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CHURCH PLANTING IN

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CULTURE

A Thesis Project Submitted to  
Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

By

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LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THESIS PROJECT APPROVAL SHEET

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## ABSTRACT

### CHURCH PLANTING IN APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CULTURE

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Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 1999

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This project is a review of Appalachian Mountain culture and the church planting practices of the region. The purpose of the project is to review the approach being employed in establishing churches as indigenous bodies of believers. This is based on a survey of pastors in the area and an interview of an evangelist with roots in Appalachia. Problems are addressed that the church planter will face. This is a plan for the Bible school, the home mission board, and the local church to work together in the establishment of indigenous local churches.

Abstract length: 93 words.

## DEDICATION

I wish to express my appreciation to the following people who have helped greatly in the accomplishment of this project.

--My wife, Annette, for her encouragement, patience, and help not only with this project but with many areas of my life.

--My children, Krista and Timothy II, for understanding the amount of time that was spent on this project.

--My parents, William and Donna Compton, for helping me stay at the task and not get discouraged. They have been faithful to my family and the Lord's work for many years and are an example of dedication.

--To my brother, Rodney, who kept me preserving with the saying, "If it were easy everyone would have a doctor's degree".

--To my deceased grandparents, George and Emma Summers, and Bill and Dorothy Compton, and a special deceased Uncle, Robert Summers, who gave of themselves sacrificially to allow me to accomplish my schooling.

--To Gladys Brown, secretary of Wayside Chapel, who spent many hours reading and editing this project.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Purpose.....	2
Statement of the Question.....	2
Questions to be Answered.....	2
Definitions.....	3
Overview of the Project.....	4
Limitations of the Project.....	5
2. THE CULTURE OF THE APPALACHIAN HIGHLAND.....	6
Individualism and Self-reliance.....	17
Personalism or People Orientation.....	19
Suspicion of Strangers or Aloofness from Strangers.....	21
Closeness to the Land and the Importance of Place.....	25
Family Solidarity.....	26
Innate Modesty.....	28
Emotional Nature.....	28
Religion.....	29
3. THE MOST EFFECTIVE TYPE OF CHURCH IN MOUNTAIN CULTURE .....	37
What is the Biblical Definition of a Church?.....	37
What is the Purpose of the Church?.....	39

Importance of Godly Leadership in the Local Church.....	40
4. QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEW.....	51
Questionnaire Data.....	53
5. A PLAN TO DEVELOP AND PLANT INDIGENOUS CHURCHES IN APPALACHIA.....	80
Conclusions.....	80
The Problems.....	83
The Plan.....	85
Conclusion.....	98
Apendix	
A. CHURCH OPERATIONS MANUAL.....	101
B. SAMPLE CONSTITUTION.....	110
C. LETTER AND FORM SENT FOR SURVEY.....	128
D. INTERVIEW WITH REV. HARRY RAMSEY.....	131
E. EVALUATION FORM.....	138
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	139

## Chapter One

### Introduction

Appalachia is a unique area of the United States that has developed its own characteristics. This region of the country has had its times of prosperity and its times of depression. Most, if not all, of these swings have been linked to the demand for coal, the main industry, as well as the social and economical tie of the area. There is much mistrust of the outsider because of the methods that have been used to gain the rich natural resources for which this region is known.

Appalachia was a disregarded section of the country until it received its greatest notoriety when President John F. Kennedy visited the region in the 1960's. The visit by President Kennedy resulted in the creation of the Appalachian Regional Commission in 1962. President Lyndon B. Johnson was the next significant visitor to the region in 1964 and he declared war on poverty, thereby bringing many individuals and publishers to this region of the country.

The religion of the Appalachian Mountains is distinct because of the isolation of the region. The missionaries who have entered the region have many times had a negative or superior attitude toward the mountaineer. This attitude has resulted in the difficulty of establishing the indigenous church.

This project is about planting successful, indigenous churches in this region. Many of the pastors of the region are bi-vocational, and the natives of the region believe

that this is the proper way to establish and minister in mountain churches. These men have done a great job in mountain churches, and without them many of the mountain churches would not exist today.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this project is to understand the culture of the region and particularly the spiritual life of the mountaineer. This paper will provide information for the church planter who is not a native of the region. It will help him to work effectively in the mountains, avoid the pitfall of not understanding the culture, and not become discouraged when trials come.

The author is a native of the region and has pastored a church in the mountains for 14 ½ years. He has observed many ministers come, work, get discouraged, and then leave. There is a need for ministers who are called of the Lord to establish indigenous, local churches and who will avoid certain pitfalls. After reading this paper, such a minister should be better prepared to accomplish the job to which God has called him.

### **Statement of the Question**

What factors make it possible to establish indigenous local churches in the Appalachian Mountain culture?

### **Questions to be Answered**

1. What characteristics make Appalachian Mountain culture unique?
2. What type of church best meets the needs of the inhabitants of this mountain



culture?

3. What methods have worked well in the past, and what methods have failed?
4. What conclusions can be drawn from this study to help the church planter, and what plan will best establish these indigenous churches?

### **Definitions**

Appalachia: The thirteen hundred-mile ranges of mountains that run from Canada to Mississippi. Parts of twelve states make up this region--Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, North Carolina, West Virginia, Virginia, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and New York.

Appalachia Highlands: The coal producing region of Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky, which is largely inhabited by individuals of Scotch-Irish, German, and English ancestry.

Rural: A town, community, or settlement of less than 2,500 people.

Indigenous Church: A group of saved believers who have banded themselves together to share the Gospel in worship, service, and ministry observing the ordinances of communion and baptism. They are able to support a pastor and the work of the church without any help from outside. They are also able to govern themselves both in leadership and finances.

Church Planter: An individual whom God has called either to start a church in an area that is in need of a church, or to help a group of believers who have already formed a church in a particular area.

## Overview of the Project

The focus of chapter two will be an understanding of Appalachian Mountain culture. That is, what makes it different and what needs to be known if one is going to understand the area in which the church will be established.

The third chapter will define the type of church that best fits this type of culture. This chapter focuses on what a church must be to meet the Biblical definition of a church, and how a church can be both Biblical and still relevant to reach this culture.

The fourth chapter will be an evaluation of a survey sent out by the author to fundamental pastors in the mountain area to see what has worked in the past and what has failed. An interview with a pastor-evangelist who was born and has worked in the mountains will be included in this section. A brief look at bi-vocational or tent-maker pastors will be viewed.

The fifth chapter will draw conclusions from this study. A plan will be presented for establishing indigenous local churches. This plan will draw some conclusions from the survey done for chapter three.

The author will include five appendices--a sample church confession of faith and constitution, a church operations manual, survey letter and form, interview with Harry Ramsey, and evaluation form from a mission to evaluate yearly progress of church-planters on the field.

The method of the author will be to draw from his own personal experiences, his research on ministry in Appalachia, and a survey from pastors in the region.

### **Limitations of the Project**

This project is not to be an exhaustive study of the culture of the Appalachian Mountain region. Many qualified individuals have been very thorough in studying Appalachian Mountain culture. The bibliography will indicate some of the more extensive studies of the culture of the Appalachian mountaineer. The author will not do a study of the different types of church polity, which is outside the scope of this project, nor will the author study all types of churches, but rather only fundamental churches, which fit the New Testament pattern.

## Chapter Two

### The Culture of the Appalachian Highlands

Why is this area of the country unique? What must be known in order to become effective in establishing a local church? As one studies the culture of the area, it will be helpful to know how the mind of the individual who lives in Appalachia works.

It is difficult to obtain a definition of Appalachia because it is more than just the land that is involved. Horace Kephart defined the area as populated by “frank, old-fashioned Englishmen and Scots.”<sup>1</sup> The settlers of Appalachia encountered Indians with whom they had to deal, but after 1775 and the Treaty of Sycamore Shoals the Indians became less of a problem. The Cherokees gave up the Cumberland Plateau by 1805.<sup>2</sup>

“Between 500,000 and 600,000 Scotch-Irish, driven from Ulster by British opposition, had arrived in the New World by 1776. Many of them had settled in the mountains, inasmuch as all coastal lands had been taken up.”<sup>3</sup>

Rev. Jack Weller was a Presbyterian who came to southern West Virginia in the 1940's. His book Yesterday's People has become a standard on the region; he made the

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<sup>1</sup> Horace Kephart, Our Southern Highlands (New York: The MacMillian Company, 1929) 349.

<sup>2</sup> Maxine Kenny and Don Baker and Helen Lewis, The People of Appalachia: A Brief History of the Migration of People to, from, and within the Region (Whitesburg: Appalshop History Project, 1982) 60-61.

<sup>3</sup> Rebecca Caudill and Edward Wallowitch, My Appalachia: Reminiscence (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966) 20.

following observation: "For many decades southern Appalachia has represented a 'closed door' society, similar to that found in the inner city."<sup>4</sup>

According to Christiane Dagneaux who did a study of the people of Appalachia:

People have characterized the Mountaineer as being a person of great ignorance. They are the mountaineer (polite term), the hillbilly, the hick, the hayseed, the rube, the backwoodsman, the briar, the snake, the cracker, or in reference to his political and/or job union activities even "red neck" (A reference to the Appalachians working out of doors and the sun's burning a red ring on his neck at his collar). Later, his unskilled background which leads to persistent aggressiveness with management.<sup>5</sup>

This stereotype is evident in the popular culture with the advent of the series on television called "*Christy*." The idea suggests that education is not needed for job opportunities for youth of the area. In times past, many of the youth knew that a college education was not needed to work in the coalmines; therefore, the emphasis was not there. Things are changing with the demise of the coal industry, but the old ways still have a way of staying. The following describes the lack of emphasis on education:

Not, as is so often implied, because they were so stupid to see what was going on about them. But greater, because quite different things were going on. For several generations the increasingly complex industries of the North and Mid-West have demanded well-educated employees. That region responded to those demands. However, in Appalachia the two great industries were coal mining and lumbering and both were almost unique among major industries in that they did not require an educated work force. Boys could leave school at sixteen and enter the mines or go into the forests at wages greater than their teachers. Another few years of schooling offered no visible economic rewards. This was a fact of life in Appalachia and was well recognized as such. Here is but one example of the great chain reaction, which is the curse of Appalachia. The new

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<sup>4</sup> Jack Weller, Yesterday's People: Life in Contemporary Appalachia (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1965) 139.

<sup>5</sup> Christiane B. Dagneaux, Appalachia: A Separate Place A Unique People (Parsons; McClain Printing Company, 1981) xi.

problems fed on the old and the old make the solution of the new seem difficult indeed.<sup>6</sup>

There are two basic economic factors that contributed to these economic woes: the stealing of the land and resources, and the coal of the region. One also can be sure that geographic isolation contributed to the deterioration of education in the mountains as well.<sup>7</sup>

The neglect of education has had the following result: parents in Appalachia without high school degrees consider education irrelevant.<sup>8</sup> These are blue collar workers who make their living by using their hands rather than their minds.

When one thinks of the area of the Appalachia Mountains, the first word that comes to mind is poverty. This mind-set is illustrated by a conversation the author had with an individual who was coming into the region working for the electric company. He stated that Buchanan County, where the author lived, should be the richest in the state of Virginia; yet, it is one of the poorest because the natural resources have been removed by individuals and companies who do not live in the area.

Even before the Civil War, the economic rape of the people of Appalachia was going on. Because of the isolation of the area, the value of money was not known; and the virgin timber, measuring ten to twelve feet in diameter, was sold unwittingly for less

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<sup>6</sup> David S. Walls and John B. Stephenson, eds., Appalachia in the Sixties (Lexington: The University of Kentucky, 1972) xi.

<sup>7</sup> Peter F. Gunther, The Fields at Home (Chicago: Moody Press, 1963) 204.

<sup>8</sup> Clyde B. McCoy and Virginia McCoy Watkins, "Appalachian Youth in Cultural Transition," Appalachia/America, ed. Wilson Somerville (Johnson City: Appalachian Studies Conference, 1981) 115.

than a dollar per tree.<sup>9</sup> The land was taken by those who took advantage of the agrarian economy; the owners had little understanding of the cash they were offered.

Long before the coming of the railroads, the pioneer landowners, ignorant of the vast wealth hidden within their mountains, sold their holdings for mere pittance--from ten cents to a dollar an acre. The purchasers, millionaires from the East, through reports of their engineer scouts, knew of these riches, and fattened themselves upon the ignorance of the mountain people.<sup>10</sup>

This intolerable practice continued into the second half of the nineteenth century and into this century:

Therefore in the years immediately following the Civil War, land agents were sent into Appalachia by lumber and railroad companies to gain control of the land. . . . The same tactic was used a few years later to lay claim to the coal lands. Land often was sold at as little as five to ten cents an acre and sometimes less. Other land agents purchased only the mineral, timber and access rights to the land, and this often worked even more to their advantage.<sup>11</sup>

The area of Appalachian Highlands has been the victim of crass, unabashed colonialism<sup>12</sup>. "We have been bilked of land, minerals, and ballads. We have been gerrymandered, lied to, and done unto."<sup>13</sup> It is easy to see how the isolation of the region has resulted in many of the economic problems that the region now experiences. At the

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<sup>9</sup>Harry Caudill, My Land is Dying (New York: E.P. Hutton & Company, Inc., 1971) 31.

<sup>10</sup>Howard B. Lee, Bloodletting In Appalachia (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 1969) 7.

