_\_\_\_\_
  - Maintains a list of unbelieving friends with whom they are intentionally relate in order to bring them to Christ.
- Participating in community with \_\_\_\_\_
  - Is regular in worship attendance
  - Participates regularly in a small group
- Living to \_\_\_\_\_
  - Serves people in the church
  - Serves people in the community
  - Serves people in another culture or community
- Knowing and \_\_\_\_\_
  - Is involved in disciplined, ongoing study of the Bible
  - Can cite a recent change in thoughts, attitudes, or behavior as a result of their Bible study

Discerning God’s heart is one thing. Growing so that our hearts beat with His is another. And aligning our priorities and activities to reflect God’s heart is still another.

Making disciples involves more than evangelism and conversions – In the Great Commission Jesus brought two dimensions of disciple making into focus – baptizing and teaching – and yet the teaching wasn’t so they “know” but so that they “do”!

## Spiritual Formation or Making Disciples That Make Disciples

If developing people so that they become like Jesus is our grid for evaluating fruitful ministry, then we have to take an honest look at everything else we've felt pressure to provide and ask ourselves, "Do these activities, services, processes, staff positions, religious ceremonies, and financial resource allocations actually help us reorient someone's life direction so they are growing closer to Jesus? Spiritual formation is helping people becoming like Jesus instead of just knowing about him.



These are not an end in themselves  
- they are a means to an end!

### 3 Most Common Spiritual Formation Blunders

- \* Not having a process
- \* Having an unbalanced process
- \* Not helping people live & grow within all three spheres

## The Use of Space In Spiritual Development and Establishing Community

*According to George Gallup Americans are among the loneliest people in the world. In 1974 nearly one in four Americans visited with a neighbor several times a week. By 1994, that figure had declined to 16%. But in 1994 it was also noted that one in three had never spent an evening with a neighbor.*

**Public space** is where we share a common experience and connect through an outside influence. **Social space** is where we share authentic “snapshots” of who we are, which shows what it would be like to have a personal relationship with us. **Personal space** is where we share private experiences, thoughts, and feelings. **Intimate space** is where we share “naked” information about who we are and are not ashamed.

TYPE OF SPACE	NT PARALLEL	CURCH PARALLEL	Values/outcome
Public	Jesus proclaiming to the masses	Public Worship	Inspiration, Momentum, and Preaching
Social	Jesus and the 72	Missional Community	Community, Mission, and Training
Personal	Jesus and the 12	Small Group	Support, Challenge, and Closeness
Intimate	Jesus with Peter, James and John	Triad	Transformation

- Healthy community - the goal humankind has sought since the beginning - is achieved when we hold harmonious connections within all four spaces.
- The four spaces are not an assembly line for growing community. A person cannot start at one end (public), work through the line, and roll off the line a brand-new intimate believer.
- In order to extract a deeper sense of belonging, we must consolidate our worlds into one.
- No groups that came together around a non-missional purpose (prayer, worship, study, etc.) ever end up becoming missional. Those groups that set out to be missional (while embracing prayer, worship, study, etc. in the process) bring transformation.
- Community is not an end unto itself; it is a means to an end.
- Christian community results from the greater cause of Christian mission.

## Missional Communities

*Missional Communities are a group of people, about the size of an extended family, doing the mission of God together outside the regular confines of the church building.*

A Missional Community:

- ... Is a group of people (20 – 50) on mission together
- ... Centers on Jesus, helping people become and then grow as His disciples
- ... Has a defining focus upon reaching a particular neighborhood or network of relationships
- ... Takes place in community and often revolves around shared times of food and fun
- ... has a healthy balance of UP, IN, and OUT
- ... Does not require that members be professing Christians to attend
- ... Looks outwards through a mixture of good deeds and verbal witness
- ... has leaders who receive ongoing help, coaching and accountability

### UP-IN-OUT

As we read the Gospels, Jesus had three great loves and thus three distinct dimensions to his life:

**UP:** (Communion) Deep and connected relationship with his father and attentiveness to the leading of the Holy Spirit

**IN:** (Community) Constant investment in relationships with those around him (his disciples).

**OUT:** (Mission) Entering into the brokenness of the world, seeking to transform individuals and society as a whole.

## Disciple Making Disciples

### Seven Steps for Making Disciples

1. Identify your *oikos*
2. Develop a profile of each person
3. Focus your efforts
4. Develop your disciple making plan
5. Follow your disciple making plan
6. Pray regularly for each person
7. Accept accountability to others and to God for the task at hand