<sup>11</sup>James E. Cushman, Beyond Survival (Parsons: McClain Printing Company, 1981) 32.

<sup>12</sup>Larry Halsey, "Ministry in the Mountains and Rural America " (D. Min. diss., Tennessee Temple, 1992) 21.

<sup>13</sup>Loyal Jones and Billy Ed Wheeler, Laughter In Appalachia (Little Rock: August House Publishers, 1987) 20.

present time, the talk of coal being used up is a danger with which the entire region must now deal. It was at one time thought that the natural resources of the Appalachian Mountains were limitless.<sup>14</sup> The lay off of miners and the closing of the coal mines is proving that the natural resources are limited. It is becoming more and more of a reality that the economy is going to have to look into another area to provide jobs.

John Calhoun has listed four factors that have contributed to the poverty of this region:

- (1). Absentee corporations and a few local elite own the great wealth of central Appalachia.
- (2). Long-term and continuing hemorrhage of wealth.
- (3). The coal industry exercises political domination.
- (4). The industry has fostered and continues its domination by means of effective maintenance mechanism.<sup>15</sup>

This mechanism is another large factor affecting the coal mines. More and more of the jobs that were once done by men are now being done by machines. That trend is going to continue. The mines are not hiring as many men to do the same amount of work. Consequently, they are working the employees longer because of the increased costs of paying employee benefits.

The ups and downs of the coal industry have a great bearing on the population.

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<sup>14</sup>Samuel Tyndale Wilson, The Southern Mountaineers (New York: Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A., 1914) 7.

<sup>15</sup> John W. Calhoun Jr., "Poverty Amid Riches: Why People Are So Poor In Appalachia" (Ph. D. diss., Rutgers Univ., 1977) 37.



The World Wars caused a great boom in the demand for coal. With the coal collapse in 1948, working times in the coalfields were very lean. Many Northern populations were enlarged by those who have left the Appalachian Highlands and moved to Chicago, Detroit, and other cities of the North to find jobs. John Fetterman noted in 1967 that “since 1940, two million people have picked up their modest belongings and left their hills and hollows.”<sup>16</sup>

With the Oil Embargo of 1972-73, the nation again turned to coal and the coal resources of Appalachia. The area had a boom with malls and fast food restaurants entering the area. The boom did not last long, and by 1981 the future did not look nearly as promising. The author pastored a church in the southwestern area of Virginia, and in that church, most of the men were in their 40’s and 50’s. These men obtained their jobs during the time of the boom and had the seniority to keep them. This age group is better protected than many others groups because of the coal boom of the 1970’s.

The population no longer travels to the North to find work. Rather, the trend is to go to Charlotte, North Carolina. Many of the youth of the area, and those who have been displaced, have traveled to North Carolina to find work. It is interesting that many of the people who move out of the area long to return. Many men long to retire so that they may return to the mountains.

With the use of the longwall method of mining, there has been a loss of many of the jobs that were once held by men:

The longwall is a highly mechanized means of mining coal that was brought to this country approximately twenty years ago from Europe

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<sup>16</sup> John Fetterman, Stinking Creek (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, Inc., 1967) 154.

and has been greatly refined in the last five to ten years. It consists of a shearing machine, which hauls itself back and forth on a conveyor frame and cuts 30" of coal from a 700' face. Each longwall panel will be from 2,500' to 8,100' in length. The sheerer and conveyor are both located under massive metal roof supports with hydraulic legs and most of the work is performed under these roof supports, greatly enhancing the safety of the work crew. On the longwall face, we are expecting to mine six times as much coal, with a similar sized crew on a continuous miner section.<sup>17</sup>

There are many differences about the mountains and its people, but if a person is only looking for the backward, uneducated individual, he will be sadly disappointed. One writer made the following observation:

Thus to this day there are a thousand people who "know" that mountaineers weave coveralls and sing ballads for every one who knows that millions of them have been industrialized workers for a hundred years, have organized unions and picketed state and national capitols in pursuit of their constitutional rights, and have laid their bodies in front of strip-mine bulldozers and overloaded coal trucks. Or that, today, they shop at the K-Mart and Radio Shack, drive Camaros and watch as much television as people anywhere.<sup>18</sup>

One traveler to the region had to admit: "We had heard so many stories of the ignorance of the mountaineer that we were somewhat disappointed by their familiarity with a good many things we had expected them not to know."<sup>19</sup>

The Appalachian mountaineers have been called many names over the years. An author named Ford called them "contemporary primitives."<sup>20</sup> It is easy to see that the

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<sup>17</sup>Kenny, Baker, Lewis, 157.

<sup>18</sup> David E. Whisant, All That Is Native & Fine (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1983) 13.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid, 17.

<sup>20</sup> James S. Brown and George A. Hillery, Jr. "The Great Migration, 1940-1960," The Southern Appalachian Region: A survey ed. Thomas R. Ford (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1962) 67.

people who populate the Appalachian region are neither considered to be overly bright nor an asset to society.

People from outside of Appalachia have often stereotyped the Appalachian mountaineer in many ways that have not always been kind. One such article in the 1980's found, "the mountaineer to be violent, lazy, wily, immoral, superstitious, ignorant, and noble."<sup>21</sup> The word "hillbilly" first appeared in print in 1900, when a New York Journal reporter defined "a Hill-Billie as a free and untrammeled white citizen who lives in the hills. He has no means to speak of, dresses as he can, talks as he pleases, drinks whiskey when he gets it, and fires off his revolver as the fancy takes him."<sup>22</sup> Loyal Jones noted that even the Appalachian magazines have fostered the negative image.<sup>23</sup> It is easy to see that the perception of the outsider to the culture and people of Appalachia is not a positive one. Therefore, since there has been little understanding of the Appalachian people, most people would rather believe what they read rather than investigate for themselves. "The stereotyping of a people and region by dominant national culture facilitates the exploitation and sacrifice of that region."<sup>24</sup>

The land of Appalachia is a land that is very hard to place in one system or to

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<sup>21</sup> Deborah Vansau McCauley, A Bibliography For the Study of Appalachian Mountain Region rev. ed. (N.p.:n.p., 1987) 60.

<sup>22</sup> John Solomon Otto, "Reconsidering the Southern Hillbilly," Appalachian Journal 4 (March 1985) 324

<sup>23</sup> Loyal Jones, ed., Reshaping the Image of Appalachia (Berea: The Berea College Appalachian Center, 1986) 1.

<sup>24</sup> Patricia D. Beavers and Burton L. Purrington, eds., Cultural Adaptation To Mountain Environments (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1984) xi.

understand simply by reading about it from an expert. "On the one hand it is a land of extreme poverty, while on the other it is a land of millionaires."<sup>25</sup>

Travelers to the heart of Appalachia soon see how different things are. For example, a person will see the shack that some photographer has taken for the magazine on one side of the mountain; while across the hill, he will see a beautiful house with a new Lincoln Continental. One must be careful that he does not accept the version that the media has created for this beautiful region of the country.

The best explanation is that the people of Appalachian are bicultural.

This is not to say that there are not some different lifestyles, values, and subcultures in the mountains. There are several Appalachian subcultures which present distinctive group identities and behavior patterns including dialects, aesthetic styles, bodies of folklore, religious beliefs and practices, political allegiances, family structure, food and clothing preferences. There is no single homogeneous Appalachian culture but several subcultures with inter-group commonalties and some sharing of mainstream culture.<sup>26</sup>

It must be remembered that a great amount of change has taken place in Appalachia, and that change is still taking place. Because of television and highways, the land is not as isolated as it was at one time. Many government programs have initiated a great deal of the change of the area.

Education, mass communication, and improved roads that linked more closely hollows and cities all contributed to the weakening of traditional values, a process that was greatly accelerated by World War II. Where the other forces had aroused yearnings for new ways, the war provided numerous opportunities to fulfill these desires and created yet

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<sup>25</sup> John D. Photiadis, ed., Religion in Appalachia (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 1978) 65.

<sup>26</sup> Helen Lewis, "Fatalism Or The Coal Industry?" Appalachia: Social Context Past and Present eds., Bruce Ergood and Bruce E. Kuhre, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (Dubuque:Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company, 1983) 181-182.

others. Even those who did not go into the armed forces were affected by the war. Some migrated to northern cities to find employment in expanded industries at ways earlier undreamed of and learned to cope with the conditions of urban living. Within the region itself there were new industries and construction work.<sup>27</sup>

One must understand that most of the things that others have taken for granted are found in Appalachia, such as the fast food restaurants, satellite dishes, motorcycles, and winters in Florida. The people of Appalachia experience all of the luxuries that one would expect in any other place in the nation today. Furthermore, many of the problems that are facing other parts of the country are now facing Appalachia as well. The family has had a strong bond in the past, but even with that long held bond, values are falling by the wayside.

In the area of religion, the land has changed much as well. Snake handling is still a religious practice of some sects in the region,<sup>28</sup> but many other changes are taking place. There is still a passion for revivalism that long was a trademark of the region. This author observed a time when all a person had to do was say that there would be a revival and singers, and people would come every night. Now the token three to four day meeting is being observed more by some churches in the region, and the crowd is not nearly as large as in the "good old days." Many churches are made up of older congregations because many young people have moved away to find jobs. There is not much work going on in the mountains with youth because the idea of kids being "saved"

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<sup>27</sup> Steven L. Fisher, "Victim-Blaming in Appalachia: Cultural Theories and the Southern Mountaineer," Appalachia: Social Context Past and Present eds., Bruce Ergood and Bruce E. Kuhre, (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1983) 150.

<sup>28</sup> "Courting Death: Appalachia's Old-Time Religionists Praise The Lord and Pass The Snakes," People Weekly, 1 May 1989: 79.

is foreign to some of the churches of the mountains.

The people of Appalachia do have a worldview that the individual who plans to minister to that region needs to understand.

No two races or groups of people think exactly alike. Thus two people coming from different backgrounds may do the same thing but to each the act may have connotations which vary and may arise from a mind set that bears no relationship to each other.<sup>29</sup>

If the land of Appalachia is going to be reached for Christ, those who bring the Gospel must understand the culture and penetrate that culture for Christ. "The Appalachians stand for a way of life--friendly, unhurried, cooperative, and respectful of the rights and opinions of others."<sup>30</sup> So, just who is the mountaineer?

Loyal Jones has divided the characteristics of the mountaineer into ten areas: (1). Religion, (2). Individualism, Self-reliance and Pride, (3). Neighborliness and Hospitality, (4). Family Solidarity, (5) Personalism, (6). Love of Place, (7). Modesty and Being One's Self, (8). Sense of Beauty, (9). Sense of Humor, (10) Patriotism.<sup>31</sup>

Larry Halsey has put together eight characteristics of the mountaineer that one must understand if a ministry in the mountains is going to be effective. He selects these from the list of Jones' and makes some additions. These eight are (1). Individualism and Self-reliance, (2). Personalism or People Orientation, (3). Suspicion of Strangers or

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<sup>29</sup> Harold Lindsell, Missionary Principles And Practice (Westwood: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1955) 193.

<sup>30</sup> Herma Cate and Clyde Ussery and Randy Armstrong, The Southern Appalachian Heritage (Kingsport: Holston Publishing Company, 1974) 14.

<sup>31</sup> Loyal Jones, "Appalachian Values," Appalachia: Social Context Past And Present, eds. Bruce Ergood and Bruce E. Kuhre 2nd ed. (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co., 1983) 125-128.

Aloofness From Outsiders, (4). Closeness to the Land and the Importance of Place, (5). Family Solidarity, (6). Innate Modesty, (7). Emotional Nature, (8). Religion.<sup>32</sup> We will take a brief look at all of these characteristics in order to better understand the mountaineer and how he can be reached for Christ.

### Individualism and Self-reliance

This characteristic would be the most distinguishable trait of the individual who traces his roots to the frontier.

Several years ago there was a great snowfall in western North Carolina and many people were snowed in for weeks. The Red Cross came to help. Two workers heard of an old lady way back in the mountains, living alone, and they set out to see about her, in a four-wheel drive vehicle. They finally stopped and skidded over the mountain and got into the high cove where she lived, got out and knocked on her door.

When she appeared at the door, one of the workers said, "Hello, we're from the Red Cross," but before they could say anything else, she replied, "Well I don't believe I'm going to be able to help you any. It's been a right hard winter."<sup>33</sup>

This sense of individualism has made it very difficult for churches in the region to grow. Therefore, most churches are very independent and have little or nothing to do with each other. The author was involved in a movement to stop sex education from being taught in the county school system. One day in a phone conversation with a person from Eastern Virginia to help us fight this program, a lady made this statement, "You pastors need to get together and pool your resources in South Western Virginia; you are just too independent."

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<sup>32</sup> Halsey. "Ministry in the Mountains and Rural America" 46.

<sup>33</sup> Jones and Wheeler, Laughter In Appalachia 22.

This independence is the reason that Baptists and Methodists did well in planting churches in the mountains. The Presbyterians had a very difficult time because of the depreciation of education and illiteracy of the region. "The Southern Baptists and the Methodist comprise nearly sixty percent of all church members in the Southern Appalachians but only twenty-one percent in the country as a whole."<sup>34</sup> The Baptists were able to tap into the feeling and hearts of the people.

The Baptist form of government, which set up the local church as the only authority and allowed no interference from regional or national bodies, was most compatible with the leveling philosophy of the mountaineer. A kind of lay religion grew up in which each congregation became its own interpreter of the Bible and theology and recognized no new ideas from the outside. The fierce individualism of the mountaineer carried this spirit of the extreme--every man became his own authority, the mountaineer recognizes no experts, religious or otherwise.<sup>35</sup>

The Baptists have become the single largest denomination in Appalachia, and there are all types of them. "Freewills" have an Arminian background and are more emotional than some of the rest. "Primitive" are hyper-Calvinistic and include many different groups "Missionary" are those who would have a desire to send missionaries. One can find too many differences inside of these groups to detail.

There are other sects and denominations that are starting to make an impact on the region as well. "In the 19th century most successful denominations were Baptists and Methodists, with circuit riders and lay preachers, but in recent decades the Holiness and

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<sup>34</sup> Earl D.C. Brewer, The Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey ed. Thomas R. Ford, (Lexington: The University of Kentucky Press, 1962), 202.

<sup>35</sup> Weller 123.



Pentecostal sects have also become preeminent."<sup>36</sup> One must see that these are very effective denominations when it comes to methods of reaching the mountaineer for Christ.

The individualism of the male in this culture becomes a very important factor to the pastor who is going to minister in the mountains. "He [the Appalachian male] finds difficulty in linking himself with others to carry out long-term goals and objectives."<sup>37</sup> Therefore, it becomes very difficult for the pastor to develop mature, committed leadership in mountain churches. The development of male leadership is one of the most important goals if mountain churches are going to be indigenous. The mountain pastor must always work to develop leadership and keep leadership development in mind when it comes to training the men of the church. He will need to do teaching and leading in this important area. The principle that will result in success in the goal of planting the indigenous church is the training of leaders in the church.

#### Personalism or People Orientation

The second characteristic of individuals of the mountain is people orientation.

One of the main aims in life for Appalachians is to relate well with other persons. We will go to great lengths to keep from offending others, even sometimes appearing to agree with them when we in fact do not. It is more important to us to get along and have a good relationship with other persons than it is to make our true feelings known. Mountaineers will give the appearance of agreeing to attend all sorts of meetings that they have no intention of going to, just because they want to be agreeable. Of course, this personalism is one of the reasons those who work for confrontation

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<sup>36</sup> The National Geographic Society, American Mountain People (Washington: Special Publications Division of National Geographic Society, 1973) 89.

<sup>37</sup> Halsey, "Ministry in the Mountains and Rural America" 52.

politics often fail in Appalachia. We are extremely reluctant to confront anyone and alienate him, if we can get out of it.<sup>38</sup>

When people become the most important aspect of a community, that relationship takes importance over any other area. This emphasis on people has its advantages and disadvantages. The advantages are that people are important and should have the greatest consideration in a church, for God will hold each one accountable in the area of relationships. It can be good for people to be concerned about the needs of others: it draws them closer together, which results in needs being met on a greater scale. The disadvantages of "people over substance" are that if one person is hurt or becomes upset with another (such as the pastor), it affects a large group of people. When individuals are close and the pastor does something necessary, but distasteful, such as church discipline, dissension may ensue. The person becomes more important than does the principle, making it much harder to deal with sin and problems in the church. This difficult situation becomes especially true if the pastor or person making the suggestions happens to be a non-native of the mountains. It can also be a problem because many will not verbally disagree with the pastor. They will simply show their displeasure by boycotting a workday at the church without having given any sign that they will not be participating.

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<sup>38</sup> Jones, "Appalachian Values," 127.

Suspicion of Strangers or Aloofness from Outsiders

One of the reasons for the mountaineer's suspicion of outsiders is the isolation of the region. The rugged mountains and lack of transportation have resulted in a very visible clannishness, which extends beyond near relatives to fellow mountaineers. It is a quirk traceable back to his Scotch-Irish roots.<sup>39</sup>

Exploitation, past and present, is a primary reason for the highlander's skepticism of strangers.

His (the mountaineer) history has been one of futility, trickery and lies. He learned to distrust the plantation masters to the east. He learned that the absentee owners of his natural wealth would lie, use him, and desert him. He learned that the unions he bled for would turn away in his hour of need. He learned that his political leaders would never honor their promises of roads, and jobs. He learned that the railroads brought not prosperity for him, but only plunderers.<sup>40</sup>

Many individuals, including the author, live in coal camps that were built by the coal company to house their workers and their families. These houses would occupy nearly every available inch of the valley or hollow with very little space between the houses. The houses would be built so that the people could walk to work, to the company owned church, to the company owned school, and to the company store, made famous by Tennessee Ernie Ford in his song "Sixteen Tons." The company store would issue scrip and it would have the name of the coal company on it. Individuals could buy anything that they wanted at the

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<sup>39</sup> W.D. Weatherford and Earl D. C. Brewer, Life and Religion in Southern Appalachia (New York: Friendship Press, 1962) 8.

<sup>40</sup> Fetterman, Stinking Creek, 189.

company store.<sup>41</sup> Once the miner got into the cycle of the company store, he had a very difficult time getting free of it.

The company store and the coal camp are things of the past now. People still live in coal camps, but the companies do not own them any more, and it would be hard to find a company store today. The effects that these company stores had on the people of the mountains are still seen today. The memories of these stores have caused a suspicion of outsiders that is passed on to the offspring. No one would question the fact that the people who worked for the coal companies were exploited.

Another reason for the isolation of the mountaineer is that outsiders have been trying to change him and his ways.

No area, such as Appalachia, could long escape gleeful discovery by do-gooders, those fervent, tireless Americans among us who are driven, as though by demons, to do unto others. So for decades, Appalachia has been done unto. The desolate hollows have swallowed up legions of pious, prim, pathetic little men and women who have braved the wilderness to spread the light. The aching mountaineers have felt the purposeful tread of zealous social reformers.<sup>42</sup>

People coming into the mountains have had a disapproving, demeaning attitude that has caused the mountaineer to be wary. "The mountaineer, would like just one person--one day--to come into his hollow and show some sign of approval of the way he has lived over the decades, and the way he wants to live forever."<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Crushman, Beyond Survival, 35.

<sup>42</sup> Fetterman, Stinking Creek, 163.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 33.

This desire for approval is very evident when it comes to the minister who has just moved into the mountain region. Many others have come to educate and to bring the mountaineer into the present age. When a person has this attitude of change, the native of the region senses it. When a native missionary or revival speaker comes to minister in a mountain church one of the first statements he needs to make is that he is a native of the region. This opens many doors for the speaker. It is not that the individual from outside definitely will not be effective, but he will have to prove himself. The speaker who is a native of the region will have the instant respect of the people and will find the people are more quickly comfortable with him. There is always a sense of suspicion because of the way that the land has been stolen and the seeming lack of education of the mountaineer. The suspicious nature of the mountaineers should not discourage a pastor who is not native to the region; he just needs to understand this suspicion if he is going to be accepted and successful in ministry. His attitude and actions must be ones of service and not snobbery if there are to be results in his ministry.

One must not talk "down" to the people of the church and treat them as if they need to come up to his level. The minister needs to love the people and minister to them in a way that shows he is concerned about them and the things that affect their lives. It is easy to think of oneself as "God's gift to the mountaineer," but that attitude does not work in any area, much less in the mountains.

The preacher from the outside must be very careful about the jokes and

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stereotypes of the area and particularly about name-calling such as “hillbilly.” It is never wise to talk about how far the place is from the main road or civilization. The native views this attitude as demeaning. The author was at a pastor’s fellowship meeting with a group of local pastors when a pastor from outside of the area came to the meeting and made a remark about how far off the road this town was, how people lived here, and how hard it was to drive to this town. The author was the next speaker and he started by mentioning how great the country was, calling it “God's Country.” After the meeting, one of the individuals who was a native of the area was thankful for the comments. The individual appreciated the fact that the author was a native, and that he had something good to say about the place where he lived. It may not be a big thing to some people, but if one is going to be effective, this potential harm to the ministry is an area that must be guarded against. No group of people wants to be mocked or ridiculed.

It is very important to identify with the people of the mountains. They watch the lives of people who come into the area, and if the mountaineer does not identify with the outsider, the outsider will find it very difficult to reach the individuals with the Gospel.

One must also be careful in his dress in mountain culture. It is acceptable to have the coat and tie in the pulpit, but at other times the baseball cap and flannel shirt are as effective. There needs to be balance between ministry and being able to identify with the community. There is a sense of community that the pastor needs to be a part of if he is going to be effective. Involvement in the events of the community such as joining the local rescue squad or taking someone

to the hospital will be an asset. In the author's ministry, helping a lady and her brother off a hill during a snow period was viewed as being concerned for the needs of others.

The new pastor must not only accept people for who they are but also accept the things that are good in the community in which he finds himself. Change will come, but it will take time; that is true not only in Appalachia but any place. One must never view himself as the person to straighten out the situation. People have lived a certain way all their lives and the pastor must love them and allow the Word of God to do the changing.

#### Closeness to the Land and the Importance of Place

People are very much connected to the land because of the geographical isolation of the region and the economic dependence on the land.<sup>44</sup> The Federal Government took note of this quality:

The Congress also wisely took into account the nature of the people in legislating the Appalachian Regional Development Program. It recognized a proud, independent people, bound to the land and their past by a strong sense of place and belonging, people who tended to regard the rest of the world with equal portions of shyness and suspicion.<sup>45</sup>

The author has now moved to Ohio and has sensed the idea of place in his own life. It appears that those who have left the area because of the economy plan to return home at the earliest possible time. When the author was a student in Grand Rapids, he

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<sup>44</sup> Roy Joslin, Urban Harvest (Welwyn: Evangelical Press, 1982) 22.

<sup>45</sup> Jill Durrance and William Shamblin, ed., Appalachian Ways (Washington: The Appalachian Regional Commission, 1976) 4-5.

met an older gentleman who was about to retire. The author asked him what he was going to do when he retired, and he stated that he would be returning to the hills of Virginia where he grew up. There is a sense that the land is important, and the locality where one grows up presents an emotional bond to its people.

Individuals who come into the area with the idea of "How do you make it being so far from the hospitals, or the local mall?" and "How do you live out here in the sticks?" will not be around long. The people have a closeness to the land. The people will reject a pastor who comes into the area with an attitude of rejection of the land. They see this rejection of the land as a rejection of them.

#### Family Solidarity

One of the important characteristics that one must understand is the importance of family:

Appalachian people are family centered. Loyalty runs deep between family members, and a sense of responsibility for one another may extend to cousins, nephews, nieces, uncles, and aunts and in-laws. Family members gather when there is sickness or death or other disaster. Many supervisors in northern industry have been furious when employees from Appalachia have been absent from jobs because of funerals of cousins or other distant relatives.<sup>46</sup>

It is not at all uncommon for married children to place a mobile home on their parent's lawn a little way from the parent's house. One can sometimes see a number of homes on the same property. Rural teenagers who consider college will frequently opt to

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<sup>46</sup>Jones, Appalachia: Social Context Past and Present, 126.



attend a local community college so that they will not have to leave home and parents. This is illustrated by the local community college, Southwest Virginia Community College, which serviced the area in which the author lived. It had the largest enrollment of all the community colleges in Virginia, and is in the most sparsely populated region of Virginia. The idea of not leaving home was a great one for both the teenagers and the parents in the mountaineer communities.

While one hears much about the demise of the family in America today, this is not the case in Appalachia. The world is having a greater influence on the region; however, the families are strong, as is their bond. This strong family bond has a great implication for ministry that one must understand. If a pastor offends one member of the family, he may lose the entire family and be a target for criticism and opposition from the other family members in the congregation. However, this does not mean the entire family will oppose him when he takes a Biblical stand.

There will be many people in the mountains who are related by either marriage or ancestry. The pastor who understands these ties will emphasize the family holidays of the year helping to ensure an effective ministry. He will understand that the elderly are an important part of the ministry of the mountains and will be able to win the hearts of many mountaineers when he has time for the aged members of the family. To be effective in this ministry, a pastor will be very much tied to family and will understand the meaning of family. The mountain church will be built on family ties and will be strong or weak according to these ties.

Innate Modesty

It may be quiet surprising to find out that the mountain neighbor or friend has received a great reward or is quite wealthy. It is not something that mountaineers spread around easily. Loyal Jones stated this:

We mountaineers believe that we are as good as anyone else, but no better. We believe we should not put on airs, nor boast or try to get above our raising. A mountaineer does not usually extol his own virtues: persons who are really accomplished, such as in playing or singing, will be reluctant to perform and will preface a performance with disparaging words about himself or his musical instrument. The mountain preacher will talk of his unworthiness for the task and hint of many others who are far more able. Of course, when these formalities have been dispensed with, the preacher or musician will probably cut loose with a good deal of vigor.<sup>47</sup>

One can see this modesty in the life of the church many times. When volunteers are needed, not many will publicly volunteer because that would look like pride and the promotion of themselves. It is better to approach the people one-on-one if something needs to be done. Most people will not want their names mentioned because of the attention it will draw to themselves.

Emotional Nature

The emotional nature of the mountaineer is easily seen in his worship. One person described his experience among mountaineers: "He is very emotional, easily moved, and easily led by those who have his confidence."<sup>48</sup> It is hard to say without stereotyping, that the heart becomes the basis on which most interpretation and decisions

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<sup>47</sup> Jones, Appalachia: Social Context Past And Present , 127.