*Win Arn*

### The Basic Elements of Discipleship

1. Friendship-building
2. Meeting regularly
3. Inter-personal sharing
4. Study of scripture
5. Prayer
6. Counseling them thru areas of weakness
7. Help them develop their own ministry
8. Releasing your friend to repeat the process

*Dennis McCallum*

### Six Areas of Transformation

1. Transformation of the mind
2. Transformation of our character
3. Transformation of our relationships
4. Transformation of our habits
5. Transformation of our service
6. Transformation of our influence

*Bill Hull*

### Disciple Making Process

1. Connection
2. Conversation
3. Belief
4. Commitment
5. Transformation
6. Reproduction

*John M Bailey*

**You cannot be my disciple unless you dig your grave...**

**The Biblical Progression of Maturity is believe - serve - mature. (Eph. 4:11-16)**

### Jesus' Model

*So all I did was invite people to follow me, go where I went, watch me do what I did, experience what I experienced, and then send them off to do the same. After that, I usually debriefed or helped them work through the difficulty and the tensions, and I taught them about the Kingdom, the father, and my way of life. When it didn't go too well, I confronted them; when they got bummed out, I encouraged them. I always raised the bar much higher for them than they would have raised it for themselves; I forced them to learn together in community. In fact, I left them because I knew that if I allowed them to always feel safer by me, they'd never learn to trust the Holy Spirit, to work together, or to take ownership of my mission."*

## Luke 10:1-12: Sending Out the Seventy

What are the Implications for Today's Church?

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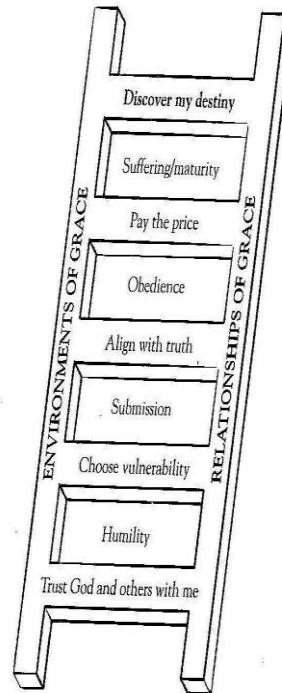
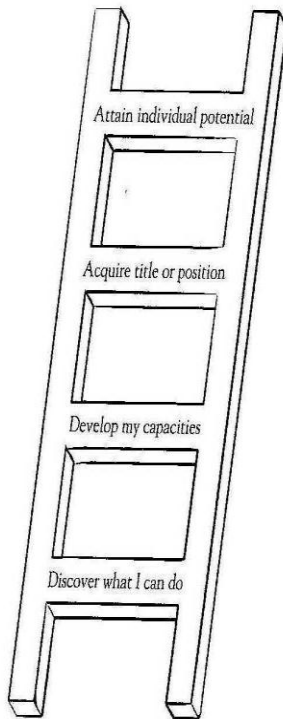
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1. Go \_\_\_\_\_
2. Leave your \_\_\_\_\_ behind
3. Don't \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_ what is set before you
5. Listen to the \_\_\_\_\_
6. Move into the \_\_\_\_\_
7. Create \_\_\_\_\_

	<i>Western</i>	<i>Eastern</i>	<i>Postmodern</i>	<i>Gospel</i>
<i>Why we believe</i>	Reason	Faith	Preference	Discovery
<i>How we view relationships</i>	Autonomous	Holistic	Pluralistic	Inclusive Community
<i>What we value</i>	Security	Legacy	Gratification	Eternity
<i>How we influence others</i>	Institutions	Tradition	Deconstruction	Modeling
<i>How we measure success</i>	Product	Process	Justification	Transformation

## Leader Development

Today's leaders seem to have competence and charisma, but they fall short in the character dimension. Why is character important? Character - the inner world of motives and values that shapes our actions - is the ultimate determiner of the nature of our leadership. In the past, some assumed that the family would own the task of developing character. This simply isn't true, or maybe even possible, in today's world.