<sup>48</sup> John C. Campbell, The Southern Highlander & His Homeland (1921; reprint, Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1969) 179.

are made. There is no place that emotion plays a larger role than in the area of mountain religion.

### Religion

Religion must be understood before one can get an understanding of the region called Appalachia. It is in the area of religion that the people of Appalachia have been stereotyped more than any other. One often hears of the “Bible-thumbing, hell-fire preacher.” The area of religion is of great concern due to the fact that to understand the religious makeup of the area is the only way to plant indigenous Bible-believing churches.

What is true of the churches of the mountaineer? Earl Brewer found seven marks that are the standard to any discussion of mountaineer religion: (1). Puritanical behavior patterns, (2). Fundamentalist views of the Bible and doctrines, (3). Little distinction between clergy and laity, (4). Sectarian concepts of the church and its mission, (5). Revivalism, (6). Informality in worship, and (7). Local church autonomy<sup>49</sup>. Each of these will be presented in the following pages.

#### *Puritanical Behavior Patterns*

Puritanical behavior patterns is the idea that there is an external set of rules by which one must live his life. If one is able to obey these rules, then he is able to claim that God is using him. An observation into many of the churches of the mountains shows

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<sup>49</sup> Brewer. The Southern Appalachian Region: A Survey. 202.

that when a church decides that something is wrong, this wrong becomes the determining factor in holiness. One may do many others things that are wrong, but if he keeps the rules that are sanctioned, his behavior is viewed as acceptable.

*Fundamentalism Views of the Bible and doctrines*

Most people might think that the most fundamental groups are the Pentecostals and the sects. Now the Independent Baptists are becoming more and more a part of the most fundamental groups. "The Independent Baptist, given Baptist obsession with autonomy and rugged individualism of the mountains, as well as the tendency toward competition and doctrinal debate, it is no surprise that independent churches flourish in Appalachia."<sup>50</sup>

The literal interpretation of Scripture is a very positive trait because that interpretation is the standard for churches. This strict adherence to Scripture is often seen in the focus of the inspiration of the King James Version viewed as the only version that would be worthy of reading or studying. A minister cannot expect to do any ministry in most parts of the mountains with anything other than a KJV.

One mistake that young preachers make today is changing the way people in the mountains do things. If a pastor plans to minister in the mountains, he will use the KJV and forget about trying to change the version people use. Many young pastors get very discouraged because of the lack of change that takes place in these areas.

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<sup>50</sup> Paul F. Gillespie, ed., Foxfire 7 (Garden City: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1982) 438.

*Little Distinction between Clergy and Laity*

The roots of having little distinction between clergy and laity are found in the history of the rural preacher and history of the spreading of the Gospel to the region. The farmer-preacher of yesterday and the coal miner-preacher of today were the beginning and the only way many churches would and could exist in the mountains today. Many of the smaller mountain churches strongly reject the idea of a paid ministry and are very much suspicious of an educated preacher. The author met one of his high school classmates one day and when asked what he did for a living responded that he pastored a church. "What else do you do?" was this classmate's response. It exemplifies that same concept that ministry is not a paid occupation. Additionally, it even comes to the point that anti-intellectualism prevails. This is changing in the larger churches, but one will find many that would have this idea in smaller churches.

The young pastor will have to deal with the idea that pastoring is not a full-time ministry when he begins his ministry in the area. The people need to find acceptance with the pastor, even though they may be uncomfortable with his way of earning a salary. Some churches in this region will never be able to afford a full-time pastor, and a bi-vocational pastor will be able to lead a church and the community. It is important that the new pastor who comes into the area takes every opportunity to let the church know that he is not above them nor is money the reason that he is pastoring the church. Nothing will kill the ministry of a pastor more quickly than the idea that the pastor is superior or better than the people are.

*Sectarian Concepts of the Church and its Mission*

The idea exists that one has to be careful about the outside world and its influence. Because the region has been isolated and left to itself for years, the idea that they are the only true churches sometimes becomes the standard. Even though this isolationism is not as much of a problem today as in days past because of television and new roads, it still must be taken seriously. If a person is going to be effective, he must understand that this idea of the outsider trying to change the mountaineer in some way will be a great threat. One must love the people as they are and seek to minister to them as they are if he is going to be effective.

Certain types of churches in the mountain culture are much more prone to view their churches as true churches. The Primitive and Old Regular Baptists are very prone to view their church as the only true church and others as an invasion from other parts of the country. This thinking may be softening some, but these groups will not be on the platform with a preacher from another church. They believe that they are the only true church, and that it is not proper to mix. Other churches, from the observation of the author, are not as vocal about the approach, but there is the concept of "us" and "them" that can be found in many mountain churches.

*Revivalism*

The revival still plays a large part in the culture of Appalachia. Many say that it is impossible to have a week revival any longer in America, and in some parts of the country that may be true. It is not true in the mountains, however, because it still is an event that is being used effectively today. In the church that the author pastored, the

people would want more, not fewer revivals. It is part of the community and it would be a grand time to have new people in the church. People would work hard to have this special event. Revivals gave them more incentive to invite people to church. It was observed that many of the people who come to the revival meetings were from other churches. It was not as easy to get the lost to the meeting as it was to get other believers there: a major change from the past. In the past, the unsaved were very much at the meeting and many decisions were made with a baptism service to follow the meetings. In the mountains, revival does not mean encouraging those who are saved, but means reaching the lost. The pastor who comes into this region must understand this principle.

Historically, the annual revivals represented a break from the routine. The mountaineer is basically an action seeker; thus, these seasons of enthusiasm were perfectly fitted to his temperament.<sup>51</sup>

Revival has the idea of emotion involved in the nature of the word. Emotions are a very important issue for the mountaineer as is seen in the growth of churches that are very emotionally based. "The mountaineer emphasizes that a person should feel his religion and testifying about one's personal religious experience should be a part of regular church services."<sup>52</sup> The new pastor must understand that this is a part of the cycle of the church. If the pastor coming into the area tries to change the attitude, he is in for a short stay and will leave very discouraged.

The emotional preaching of the Word is an area that the new pastor to the area

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<sup>51</sup> Weller, Yesterday's People: Life in Contemporary Appalachia, 41.

<sup>52</sup> Richard A. Humprey, "Development of Religion in Southern Appalachia: The Personal Quality," Appalachian Journal 1 no. 4 (Spring 1974): 253.

must understand. If he preaches quietly and uses very little enthusiasm or emotion in his preaching, he will be considered a “teacher” and not a “preacher.” Pastors that come into the area must not consider this to be an insult, but part of the understanding of what is expected. The author would encourage anyone who is going to be pastoring in Appalachia to be prepared to use emotion in his preaching, not to try to play on the emotions of the issue, but to know what one is saying and do it with enthusiasm. This will be what most of the churches and people who are in these church will expect. One may use different methods with the different services of the week. The author would vary the services and the way the Word would be presented. Wednesday evening and even Sunday evening would be considered more of a teaching time. Sunday morning would be viewed as “preaching” and the challenge to move the congregation to be involved in the ministry.

If the young or new pastor misses this principle of emphasis, he will find that he will become very discouraged very quickly. Discouragement has caused many to leave the mountains.

#### *Informality in Worship*

To many churches in the mountains, the idea of a printed program would be a terrible thing. A person is limiting the power of the Holy Spirit by planning a service. Many churches take pride in the fact that nothing is planned, but that the Holy Spirit is moving in the service. The Holy Spirit is hindered if any organization has taken place. The author was involved in a funeral with a pastor of another church in the community. After the author gave his message, the other pastor got up and said that he did not have



anything written out, so the congregation needed to pray for him that the Holy Spirit would be able to speak through him. A pastor must not allow this type of attitude to hinder the job that God has called him to do. A principle that must be taught is that the Holy Spirit can work even if things are planned. This is not to be done in a condescending way, but by conducting services in which people are involved and understand the purpose of the service and realize that the Holy Spirit is still active.

### *Local Church Autonomy*

The mountain religion is seen in the fact that each church is free from any type of central control. So much has been done to them by the "outsider," such as the coal company, that the church that is free of controls by the denomination or controlling board will grow faster than a denominational church. There is a free spirit that one must understand in dealing with people of Appalachia.

In summary, one must understand that the region of Appalachia is open to the ministry of the Word of God. The person who is going to minister in this region of the country must not view himself as "God's gift" to the region who is going to straighten out the "dumb hillbilly." If one comes into the region with a superior attitude, he will not last long. The pastor or church-planter must have this basic understanding of the culture if he is going to be acceptable. The heritage of the people of Appalachia is a dynamic part of who they are and how they accept outsiders. The pastor who comes must not only love the people just as Christ loved others, but also have a heart to minister to the people of the mountains. He will find that the people are loyal and honest. If he loves the people and ministers the Word of God faithfully, he will be able to see souls saved and believers

growing closer to God.

## **Chapter Three**

### **The Most Effective Type of Church in Mountain Culture**

After this brief overview of what makes Appalachia Mountain culture unique, it is now the task of the author to apply these characteristics to a mountain church. What should be the view of the pastor as he attempts to either plant a church or pastor an existing church? How can he apply the information of chapter one into a local church setting, thereby avoiding certain pitfalls as an effective church planter, or mountain pastor? Not only are there questions to be addressed, but also dangers of which to beware.

The two dangers to be avoided in pastoring the mountain church are the effects of culture and personal preference. The pastor must be sure the Bible is the standard for all doctrine and conduct.

#### **What is a Biblical Definition of a Church?**

The place to begin looking at the church would be the declaration of Christ in Matthew 16: 18-19, “Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.”

The church is God’s idea, and He is the One who sets the agenda, delivers the results, and receives the glory for what is accomplished. Christ assumes responsibility for the church, so therefore one must know and understand His plan for planting churches

and conducting ministry in the local church.

The plan of Christ for the church is observed very well in another passage in the book of Matthew. Matthew 28:19-20 says, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always even until the end of the world.” It is the plan of Christ that we should make disciples, which is the only verb in this passage. Any church that exists must be involved in the process of winning the lost and making disciples. How to accomplish this in the mountain church culture becomes the important, central issue.

The word church must first be defined. Bancroft, in his book on theology, has the following definition, “ ‘ekklesia’ is derived from “ek,” out, and “kaleo,” to call, denoting in good Greek usage the assembly of citizens when called out from their homes to gather in places for the discussion of public business.”<sup>53</sup> This is a general definition of the church in the classic meaning of the Greek word. For the purpose of this paper, a better definition would deal with the local aspect of the church: “The church in the individual or local sense may be defined as that smaller company of regenerate persons who, in any given community, unite themselves voluntarily together, in accordance with the principles, precepts, and purposes of Christ, revealed in the New Testament.”<sup>54</sup> This is the relevant definition for this project. A simpler definition is found in the notes of the Ryrie Study Bible, “A local church is a group of professing believers in Christ who have

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<sup>53</sup> Emery Bancroft, Christian Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975) 260.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, 267.

been baptized and who have organized themselves for the purpose of doing God's will."<sup>55</sup>

The local church is made up of baptized believers who are in a specific location to win souls for Christ and to edify fellow believers.

The universal church is dealt with in the New Testament as well. It is made up of all individuals who have been saved from the Day of Pentecost until the return of Christ. They belong to the "Body of Christ"-- those who will one day populate heaven. For the purpose of this project, the definition of the local church will be used.

### **What is the Purpose of the Church?**

One must understand that the best way to accomplish the task of the church is the Biblical way. According to John MacArthur, "The ministry of the church is simple: teaching sound doctrine."<sup>56</sup> The church, if it is going to achieve the plan that Christ left it to do, must involve itself in the sound teaching of God's Word. The only lasting accomplishments in a local community are the winning of souls for Christ and the hearts and attitudes changed for the glory of Christ. Paul Jackson states a similar purpose when he states, "While there are many aspects of responsibility laid upon the church, we believe its ministry centers in three fundamental duties: evangelization, edification, and glorification."<sup>57</sup> It becomes imperative that the local church involves itself in the

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<sup>55</sup> Charles Caldwell Ryrie, The Ryrie Study Bible (Chicago: Moody Press, 1978) 1951.

<sup>56</sup> John F. MacArthur, Jr., The Master's Plan for the Church (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991) 85.

<sup>57</sup> Paul R. Jackson, The Doctrine and Administration of the Church (Des Plaines, IL: Regular Baptist Press, 1968) 83.

accomplishment of this divine purpose. All that is attempted in the church will be evaluated by this basis purpose. The only church that is going to accomplish anything worthwhile must have a clear vision of where it is going and how to get there.

How does one accomplish the church's task? What will be an effective plan to change one's community for Christ? These three purposes will be found in the following list of priorities. John MacArthur lays out twelve marks of an effective church.<sup>58</sup> If a church is going to be successful, these twelve will be found: (1.) Godly Leaders, (2). Functional goals and objectives, (3). Discipleship, (4). An emphasis on penetrating the community, (5). Active church members, (6). Concern for one another, (7). Devotion to the family, (8). Bible teaching and preaching, (9). A willingness to change, (10). Great faith, (11). Sacrifice, and (12). Worship. These are all worthy and Biblical goals for a church to have, although it is outside the scope of this study to analyze all of them.

### **Importance of Godly Leadership in the Local Church**

The position of the author is that the first goal stated--Godly Leaders--is the basis on which all the rest will be built. It is important to understand what is involved in the area of Godly leadership. Dr. Frank Schmitt makes the following statement, which defines Godly leadership:

The Christian leader or spiritual leader will be controlled by Christ and every act of leadership will be influenced by this relationship. The Christian leader will accept the Bible as God's infallible Word and as the supreme authority in his life. He will search the scripture to find principles, promises, and precepts to govern his life and his leadership role. When he is exposed to teachings about leadership from other sources, he will examine them in the light of the Bible, and reject any

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<sup>58</sup> MacArthur, The Master's Plan for the Church, 103.

teaching that is in opposition to the Bible. The successful Christian leader will recognize that he is not a self-made man, but will acknowledge that he is successful because he has emptied himself of self and has been filled and empowered by God. The successful Christian leader will be one who has voluntarily surrendered himself to God, and through faith has been mastered or controlled by the Holy Spirit. Other factors are important, but this is indispensable.<sup>59</sup>

To develop this type of leadership, which every church needs, the church is going to have to emphasize certain principles. The church must have a goal that can be measured and understood by the church and the leadership. The outline of how to focus a church in this area has been given. How can this be placed into practice on a daily basis in the local church?

The fact that Christ spent most of His time while here on earth with twelve men gives us a Biblical priority to follow. Even with the twelve, He concentrated on three, and of the three, specifically Peter received most of His time. One can see that Christ's primary focus was training leaders for the special job that He would leave for them to accomplish. Christ set the example for His followers to train individuals, not allowing oneself to be overtaken with the masses. People must be reached, but the most effective method is to train leaders to train others, thereby multiplying the outreach. There is no doubt that the laws of multiplication are borne out in the process of leadership and the training of people. It is the most effective methods to train those who will train others and the individuals involved in ministry increase dramatically.

The Apostle Paul's example is to concentrate on a number of special individuals who would carry on the work. He calls Timothy his "son in the ministry", and the book

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<sup>59</sup>Frank Schmitt, "Christian Leadership: Pastors as Bishops" (Lynchburg, Va: Liberty Baptist Seminary, Class Notes, 1986) 12.

of II Timothy is a charge for Timothy to carry on the work that Paul had left. Titus is instructed to carry on the task of training leaders in Crete to do the work of ministry. The number of people who are mentioned in Paul's letter are many, but there are a few very special ones who received most of his time and energy.

The New Testament pattern is therefore easy to follow and is an example for the church today. When one is involved in a church-planting ministry or in pastoring a church in which the goal is to produce an indigenous church, the need for leadership must be the first priority.

Leadership sets the goals and objectives of the local church. It is the responsibility of the leader to see that the church is moving toward a determined goal. There is a great need to be sure that the goals of the church are understood and energy is being used effectively. Dr. Schmitt states "the person with the gift of administration will have desire and ability to look ahead and to plan for the future"<sup>60</sup> A church must not be uncertain in its direction, and leadership is the place that direction must start.

This leads to the area of discipleship, as all Christians should be involved in edifying other believers. This means that Biblical truth must be taught to other believers. God's children need to hear what the Bible says from the pulpit, and how to apply these truths to their daily lives. Leadership must cause people to use the Bible in solving daily problems that come. Discipleship means that God's Word is the source and comfort for the soul, not just a book to carry to church on Sunday.

The leadership of the church must be involved in the penetrating of the community for Christ. An example must be set by the leadership of knowing how to

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<sup>60</sup> Schmitt, Christian Leadership: Pastors as Bishops, 17.



share one's faith in a very practical way. The most effective evangelism is done on a personal level in the area where you live. Evangelism must be going on all the time and be a constant focus of the church.

Everyone should be involved in the ministry of the local church. Many think that the preacher or paid staff should do the work and they are nothing more than fans at a sporting event. When the members of the church realize that there is a job for them to be involved with it causes each to buy into the dream of what is to be accomplished.

The church should be a place where people are encouraged to care for one another. There are many interesting studies that focus on passages in the New Testament about caring for one another. The point is that people are to be involved with their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. Attending church together is a great time of encouragement and the command of Hebrews 10:24-25 is for each believer. The caring that comes from a church is found first in the lives of the leadership of that church. If the pastor and leaders are not involved in people's lives and care what happens to them, the members of the church will not care.

Families and devotion to families is an area that Godly leadership must emphasize. There have been many leaders who have been very effective in areas of church growth and have lost their families. Leadership must understand that family is a very important part of the ministry of the local church. There are many negative examples that could be given from the Bible—Eli and David being two. One of the greatest disasters in the ministry today concerns pastors who don't take care of their families because they are too busy with other things. Leadership must allow time for families to spend time together and not have every night of the week scheduled with some

type of activity. The development of solid marriages and family-oriented ministries by teaching husbands to love their wives (Eph. 5:25), wives to submit to their husbands (5:22), children to obey their parents (6:1), and parents not to exasperate their children but to nurture them (6:4).

There should be solid Bible teaching and preaching in the local church. It is only the teaching and preaching of the Word of God that will result in the changing of people's lives. It may not always make people feel good, usually it will make them feel worse before it makes them feel better. When one is confronted with the authoritative Word of God there must be a change in the life. Today it is believed that preaching is "out of style" and that other things must be done in order for people to come to church. God has given a definite command to the church and the pastor to "Preach the Word" (II Timothy 2:2). "A church pulpit isn't primarily designed to help people make decisions about the details of everyday living. It is meant to teach the Word of God and identify sin so that they might change their behavior."<sup>61</sup> It becomes very important for the leadership to focus on the teaching and preaching ministry of the local church.

Leadership must have a willingness to change. One of the worst phrases that some churches live by is "we have never done it that way before." This is the attitude of many congregations that have a number of older and traditional bound members. One must not change just for the sake of change; sometimes that becomes the reason. One of the signs of poor leadership Dr. Schmitt points out is that the leader "Fights change or is afraid of innovation. There can be no growth without change. A leader must be willing

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<sup>61</sup> MacArthur, The Master's Plan for the Church, 114.

to accept change.’<sup>62</sup>

There is a need for the leadership to exercise great faith and allow this to be experienced by the church. God has a plan that He is going to perform and churches must be ready to be involved in that plan. It takes leadership who is able to trust God to accomplish some great things.

Sacrifice will be involved in a church that is going to be effective in seeing God work in lives. Leadership must be willing to sacrifice some of itself and be willing to be known by a spirit of giving. The church of the Philippians was commended by Paul for meeting his needs (Phil. 4:10, 14-16). A church must be a generous church and that starts with the leadership of the church.

The worship of God must be the focus of the church. When a church sets its complete focus on God and does everything it can to honor Him, it has a base for uncompromising integrity. The focus must be on what does God require, lots of other things will cease to have the attention of the church. This type of focus must start with the leadership of the church.

Godly leadership will result when these areas become the plan of action of the church. When individuals who have this focus lead the church, stability will be achieved. This church will be able to handle the change of a pastor and even some of the other difficult times that come to a church. It will be possible because the church has achieved these principles and focus. The church will know what type of man they need in order to continue the process of church growth and stability.

The result is a church which develops the conviction among the church

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<sup>62</sup> Schmitt, Christian Leadership: Pastors as Bishops, 10.

membership that this is the church in which God wants each member to develop and demonstrate enthusiasm about what God is doing and what He wants to do in their community. People need to be strongly committed to their church. It is impossible to build a strong church unless the attitude of understanding God's plan to reach our community is established in the members.

Developing Godly leadership will communicate Biblical principles to others and will result in a strong church. The New Testament plan is to have churches that will be able to carry on the Gospel of Christ. Furthering the Gospel can only become a reality when the leadership knows where it is going and how it is going to get there.

How may this be done in the culture described in the last chapter and done in a way that the Biblical definition of a church is preserved? This application will be made by the use of the fifteen years of experience that the author had in pastoring a mountain church. The vantage point of being away from the culture for two and a half years will be an advantage in the brief analysis.

**1. Puritanical Behavior Patterns<sup>63</sup>** -The church that is going to be effective must understand that certain patterns of dress and appearance are going to be evaluated by the local community. For a pastor and family to be effective, they must not approach a community with the idea that they have been sent to teach how to do things the proper way. It may be necessary because of love to change certain ideas in order to effectively win a community to Christ and establish an indigenous local church. Any pastor and

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<sup>63</sup> These are listed on pages 30-36 above.

family should have a desire to love the people and community to which God has called them to minister. It is going to be of the utmost importance that the pastor's family does not condescend to the community. Love will cover up a multitudes of sins (I Peter 4:8) and mistakes.<sup>64</sup> There is a necessity to teach that God is concerned about the heart, and that the external is only a reflection of the heart. This is needed, but it should be approached over a period of time and with a proper attitude toward the congregation.

**2. Fundamentalist views of the Bible and Doctrines.** The version of the Bible that is used in the local church will cause much concern. As stated earlier, it is best to use the King James Version and allow someone else to win the arguments. The author used the King James Version for public preaching and speaking, but studied with other versions. This allows the congregation to have a consistent presentation. It is very helpful to the community and makes it possible to get to the important issues without going through many debates.

It is important to keep the independent nature of the church alive. The culture of the reason demands it. One experience from the author will illustrate this principle. The local church had been helped by a home mission board. The author felt the responsibility to write a constitution for the church, and get the membership to ratify it, as there was none. As the constitution was being read to the congregation, there was a fellowship article concerning looking to Southern Highland Evangel to help in securing a pastor in

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<sup>64</sup> Author's addition to the passage.

the future.<sup>65</sup> One of the members wanted to know if that meant that this home mission board had any control over the church. Control was an area of concern for the congregation. It is important to maintain that independent spirit. This should not be difficult because the New Testament example is an independent, local church reaching its community for Christ.

**3. Little distinction between clergy and laity.** The local church must have a great concern to get the entire congregation involved in the ministry. This is a cry from pastors no matter in what part of the country or world they minister. The pastor in mountain culture must work hard to develop the male leadership that will result in effective churches. It is the development of the male leadership that will, more than any other factor, determine the effectiveness of the local church. This will result in the financial base and the vision and foresight that is needed to direct the church through the difficult time it will face.

**4. Sectarian concepts of the church and its mission.** The suspicion of the outsider and his motives is one of the greatest hurdles to climb. The best approach to overcoming this idea will be addressed later, but a brief statement must be given. The best approach is to train local mountain men to do the work of the indigenous local church. This is not to say that the outsider cannot come in and do a good job, but he will have limitations. The non-indigenous pastor will have a harder time being accepted, and he will have to be more courteous. The observation of the author is that the pastor who is

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<sup>65</sup> See Appendix B for the sample church constitution.

transplanted into the culture often becomes very discouraged and leaves. The best approach is to train the native young man and allow him to return to the area and establish the local church. He knows the culture and the problems to avoid. Training local people to be pastors is becoming the practice of many foreign mission agencies and has much merit for mountain missions. Mission boards who work in mountain culture need to examine the product and the effectiveness of the church planting work in which they are involved.

**5. Revivalism.** The style of preaching and enthusiasm are a must for the mountain church. The Bible must be taught in a consistent manner, but the mountain pastor must be prepared to do so with enthusiasm. The Bible must be taught, but the emotions must be touched to have effective communication. The pastor who realizes the need for special services and getting a speaker for those special services who communicates the truth of the Word with some enthusiasm will be most effective. The pastor must work hard at understanding the attitude of the church and making the pulpit effective in the communication of God's truth.

**6. Informality in Worship.** The idea that God moves at any time is not to be discarded. The wise pastor will allow for testimonies from the congregation; these are viewed as times when God is moving in people's lives. It is not that order should be avoided in the church, but the appearance of doing something that has not been planned may be very effective in mountain churches. The pastor needs to be careful how the order of worship is handled; a little flexibility and changing of the pattern are a welcome relief

from the same old thing. Mountain churches enjoy the freshness that is generated by some spontaneity.

**7. Local church autonomy.** The independent nature of the church is a must. Not having “outsiders” tell the church how to do things and run things is very important. For a church and a pastor to be effective, the pastor must understand the culture in which he has been placed. He must maintain a Biblical understanding of the local church and bring about the changes that are necessary. Change must be done with tact while allowing the Holy Spirit to move. The pastor must be careful concerning the attitude that he uses in approaching the culture. There must be a genuine love and concern for the people to whom God has called him to minister. If this love and concern is missing, he will not have an effective mountain ministry.

It is the concern of the author that good, solid, indigenous, Biblical-based local churches be established. Now that the culture has been identified and the product ‘the local church’ has been defined, an evaluation of what has been done in the past will be discussed.



## Chapter Four

### Questionnaire and Interview

The purpose of this chapter is to review a questionnaire that the author sent to over sixty pastors who are serving in the Appalachian Mountain culture. This questionnaire was sent only to pastors who would identify their churches as fundamental, independent, Bible-teaching and preaching local churches. The scope is limited to this group because this is the type of church that will best fulfill the Biblical definition of a local church given in the last chapter. Most of these pastors work or have worked with establishing indigenous mountain churches. There were some pastors who work with established churches, while some have had experience with church planting in mountain culture. Some of these pastors are bi-vocational and others are supported as home missionaries who have raised support from outside the location of their own local church. The author was attempting to understand what plans and programs these men had tried that have been helpful in planting indigenous churches. The negative comments will also be helpful; that is, what they have tried that did not prove beneficial. The questionnaire allows a firsthand view of the struggles and advantages of the pastors on the cutting edge of the target area, allowing the future church planter to avoid some of the mistakes of the past and to use some proven methods in the future.