### The Leadership Path

1. Become a disciple of Christ
2. Disciple becomes an apprentice
3. Apprentice becomes a small group leader
4. Leader becomes a coach who develops other leaders
5. Leader becomes a ministry director

### The Apprenticeship Process

1. I do and you watch. We talk.
2. I do, you help. We talk.
3. You do, I help. We talk.
4. You do, I watch. We talk.
5. You do, someone else watches. They talk.

## **Ten Practical Ideas for Leadership Development**

1. Most leaders are all ready present; they can be raised up from your congregation. They will embrace your vision, share your values and embody the heart of the church.
2. Use small groups to develop leaders.
3. Leadership development is more relational than anything else. It's not necessarily a class or a program. The best location for leader development is around a dinner table, sharing the ups and downs of life.
4. Leadership is not about problems and decisions; it is a profoundly relational enterprise that seeks to motive people toward a vision that will require significant change and risk - even sacrifice - on everyone's part.
5. Set up simple ways to measure progress by clearly defining success. Be intentional and embrace accountability.
6. Build everything around the concept of reproducing leaders - the making of leaders who make leaders is the desired outcome.
7. Every reproducing leader needs followers, apprentices, a coach, and a network of peers.
8. When assessing potential leaders examine their character, competency, calling, leadership capacity, family and walk with the Father.
9. People learn in different ways. Seek to identify each person's style of learning and develop a customized learning plan.
10. When an individual is reluctant to lead, doubting themselves and their call, they are ripe for growth as a leader. God loves leaders who are frightened, confused and broken.

## The Essentials for Missional Living

Romans 15:18-20a

<sup>18</sup> For I would not dare say anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, <sup>19</sup> by the power of miraculous signs and wonders, and by the power of God's Spirit. As a result, I have fully proclaimed the good news about the Messiah from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum. <sup>20</sup> So my aim is to evangelize where Christ has not been named...

Essential Number One: \_\_\_\_\_

He is our source of strength and wisdom

He goes before us and prepares hearts and opens doors

See Acts 9:31

Essential Number Two: \_\_\_\_\_

It is not of human origin

It is truth without error

When implanted in the hearts of unbelievers in order to bring  
about understanding, conviction and conversion

See Isaiah 52:7

Essential Number Three: \_\_\_\_\_

God has chosen us to be His instruments

See Romans 10:15

Essential Number Four: \_\_\_\_\_

God desires that none should perish

One day people from all tribes, all languages, will worship Him

Essential Number Five: \_\_\_\_\_

Salvation comes only through Christ

Those without Christ will spend eternity in hell

See John 3:36

## The Concerns of the Sower Verses the Harvester

Harvesting and sowing are not two contradictory methods of evangelism vying for supremacy, but two *complimentary roles*, each with its own focus and methodology.

### The Harvester Focuses on...

The end result

Proclamation

Immediate Results

Individual Effort

Points of Disagreement

Answers

Justice

Courage

Innocence

### The Sower Focuses on...

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## Life Transformation Groups

*Life Transformation Groups* are simple discipleship groups that meet together on a weekly basis to bring about personal transformation in the lives of the participants. Each group consists of no more than three people who meet weekly to pray, read scripture, and hold each other accountable.

Building upon the assumption that *Christianity is not a lesson to be learned but a life to be lived*, they seek not to gain new skills or increased knowledge of scripture but rather they seek an opportunity to develop a deeper relationship with God and with one or two other people. The DNA of *Life Transformation Groups* is basic:

- D: Divine truth is read each week
- N: Nurturing relationships are created through mutual accountability
- A: Apostolic Ministry is conducted by praying for the lost

*Divine Truth:* Each week those involved commit to read 30 chapters of scripture from the same book. If a book has less than 30 chapters they agree to begin with the first chapter and continually read in sequence the entire book until the quota is met. If one of the participants fails to read thirty chapters assigned for the week the group attempts the same assignment in the following week. The objective is to allow the Holy Spirit to use scripture to transform the reader. When the group meets they do not necessarily review the reading; they simply inspect each other's faithfulness to reading scripture.

*Nurturing Relationship:* Each week the group, consisting of no more than three people, meets together to confess sins in a relationship based upon mutual accountability. Believing that the confession of sin prepares one for the reading of scripture, the participants ask each other eleven *character development questions* at the beginning of each meeting. These are printed on a *Life Transformation Card* that the participants use as a Bible bookmark and prayer guide. When the group grows beyond three people it automatically splits and forms two groups of two instead of one group of four. Each group is gender specific; men meet only with men.