This chapter will include observations by the author of an interview with Rev. Harry Ramsey. Ramsey, a native of the Appalachian Mountain culture, was born and

raised in Varney, West Virginia, the heart of the West Virginia coal country. He attended Appalachian Bible College in Beckley, West Virginia. He pastored in the mountains for a number of years before moving to northern Ohio to pastor a couple of churches.

Approximately fifteen years ago he left the pastorate to become an evangelist. His primary focus has been the smaller church, which he and his family (now he and his wife) visit. They hold special meetings for a week or conduct daily vacation Bible schools.

Most of their ministry, Ramsey Family Ministry, is with mountain churches. Therefore, the author selected Ramsey to interview because of his experience and background with mountain churches and culture. He has been exposed to both the indigenous mountain church and the mission-planted mountain church while being involved with churches outside the mountain culture. Therefore, he is able to compare the type of church found in the mountains to other non-mountain churches. He is, at the present time, the director of Southern Highland Evangel, a home mission agency whose purpose is to establish indigenous, local churches in Appalachian mountain culture.

The approach of this chapter will be to view the questionnaire and see the results of that study. Next, the interview with Ramsey will be highlighted, followed by some concluding observations by the author.

### Questionnaire Data

The title of the survey used to gather this data is called a “Church Planting Survey.”<sup>66</sup> There were fifty-eight survey forms sent; of that number, the author received twenty-two responses. The group targeted was fundamental pastors and those who had some experience in the area of church planting. Most of the respondents are pastors in the Appalachian Mountain region of Kentucky, Virginia, and West Virginia. Most of these pastors pastor an independent Baptist church or a Bible church.

These names were selected from mailing lists of missions that operate in the region of the Appalachian Mountains. Names came from a local pastor’s fellowship that operates exclusively in the Appalachian Mountains. These pastors are on the cutting edge of the culture and the work of planting churches, which is the scope of this paper.

The questionnaire was composed of fifteen questions that would gather information helpful to the church planter. The questionnaire gained information from three specific areas: (1) Who the pastor is, where he comes from, and his educational background. What is his definition of a church planter and his idea of church planting. What “indigenous” means to him; and, if that is his goal, what time has he spent and what methods has he used to accomplish that goal. (2) What has helped or hindered in the area of church planting. A list of different methods or programs was listed and whether these had been of help or hindrance to the goal of becoming indigenous. One last question was included about the effect of home missions in the area of ministry. (3) The last section

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<sup>66</sup> The letter sent and survey form is found in Appendix C.

was to allow the responder to give advice that a new pastor in the mountains may be able to use as he starts the process of establishing an indigenous local church. Also included in this section was an area allowing the responder to mention anyone he knows who may have been successful or, on the other hand, left discouraged from planting churches in the Appalachian region.

The information from the survey will be presented by simply looking at each question and including in the text of this paper material that will enlighten the reader about methods that have been helpful in planting indigenous local churches. The analyzation of the information will be followed by a summary.

### **1. Are you a native of the Appalachians Mountain?**

Out of the number who responded to the questionnaire, there were twelve who were natives of the region and ten who were not. All of these men had spent time church planting in the region.

### **2. Would you consider yourself a church planter? How would you define the term church planter?**

The answer to the first question was split with eleven saying they were church planters, and eleven saying they were not. Some of the men serve in churches that were already established. They have observed growth, but according to their own definition, they did not start the church.

A church planter is one who moves into a new area and establishes a church in that community. Many who did not consider themselves church planters emphasized the

fact that the community did have a church, and they started with that nucleus of believers. There were a number of observations made about church planting that were very informative. One pastor emphasized the need to make disciples as a part of the church planter's tasks while others stated the need to be willing to serve a community with some sacrifice involved. Others noted that one must be willing to live on the level of the people he is going to minister to and must be willing to use his spiritual gifts when he enters into a new community. The principle of teaching and preaching the Word of God to the community, which would result in leading people to Christ, should be a part of the church planter's vision. One pastor stated the true heart of a church planter is to move to another area and start over when his current church becomes self-supporting. Another aspect of a church planter is possessing the gifts and ability to work himself out of a job.

One other comment, which was very important, was working on the administration and organization of the local church. In the books of Acts, Titus, and Timothy, great emphasis is placed on the importance of organizing the believers of a church into an effective unit that can grow and evangelize others. Therefore, principles of organization and administration must be a part of the church planter's gifts or strengths. He must plan to organize the church in such a way that it will be effective in the community where it is planted. This must be done in a way that allows another pastor to follow him and work effectively. It is easy for a pastor to center everything on himself and make the church totally dependent on him. For one to be a church planter, he must not only establish guidelines that will serve as a guide in the future, but also plan for the day when he will be ready to move to a different job.

**3. Is it your goal for your church to become indigenous? How would you define the term indigenous?**

In response to this question, eighteen responded in the affirmative and only one in the negative. The other three did not consider themselves to be involved in a situation at the present time of taking a church to an indigenous status. The one pastor who responded in the negative has been in a very difficult situation and has resigned from that church, but still had some useful insights.

The definitions of the term indigenous were varied, but the common core of the many definitions involved the concept of a church being able to care for itself in the financial area. Most of the pastors made this the key element for indigenous status; although this is a very important factor, there were other factors mentioned by different pastors.

The fact of the church being supported by the local congregation was a common theme. One pastor pointed out that churches built by resources from the outside are not as strong as ones that people build from their own resources. Words also used were “self-sustaining,” and “self-governing” which emphasize the fact that the church has the ability to elect its own leaders, and these leaders are able to make decisions that will result in the growth and care of that local church. One must guard against just making financial stability the definition of an indigenous local church. The ability to have leadership and to develop that leadership is the real pillar on which the local church must stand. There must be the financial support, but being trained to do the work of the church is the real proving ground for an indigenous church.

One pastor pointed out that being able to reach out to others in missions is a part

of being an indigenous local church. This is part of the mind-set that hinders some local churches from being indigenous. They become so involved in trying to establish a complete program for the church that the foundation is not properly laid. Many pastors feel that certain programs must be in place before it appears that the church is making any progress. It would be better for the church to do less and do it well, than to just have programs so that the church can say they have this program. Too many programs are for the sake of having a program, which burns out both the congregation and pastor. The problem sometimes is that the peers of the pastor place pressure during the pastor's meetings to keep up with other churches. It is a great harm to feel the need to be accepted in a group and have certain standards that become the standard for success.

One pastor stated the need to be established in an environment where the church could function independently while another pastor stated the need for a church to be started from within the culture. Both of these men have made an important contribution to our project. In the culture of the Appalachian Mountains, one must be sure that he does not convey the impression that he is there to "straighten out" the people in how things are to be done. One needs to learn from the first chapter of this project what is involved in the mind-set of being a mountaineer and needs to be sure that he is adapted to that idea. The church must be a part of the people who populate the community; it does not, however, have to be the product of what someone from outside the culture thinks it should be. This understanding becomes very true in the culture defined as mountain. One must understand the setting if he is going to become effective in the lives of people. There is a great need for the church to function independently in the culture of Appalachia because of the nature of the people. Churches that are going to be the most

effective will have that independent focus.

**4. Have you led a church to become indigenous? How long did it take? If the church is not indigenous, how long have you labored there?**

There were seven pastors, all where native to the Appalachian region, who stated that they had led a church to an indigenous status, and fourteen who are still working toward that end. Two of these pastors have served at more than one church, for which they answered. The author personally knows that some who responded have served at more than one church, but their response reflects only the church at which they presently serve. None of the pastors who have come from outside the region, according to the survey have accomplished an indigenous status, with the exception of one. There is a clear difference between the results of the two groups of pastors surveyed.

Only one pastor was able to lead his church to indigenous status in less than five years. Three pastors took five to ten years; two pastors took ten to fifteen years; and one pastor took fifteen to twenty years. The author had to labor almost fifteen years at his local church before the status of being indigenous was reached. As one can easily see, the work is not easy and will require a long-term stay. If a pastor plans to see this goal accomplished, it will only be realized if he is willing to pour his life into a community for a number of years. One needs to keep in mind that being indigenous is more than just having the financing needed. The need to have leadership developed, in place, and able to lead, is required as well as significant amounts of time. The number of men who have labored in churches that are not indigenous is very enlightening. Only two have been pastoring for under five years; three from five to ten years; two from ten to fifteen years;



and four for over twenty years. One can see that this is a group of experienced pastors who responded to the questionnaire. There are a number of men who have given their lives to the work of establishing the indigenous church in the mountains. This reinforces the point that this is not easy work that is being considered. The individuals who have responded have observed the coming and going of many pastors. They have, as well, tried many different methods and programs to encourage the growth of churches. Establishing an indigenous church is a most difficult work in Appalachian culture. A number of reasons have already been discussed at length, and others will be exposed as we move through this questionnaire.

**5. Are you supported as a full-time pastor, a bi-vocational pastor, a supported home missionary, or other?**

The numbers of respondents in this area do not match the total number of the survey because some of these men are in different positions, and some have moved from one church to another. Some have taken a church to indigenous status and then moved to another church planting situation.

The number who are supported as a full time pastor is eight; those who are bi-vocational (pastor on Sunday and Wednesday and work another job) is six; and those who are supported as home missionaries is nine, two are native to the Appalachian region. The bi-vocational pastor is the condition in most churches in the mountains. A number of home missionary agencies have come into the Appalachian Mountain region to establish local churches. This is done many times by single ladies who were called by God to teach Bible lessons in the public schools. These ladies would establish a local Sunday

school and then try to grow it into a church so that a pastor could be called. The other approach was to take someone who had a job and was established and have him work at the job and pastor the church at the same time. Both of these means have had mixed results in church planting. Much of the success depends upon the character, dedication, and drive of the person who is involved. The next two questions will address this issue.

**6. Give some advantages of your status (according to question five).**

**7. Give some disadvantages of your status (according to question five).**

Because of the overlap of these two questions and their relationship to each other, they will be grouped together in comparing and contrasting the supported mission pastor and the bi-vocational pastor.

#### Supported Missionary Pastor

Individuals who were supported from without saw both negative and positive features to this position. Most who responded positively reported that the ability to spend most of their time in the work was the greatest benefit. One pastor mentioned that this support allows him the time to build the building. Being supported as a home missionary allows for flexibility in the ministry and for the ministry to be done in a number of different ways. One must always keep in mind, however, what the priorities are when it comes to taking money from other churches to do the Lord's work in a church planting situation.

There were some negatives that were mentioned by the home missionary supported pastors. Most of the problems seemed to fall into the area of the mind-set of

the mountaineer who has a hard time understanding the concept of the paid preacher. It is a part of the culture that one supports himself and does the preaching on the side; although as has been stated before, it is an issue with which one must deal. Some think that being supported has a tendency to isolate them from the people to whom they are ministering. It is interesting to see that this very concept can be a hindrance to the self-supporting status of the church being attained. The author has observed, as one other pastor pointed out: this can be a crutch that individuals use. If the mountain church knows that the pastor is supported, it allows the members to think that they do not have to pay an adequate salary. On the other hand many churches are able to do things that they would never be able to do if they had to care for the salary of the pastor.

There are dangers that must be addressed in the area of outside support being given. It is a benefit that may be abused not only by the church, but also by the pastor. This abuse of support certainly has occurred in the past. One pastor stated that it was hard for the new disciple (new believer) to understand why the pastor did not have to work another job. It is true that some individuals look for ways to have an easy life. It could be because of all the government programs that are abused in the Appalachian region that some could look at the outside supported pastor as a way to avoid working.

#### Bi-Vocational Pastor

The pastors who were bi-vocational saw advantages and disadvantages to their means of support. The advantages were that they felt more respected in the community because they worked a job beside the rest of the men. This causes the mountain men to feel that the pastor identifies with them and does not feel like he is above them. It is a

valid point that was made by a bi-vocational pastor, that his position allows the pastor to get to know the men better and is able to share with them on a more personal basis. The advantage for some is the fact that they would not be able to pastor any other way. Some churches are small and serve a small community, and the only way for the church to have a pastor is if he has another job. In some communities, having a bi-vocational pastor, or a mission supported pastor, who will have to be continually supported, is the only way that churches are able to have a man serve as pastor.

The hindrances were expressed as well. The fact that there is not as much time for studying or visiting the parishioners was given. It is a fact that after a man works in the mines all day, he is tired and finds it very difficult to spend much time in doing the work of a pastor. One pastor said that there are limited advantages while another could not see any advantages. That so much energy must be used to earn a living and to do the activities that are demanded of a pastor is very difficult. The author did receive an interesting report of a pastor who retired from his job and stated that there was very little increase in the effectiveness of his ministry after he retired. It would seem that most would rather have the freedom to not have to be bi-vocational in the pastoral ministry.

The conclusion that one must draw is that the ideal method for church planting is the supported home missionary. There are advantages to the bi-vocational pastor, but the time constraints are very difficult to overcome in ministry. If one teaches the church the proper method of support of the pastor, the church will have that proper understanding. The area of leadership being developed in the local church comes to the front. As the author observed the church he pastored, the conclusion was that the development of leadership is the key to having indigenous local churches.

## 8. What is your education background?

This question received a range from high school graduates, those pursuing continuing education, to the seminary graduates. The purpose of this question was to see how these pastors were called to preach and serve in a local church, and to see the type of training they received. Most of the time the perception in the Appalachian Mountains is that God calls a man to preach and he should get up and preach. Most mountain churches do not think that preachers should have any education in a religious area.

The response to the question is very interesting and shows that the churches are going through changes. All the respondents of the questionnaire had a Bible Institute or Bible College degree (difference being a three and four year degree). Seven of the men had a seminary degree, and five were working on more education, something that just a few years ago would not have been true. The results show that more and more individuals are seeing the importance of education when it comes to being a pastor. It reveals that more of the mountain churches are willing and desiring to have a pastor with a Biblical education.

This change in emphasis on education is significant because it allows us to understand that we must have trained men leading the churches that are going to be established. Training must be taken into consideration as these churches are planted.

**9. What methods, programs, ideas, or factors have been effective in causing your church to grow?**

**10. What methods, programs, ideas, or factors have not been effective in causing your church to grow, i.e., what hindrances to church growth have you encountered?**

These questions are to be viewed together because they are the positive and the negative of the same issue. The list of activities and programs used for suggestions for each question was the same. The author listed five specific areas for each pastor to comment on and then the opportunity for explanation. A blank was provided for the pastor to add any other program he would like to add that he has used or that has been effective.

The first area that was addressed was visitation in either the home or the hospital. Most of the pastors stated that this is the greatest area of help in their church, with fourteen saying it has been very effective, and only four saying that it has not been helpful. (A word of explanation-- the numbers may not be the same because all pastors did not mark all of the categories). There were a number of comments made in the area of visitation. The idea was that people get to know what the church is all about, especially if the church is new in the community. The area of hospital visitation was emphasized as one of the major areas that contributed to church growth because people are open to the pastor and church when they see that the pastor cares. Visiting hospitals allows a person to have direct contact with people in the community. The need for follow-up was mentioned with the fact that, if one does not follow-up with visitation, growth will be hindered. The difficult part expressed by most pastors is that it is hard to

get members of the church to visit. One interesting comment was that people enjoy having the pastor in their home. Cults have hindered visitation because most people think one is a cult member in door-to-door visitation.

The second area was that of leadership. Leadership is one of the areas that needs to have more emphasis. When the leadership is developed, the church will function and move forward after the church planter is called to a new place of service. Nine of the pastors marked this as a positive while four pastors marked it as a negative. One of the negatives is that the older established individuals in the community have religious practices that become very difficult for them to change. As observed in the first chapter, the nature of the mountain area is very established and very slow to accept any change as the result of suspicion of the outsider. If one can have a native who is trained and sold-out to establishing churches, it will cause the natives of the area to accept the church faster.

Any type of new idea or change becomes a problem. The characteristic of being resistant to change is common to not only the mountaineer, but of people in general. It may, however, be worse in the Appalachian Mountain culture. The native individuals know the culture that they are a part of and are not as quick to leave when things do not go well. One pastor stressed the need to get other people involved, as leadership is the best way to make individuals feel a part of the church.

The pastors mentioned the fact that men are weak in the area of leadership. The lack of male leadership is one of the largest obstacles that the local church must address. How are the churches going to get men to take responsibility and see churches become indigenous? The area of leadership falls into the hands of a few, yet this is a problem that

any church would face. There is a need to develop that leadership. The observation needs to be made that many pastors are afraid of leadership developing in the church because they fear it may threaten their position or things will get “out of control,” meaning that they will not be able to have the control they think is important. These fears are misguided because if leadership is developed and people are made a part of the church, they will want to see the work move forward.

The next topic addressed by the questionnaire was youth, which had the fewest negatives of all the topics with only three pastors mentioning it as a negative. Twelve of the pastors viewed it as having a positive effect on the growth of their church. Most of the pastors see the youth as a way to overcome the established mind-set of the older people of the community. The youth are willing to try new ideas, and it is possible to attract them to a new program. Getting the youth involved is one method of overcoming the traditionalism of the region as well as being the fresh cutting edge of the church. Training the youth involves the older people because they sense a duty to train the youth for the future.

One pastor addressed the area of AWANA, which gives the people of the church an avenue of service. The AWANA program is a way to reach families because most parents are concerned about what is happening to the youth in their family. They are attracted to a church that has a program and is interested in youth ministry. It was pointed out that there is a great need for good leadership in the area of the youth. Training youth workers is an area that has been pointed out before and needs to have much focus. Youth groups are an area for which many mountain churches do not see the need. Many churches consider youth ministry a waste of time.



It will be a great advantage if the church planter can develop a good ministry with youth that encourages the church and also involves discipleship for future leadership. A pastor must be careful, however, that he does not put all of the emphasis on youth as the future of the church. In many mountain communities, the youth will not stay in the community. They will be forced to move because of economic reasons. Therefore, to place all of the emphasis on the youth will hurt other areas. One must minister to this group, but not place all the emphasis there.

**11. How have Bible camps, home missions, and public school visitation been a help or hindrance to your church's growth?**

The pastors who responded gave a variety of answers to these different ministries that are functioning in the Appalachian region. The mission that the author was involved with had Bible camps, retreats, and public school visitation. The public school ministry is still allowed in some sections of Appalachia, but is becoming less and less of an option. It is the observation of the author that the public school visitation was a great advantage to the Bible camp, but not a great help to the local church ministry because, though the camps could be promoted, the local church ministry could not. The public school visitation became less and less available because more and more schools are closing; this had a negative impact on the camp ministry also. If the local churches had been more effectively tied into the camping ministry, this would not have created the loss of campers.

*Bible Camps* were viewed as the most productive of the three by the pastors who were surveyed. Most of the comments were positive because youth were being saved,

and this factor helped the outreach of the local church. The advantage of a place for the youth of the church to be involved in Christian service was addressed. There were some pastors who stated that camps had not been of much help. It is the observation of the author, who was a camp director for nine years, that the churches and pastors who were involved in camp thought that it was a great help. Those who did not participate in the camp ministry were not as pleased with the camp ministry.

One problem with the camp ministry is the lack of follow-up. This is a great problem; most camps attempt to follow-up on the campers who attend because it is a great form of promotion, but the spiritual follow-up is somewhat limited. The campers come from many communities that do not have a Bible-teaching local church that the camp can recommend to the campers to attend. The camp is not the final end, but the need to have the converts involved in a Bible-teaching local church is a must. Therefore, the only answer is to have a Bible-teaching local church in the communities that the campers may attend. Part of the next chapter will deal with how this may be achieved in the region and how the camp ministry can compliment the local church.

*Home-missions* were viewed positively by a few pastors who have had help from the home mission in establishing the local church. There have been churches established in the region by home missions, and a few of them, as seen earlier, have become indigenous.

There were a number of negative comments that were made concerning the home mission as well. The greatest complication was that an attitude of dependence was created and hard to overcome. The author experienced this in the local church that he pastored for over fourteen years. In general, the members of the congregation know that

the pastor is not living on the salary that they are paying him; therefore, there has to be some outside support that is keeping him there. It is difficult to make the leap from being able to have extra money to build buildings and carry on ministries, which is not possible if the pastor is paid a full salary. If this is observed with the earlier comment that mountain churches are accustomed to having the preacher work all week and preach on the weekend, one can easily see how this is difficult to achieve. The author has developed a plan to help in this area which will be addressed in the next chapter.

Only one pastor addressed public school visitation- and this was not a positive comment. One would conclude, as this author has, that this has been a non-factor in most of the churches of the mountain region. Public school visitation did not increase the attendance of the local church. There are many churches in the region and the teaching must be viewed as moral education; therefore, one could go to almost any church in the region and have the same type of moralistic teaching. One must remember that many have been saved and much work has been done in the past: the region is largely the Bible belt because of these programs.

## **12. What do you think are the largest obstacles for the church planter in the mountain culture?**

The dominant observations of the mountain pastors (some identified more than one problem) who are on the front line of the church planting efforts in Appalachia can be listed in five categories:

**Mountain tradition.** Nine of the pastors, the most, identified mountain tradition as the greatest problem for the church planter. The discouragement of seeing people

saved and then returning to the church where parents and grandparents were members is an obstacle. The problem is that many of the mountain churches of the grandparents do not fit the definition developed in chapter two as a Bible teaching church. One must remember that the clan idea, as observed before, is very strong, and family ties are very important. It is difficult to go against what grandmother did in the past. The author experienced this when one family visited the church and wanted to come, but it took over a year and a half before they attended and became members of the church. Mountain people are a very religious group of people with most people attending church or professing to attend church. When one does door-to-door visitation, the individuals are very friendly, but most will tell about the church that they attend. It becomes very important to understand the culture and the thinking processes of the people to whom one will minister.

**Lack of leadership.** The second area that was identified by seven pastors was the lack of leadership. There is a great need to develop the type of male leadership that will make the church effective both now and in the future. Pastor after pastor stated that if he could solve this problem, he would have made great progress. The problem stated is that men view church as something for the ladies and the children. Most men do not want to get involved or feel like it is not their place to get involved. This can become very discouraging for the pastor who is doing much of the work without seeing much help from the men. Getting male leadership and support must be addressed if the churches of Appalachian are to move forward. Leadership in the church is the central factor that must be solved if the church planting, indigenous model is going to become a reality in many mountain communities.

**Economic obstacles.** Five of the pastor reported that coal and coal related industry is the major source of jobs is a large factor in church planting. The economy is either great or in depression and one must adjust to this reality and plan accordingly. Extreme is the keyword: either it is really good, or it is really bad. There is no middle time; either all people are working or a large number are laid-off. This rise and fall in employment results in the income of the church being unstable. Times may be good, but one must always remember that hard times are around the corner. The extremes in employment and salary affects the population of the area because most of the youth move away to find jobs, leaving an older population. There are some young people in the churches, and some of them will find jobs with the coal industry during the good times. Many of the pastors refer to the coal business as a major problem.

**Lack of trust of outsiders.** Four of the pastors, all are non-native to the region, addressed the issue of trust as being a great obstacle in the establishment of indigenous local churches. It takes years and time for the people to trust and get to know the outsider because the outsider has taken advantage of them in the past. The coal company and timber buyer who bought the mineral rights for almost nothing caused a justified fear and suspicion of outsiders. It will take the church planter years to build the trust that is necessary for a local church to be indigenous. Many pastors do become discouraged and leave for another place, and this causes church members to wonder how long the new pastor will stay. It is going to take a long-term commitment to this type of church planting. Most churches that support missionaries want to see results, which may not happen in the time frame that has been predetermined. It takes time to establish trust and confidence, a fact not only in mountain culture but also in any culture. It will take longer

in mountain culture than most. The author will address this problem in the next chapter.

**Charismatic church.** Two of the pastors mentioned the emotional nature of the mountaineer, which is a great advantage to the charismatic brand of religion. The loud preaching and emotional singing are a great hook for this type of church. In many communities, non-charismatic pastors state that they have lost people to the more emotional style of worship than is found in charismatic churches. The pastor does not have to follow the doctrine of charismatic churches, but it does help to add enthusiasm to the services.

It takes a special person to become a church planter in this culture. One must realize that the work is going to be slow, and he must prepare himself to do the job long-term. The pastors who responded to the survey have experienced this firsthand and share the difficulties that they face daily.

### **13. What advice would you give to the new church planter who just came into our culture?**

The answers that were given came from the hearts of men who have labored and had times of victory as well as times of great discouragement. The most basic answer, and one that gets overlooked, was given by seven of the pastors--be sure it is God's call for your life. A person must be totally convinced that this task is what God has called, not only him to do, but his family as well. The reason that many have washed out in the mountains is that they do not have that call of God in their life. Today there are young men who do not know what God wants them to do so they experiment to find God's will. The mountains are not a place to experiment. A person must have total assurance that he

will be able to handle what comes his way, and he can only do that when he knows he is in the center of God's will.

The need to be patient and take time to minister to the people is another piece of advice given by nine of the experienced mountain preachers. Planting churches will not be a quick process, but will be time consuming and life consuming. A person must realize that the timetable he sets up may not be God's timetable. The author had a three-year plan that became a seven-year plan, which turned into a fourteen-year plan. There is a great need for patience and understanding in this ministry. Men who have been in the culture realize how difficult it is to be truly accepted, and overcome the suspicion of being an outsider.

The other response that seven of the pastors pointed out was the need to love the people. One must not get the idea that he is God's gift to straighten out the people of the community. Pastors get the idea that they will raise everyone up to their level. There are some changes that must be made, but the changes must be done in a way that is helpful and considerate of the people who will be affected. One pastor stated that the nonindigenous person would have a difficult time being effective. Another pastor who is a native of the region was concerned about not looking down on the people, caring for them, and not trying to change the culture. A young man with lots of ideas learned at a Bible college must take it slow, and learn to love his people.

Another pastor stated that there would be much sacrifice involved if one is going to be effective. The need to sacrifice oneself for the Lord and the area in which God has called him to work is ministry. The term sacrifice is one that must be used for the man God has called to the Appalachia Mountain culture.

The advice that was given is very helpful to someone who is just beginning the process of church planting. It is good for a person to sit down and count the cost before beginning the process. Christ told us to do that as well. The need to be sure that God has called one to the area of ministry cannot be overstated; it will be the determining factor.