*Apostolic Mission Activity:* On the reverse side of the *LTG Card* there is space for each participant to record the names of two people whom they want to see come know Jesus as Lord and Savior. Each participant records the names of their friends as well as the names listed by the other two participants. The goal is to have each of the *LTG* members pray for the six souls listed on the *LTG Card* daily using the printed prayer guide.

**Why are the *LTG's* gender specific and why are they kept small?** The objective of the relationship is to make and multiply disciples. This is done best in a safe and secure environment. Men need to share openly and do so best with other men. The same is true for women. The smallness facilitates growth by creating the appropriate environment as well.

Scripture designates that confession and accountability occurs best amongst two or three people. It's also easier to coordinate the schedule of two or three people!

**Why don't the groups use a study guide or focus on discussing the reading assignment?** The basic assumption behind the reading plan is that the Spirit of God uses the Word of God to shape the child of God into the image of the Son of God. The Word of God is active and powerful! Another assumption behind this process is that God is more interested in the transformation of life than He is in the gaining of knowledge. The church today has far more knowledge of scripture than they use. The quest is for transformation, not knowledge, and thus the emphasis upon the confession of sin and accountability.

**Why read thirty chapters of scripture?** Because it is hard! That may sound sarcastic but the idea is not to zip through the Bible in a few months but rather let the Word bring forth transformation. In reality, it may take four or five weeks before each participant completes the reading assignment in the same week. The familiarity gained from reading the same text over and over is valuable.

**Does each group have a leader?** No. Since there is no lesson, there is no need for a leader. Each participant holds the others accountable. No reporting in. No study guides. No leaders. Just ordinary people gathering together to pray, confess and hold each other accountable.

**Why focus so much attention on confession?** First, because it is commanded in scripture that we confess our sins to one another. Second, because the issue is transformation and not the gathering of knowledge. Transformation occurs when we acknowledge that certain activities in our life are sinful and seek the help of God and His people to conquer the sin in our lives. It all begins with the acknowledgement of sin.

**Where can we get LTG Cards?** <http://www.cmaresources.org/node/41>

## ***LTG Card***

### **Character Conversation Questions**

1. Have you been a testimony this week too the greatness of Jesus Christ with both your words and actions?
2. Have you been exposed to sexually alluring material or allowed your mind to entertain inappropriate sexual thoughts about another this week?
3. Have you lacked integrity in your financial dealings or coveted something that does not belong to you?
4. Have you been honoring, understanding and generous in your important relationships this week?
5. Have you damaged another person by your words, either behind their back or face to face?
6. Have you given in to an addictive behavior this week? Explain.
7. Have you continued to remain angry toward another?
8. Have you secretly wished for another's misfortune?
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Did you finish the Bible reading assignment?
11. Have you been completely honest with me?

### **Next Week's Scripture Reading**

## Prayer Guide

Each person in the group is to identify two people whom they want to see come to Christ. Each person should list the names of all identified by the group on their cards.

◇ \_\_\_\_\_  
◇ \_\_\_\_\_  
◇ \_\_\_\_\_  
◇ \_\_\_\_\_  
◇ \_\_\_\_\_  
◇ \_\_\_\_\_

Lord, I pray that You draw \_\_\_\_\_ to yourself (John 6:44)

I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ hears and believes the Word of God for what it really is. (1 Thess. 2:13)

I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ seeks to know you. (Acts 17:27)

I ask You, Lord, to prevent Satan from blinding \_\_\_\_\_ to the truth. (2 Cor. 4:4; 2 Tim 2:25-26)

Holy Spirit, I ask You to convict \_\_\_\_\_ of his/her sin and need for salvation (John 16:7-14)

I ask that You send someone to share the gospel with \_\_\_\_\_ (Matt. 9:37-38)

I also ask that You give me or \_\_\_\_\_ the opportunity, the courage and the right words to share with \_\_\_\_\_ (Col. 4:3-6)

Lord, I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ turns from his/her sin and follows Christ (Acts 17:30-31; 1 Thess. 1:9-10)

Lord, I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ would put his/her trust in Christ (John 1:12; 5:24)

Lord, I pray that \_\_\_\_\_ confess Christ as Lord, take root and grow in faith and bear fruit for Your glory (Rom. 10:9,10; Col. 2:6-7; Luke 8:15)

## Seeker Small Groups

**Definition:** A community of 3 – 12 non-Christians and 1 or 2 Christian facilitators who gather on a regular basis to discuss spiritual matters. An environment where non-Christians gather with a Christian facilitator to openly discuss questions and objections they have about Christianity and the Bible.

### Basic Format for Seeker Small Groups

- Identify what seekers believe
- Seek to understand why they believe what they do
- Assist seekers in exploring biblical truths
- Invite seekers to raise objections and questions
- Ask seekers to draw conclusions

### Six Strategic Steps to Forming a Seeker Small Group

- Catch the vision
- Build spiritual friendships
- Extend irresistible invitations
- Conduct the all-important first meeting
- Facilitate captivating discussions
- Maximize the impact

### Four handles for building spiritual friendships

- Hang out together – Jesus was accused of spending too much time with seekers
- Drop clues right away – let them see your spiritual side early and often
- Look for open windows – opportunities to have conversations about Christ
- Get the message down – be able to explain the gospel in simple terms  
(1 Peter 3:15)

### The Phases of the Seeker's Discovery Process

- Identification: Seekers identify what they believe
- Clarification: Seekers identify why they believe
- Exploration: Seekers explore biblical truths
- Evaluation: Seekers process objections and questions
- Decision: Seekers draw conclusions

### Outline of the First Meeting (In a neutral place)

- Welcome (1 minute) – Acknowledge that this may be scary
- Introductions (9 minutes) – Name, hobbies, occupations, etc.
- Icebreaker #1 (10 minutes) - *The Complete Book of Questions: 1001 Conversation Starters*
- Transition Icebreaker (20 minutes) – “If you could ask God one question what would it be?”
- Scripture (5 minutes) - Read a verse – get their reaction

Conclusion (5 minutes) – “Would you like to meet again? When? How often? Where?”

### **Making Seeker Small Groups Work**

Seek first to understand

- Be the greatest learner in the group
- Learn through asking questions
- Never tell when you can ask
- Use key follow up questions
- Be the best listener

Guide seekers to self-discover biblical truths

- Never be the “Bible answer person”
- Do not pretend to know all the answers
- Leverage some questions for future discussions
- Invite others to respond – don’t be the center of the conversation

Create a Caring Community

- Plan social gatherings
- Call seekers between meetings
- Meet with seekers individually outside the group

Train your replacement – use apprentices

### **Outline of Session Two and Beyond**

- Select the main topic to be discussed and the topic to be discussed
- Determine one or two primary biblical truths to be self-discovered
- Formulate questions to assist seekers through each of the 5 phases
  - Ask seekers what they believe
  - Ask seekers why they believe what they do
  - Ask seekers to explore biblical truths
  - Ask seekers to raise objections and questions
  - Ask seekers to draw conclusions

## PERSONAL ACTION PLAN

What three things have you heard today that you are interested in looking into further?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

### Narrowing the List

Which one would you be willing to concentrate on now? # \_\_\_\_\_ above

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

### Preparing for Action

What's the first thing that would need to be done for you to succeed?

\_\_\_\_\_

What else would need to be put in place?

\_\_\_\_\_

Who could help you with this action?

\_\_\_\_\_

What obstacles are you likely to face if you proceed with this?

\_\_\_\_\_

What will you need to do to overcome those obstacles?

\_\_\_\_\_

### Action!

On a scale of 1 to 10, how committed are you to this goal?

\_\_\_\_\_

If your commitment level is 8 or above, when will you start?

\_\_\_\_\_

(If it's less than 8 what can you do to increase your commitment level?)

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What two things (if any) will you need to drop from your life to allow adequate time for this new goal?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

What are the first three things you will do to accomplish this goal?

### **3 ACTION STEPS**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

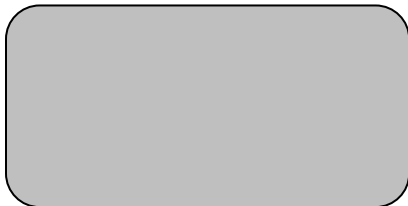
2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

To whom will you be accountable to take these steps?

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## The Simple (but rapid) Multiplication of the Kingdom



### Matthew 13:31-34

<sup>31</sup> He presented another parable to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. <sup>32</sup> It’s the smallest of all the seeds, but when grown, it’s taller than the vegetables and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the sky come and nest in its branches.” <sup>33</sup> He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into 50 pounds of flour until it spread through all of it.”