Donald Alban, a professor of missions at Appalachian Bible College, sent the author (in response to the survey) an unpublished paper. Alban has entitled his paper "A Philosophy for Church Planting."<sup>67</sup> In this report Alban is dealing with the traditional way that churches have been planted. The following quote is from this paper,

Jesus had been laying the foundation of the church during the three years of earthly ministry. Instead of forming a congregation of followers first, He was developing the leadership through which He would build His church. Until the leadership had been trained, the church would not be born. Without any theological debate, it is the conviction of this writer that the church was born on the day of Pentecost, after the training period with the Lord's disciples was completed. Notice the pattern that has been made: leadership first and then the establishment of the church. The significance of this order is most important.<sup>68</sup>

The importance of developing leadership is something that one must place as a priority for the church planter. One must not just look at the short-term (getting the congregation able to pay its own bills), but what is going to happen in the future when the next pastor comes? The real sign of good leadership is what happens after the pastor is gone, not just during the time that he is there. The church planter must plan for the day when he will no longer be present in that church. When he has departed, will that church be able to continue on with the ministry because of the establishment of good leadership?

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<sup>67</sup> Donald Alban, "A Philosophy for Church Planting" (Bradley: WV Appalachian Bible College, 1994) 7.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid, 3.



This was a topic that was wisely addressed by a pastor in Martin, Kentucky who responded to the survey and wants long-term commitments for the mountains. Therefore, one must address this issue if indigenous churches are going to be planted in the Appalachian region.

One other quote from Alban needs to be included:

Once again, this writer is convinced that training the national worker prior to the establishment of a local assembly of believers can eliminate this sort of problem. After the missionary has adequately indoctrinated his disciple for ministry, the missionary must to a large degree follow the example of the apostle Paul in Acts 20:23. His disciple must be commended to God and His Word. With this, the disciple is then sent out to plant a church.<sup>69</sup>

Training is a command Christ gave Christians in the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19, 20. The church planter in the Appalachian region must understand that the native who has grown up in the mountains is going to be more effective than someone from the outside as evidenced from the historical study of the culture (chapter 1), and this paper. It is the opinion of the author after growing up in the region and serving as pastor for over fourteen years that native church planters are the ideal goal. This conclusion is the result of the survey data from local pastors. The pastors who responded who stated they were native to the region have been responsible for bringing five churches to an indigenous status. This has taken five to ten years for three of the pastors, and ten to fifteen years for two pastors. There are four men who are still laboring, two have been working for five to ten years, one between ten and fifteen years, and one over twenty years. The point of emphasis is that five churches have achieved the goal of becoming an indigenous church. The men who are imported into the culture have been working at nine

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid, 9.

churches and only one church as achieved indigenous status. This pastor lead the church early in his life to that position and moved to another area in which he has labored over twenty years and not repeated the goal. The church that was indigenous no longer has that status. Other men have labored without the desired results at this point. Four have been at their churches for less than five years (the problem is that many get discouraged and leave). Three of the pastors have worked for over twenty years in the same location and are still working diligently. One of the pastors has worked between five and ten years. A pastor working in Eastern Kentucky had lead a church in New York to indigenous status and came to labor in the mountains. He is thinking of leaving before the five-year time, the reason is that the people are just too difficult to work with in mountain culture.

The emphasis needs to be the training of young men of Appalachia to become pastors of the churches of the region. The training needs to be done with the local church in view throughout the process understanding the area and the job that needs to be accomplished. The Bible school and seminary can have a great impact on the young men, but the culture of the region must be understood. Selecting and training native pastors needs to be the emphasis of the home mission boards who are involved in the establishment of local churches in this region. The purpose of Bible Colleges and institutes has a tendency to change with the growth process. There would be a great advantage to having an institution of higher learning, which would major on the uniqueness of the Appalachian Mountains.

The following observations from an interview with Harry Ramsey (the complete interview is included in Appendix D) will add to and support the information that has

been obtained from the survey forms. The interview reinforces the need for trained leadership in the ministry of the mountains. There are some observations he made that need to be emphasized that reinforce the survey material.

The fact that mountain culture is different must be emphasized to the church planter. A great disservice is done to assume that one can just go into a situation and everything will fall into place. Growing up in the mountains and ministering there for many years allows Ramsey to compare the difference in the culture and the changes. The idea of losing innocence is a fact, but there is an opening of the culture to a different exposure. This exposure is changing the mountaineer's concept of the purpose of the church. This allows for the Biblical emphasis that God's Word should be the final authority and not the word (or opinion) of a preacher.

An observation by Ramsey concerning the indigenous status of the mountain churches shows the difficulty of that endeavor. The author would like to make the point that there is merit in hearing the Word of God taught and aggressively instructed concerning the need to become indigenous. The lack of a goal to become indigenous is a great problem because of complacency on the part of both the church and the home missionary. It is easy to become contented with status quo. Leadership must be secured and trained in the mountain churches in order to find stability. The generation of church planters entering the mountains must have a clear vision and a goal of leadership trained to assume the leadership of the local church. The training of young men in Bible colleges should reinforce this idea that leadership and training others to lead will bring the best results. As will be stated later, the home mission agency is the place for this type of philosophical change to become reality. Consistent teaching of the Word of God will

change the understanding about paid pastors and change many church traditions. This teaching needs to start early in the history of the church; one must avoid the temptation to get lots of programs started. One must not equate programs with growth and success.

Many of the areas addressed in the survey are found in the interview. There is the economic situation that must be faced in the culture. The welfare mentality, where an outside group builds the building and pays the pastor, is another obstacle that must be faced. This area must be addressed not only because of the church situation, but because of all the government programs that have poured money into the Appalachian region. This has created a mentality that someone will provide the necessary financial backing. It is a great benefit for the congregation to build their own building and have the responsibility for maintaining the building and ministry.

The demand for a long-term ministry is one area that was emphasized. A person must have confidence that God has called him to the area because of the disappointment that will be faced. One must have a realistic expectation of what is going to be involved in this ministry. It is going to take time to establish oneself. To come and go quickly because of discouragement does more harm than not coming at all. Therefore it would be ideal if young men who have grown up in the culture are trained at a Bible College that emphasizes the ministry need of this culture. The plan that will be developed in the next chapter will deal with this very basic idea.

Ramsey mentioned one of the problems in the mountains is the emphasis that is placed on youth work instead of evangelizing the heads of households. The public school ministry because of its nature would emphasize youth. Many of the churches were started from Sunday Schools established by ladies working in public school ministry. The

emphasis, therefore, would not produce quality leadership. The author would agree that much work has been done and many souls saved by these ministries, but it has not achieved the development of the leadership of the local church. In this same area another observation would be made that most of the public schools are no longer open for the home missionary to visit. The same forces that have removed the Bible from public schools in the rest of the country are at work in the Appalachian region. It has been a slower trend, but it is more and more the norm for most communities. To place a lot of emphasis on these ministries would not help the local church. Those resources would be better placed in an area that would encourage the overall goal of training leadership for the local church.

One final observation that needs to be stated is that the bi-vocational pastor has been very successful and will continue to be because of the background of the culture. However, it will be difficult to sustain the growth of the churches with this type of leadership. The bi-vocational pastor should have a goal of training leadership to the place that he can become a full-time pastor of the church. In small communities because of limited resources this may not be the ideal situation, but the church that is going to grow and establish other churches in the culture must have a full time pastor to lead. We will now present a plan that will allow this type of work to be accomplished using the resources available to this region of the country.

## Chapter Five

### **A Plan to Develop and Plant Indigenous Churches in Appalachia**

After looking at all the information that has been gathered and the responses from pastors who are in the front lines of the battle, several conclusions can be drawn, and a plan can be developed. It is time to determine that the resources available are used in the best possible way. It is imperative that the various ministries in the Appalachian Mountains become more effective in fulfilling the Great Commission, and that they be dovetailed together to complement one another. It is important that one understands the situation at the present time in order to implement a plan to improve the process. From the information that has been presented the problems can now be identified. It is possible to make some suggestions that will aid the future of planting churches in the Southern Appalachian Mountains. The author is going to draw those conclusions and develop a plan that effectively uses the available resources.

#### **Conclusions:**

- 1. The greatest need that mountain churches have is the development of leadership in the local churches.** It becomes imperative that there be a plan that will develop this leadership for the health and stability of the local churches. The surveyed pastors made this clear (pages 71-72). The mission agency must find and develop a way

to train leaders and develop native mountaineers to do the work of the local church and pastor mountain churches.

The importing of pastors into the culture is effective to a certain extent. The pastor who has a love for people and patience will be able to work effectively. One must be committed to a long process and realize that this is God's will for his life. The Lord has used this means to establish many churches and bring many souls to Him. The pastor who is not a native of the area can be trained to be an effective pastor in mountain culture, but the best use of resources and effort would be to train individuals to pastor churches who are natives to the area. The cry of the pastors surveyed was the need of leadership. A philosophy that focuses on developing leadership helps the churches that are already established. These churches need to be used as a base to send out other trained leaders which would involve people of the home church in the process. The author grew up in a church forty-five minutes from the church he pastored. At the start of his own church his home church took on many helpful tasks such as participating in a survey and handing out promotional literature. Both churches benefited from the fellowship of the shared help. There was a feeling of involvement with a sister church that is not a trait of most mountain churches due to their independent spirit. The church was able to build a number of buildings and see growth and stability. The author left the church with no debt and able to call a pastor and take care of its needs. The home church was a great help in making this a reality in the community.

**2. There needs to be an incentive for mountain churches to become indigenous.** A better way needs to be developed to encourage the church to take on the support of its pastor. Pastors need to be encouraged to bring the church to the place where it can support itself, totally independent of outside support. The number of men who have labored in the mountains is an indication that some plan must be presented that will shorten this process. In the interview with Harry Ramsey the same problem was addressed. The incentive must be addressed if any plan is going to be effective and have the desired results. The need for teaching is evident in this process, as is the need for setting goals that are attainable and logical for the church. These goals that need to be taken into consideration are the human and financial resources of the community that are available and upon which the church can draw. The plan that has been followed up to this point in the mountains has not been greatly effective.

**3. There must be a way for the institutions working in the mountains to complement each other.** There are pastors who are working to bring churches to an indigenous state. Many of these churches have been started by home missions groups still laboring in the mountains. There was a great burden for the people of Appalachia and many mission groups and missionaries answered the call to go and reach the people of the mountains. The work would benefit if these missions doing the same work in different sections of the mountains could encourage one another. Much could be accomplished if there were a sharing of information between these agencies. Many of these missions have camp ministries that are an active part of the mission and the local church. Bible Institutes are present that have the expressed purpose of training young



men and women to reach the people of Appalachia with the Gospel. It would be a great advantage if these institutions could work together in helping with the screening of young people and aiding each other with some of the work that needs to be done. There has been duplication of work in many areas because of a lack of basic coordination. There are benefits for each of these ministries as they work together to develop and train leadership. Individuals could be placed in areas to more effectively do the work that is needed. Each of these ministry groups would know what its part is in the plan and could use its expertise, as well as the expertise of the other groups, to make the work more effective and efficient. These are ministries that have the same basic purpose, and goal, of fulfilling the Great Commission in a biblically consistent way.

### **The Problems**

**1. How are the leaders going to be trained for these churches?** As churches are in the beginning stages of development, how are individuals who are interested going to be trained and involved in the target area? Young people God calls to pastor need to be convinced to stay in the region since most move away because of the economic factors of the area. The need of the area and the option of ministering in the mountains must be emphasized to these young men. The close family ties are a definite advantage that attracts many if the need is presented properly. Young men need to be selected by churches to be trained in the role of leadership. Many do not see that the ministry is a fulfilling vocation and think that one must be involved in another area for financial reasons. Pastors need to teach that there is more to life than financial gain, and they need

to demonstrate that in the lives they live. It could be that many are not becoming pastors in mountain churches because of the fact that pastors are complaining about their lives.

**2. How will the money be available to build these churches?** There is the need for finances to be available in order to start churches and bring about the necessary support for these pastors. A plan is necessary to move these men from outside supported missionaries to pastors who are supported, not only financially, but also by leadership within from the local church. Some ministers who enter the region will stay and be effective pastors. The author is not saying that only native Appalachian men will be able to pastor mountain churches, but that is the ideal plan.

**3. The need to understand the culture of the mountains.** The mission board must train pastors and families about the culture. The home-mission board must become more involved in the training process of teaching pastors and their families the cultural demands. It is well for anyone to know the area of ministry and encourage pastors to become familiar with the culture.

**4. The need to love the people to whom God has called one to work.** This is a quality that only God can lay upon the heart of the individuals whom He has called to work in the mountains. Each person must confirm, as the pastors in the survey stated (page 74), that God has called him to this area of ministry

The churches and pastors of the region will become involved if they realize that an effective plan is being used to plant churches. The churches that are established would be

able to help with finances. They could help in the building of new churches and help by bringing and training new people.

### **The Plan**

Following is a plan that addresses the problems and finds a way to use the resources effectively and efficiently. This plan will help the different institutions that are involved to have the funds and personnel needed to do the work to which God has called them. The author has developed this plan to involve the following basic ministries that have a stated goal of establishing indigenous local churches: the Bible institute, the home mission agencies, and the local churches. This plan is to be an aid to the home mission board in the task of training leaders to fulfill the Great Commission especially as it sets its goals for the future.

The Bible Institute or College- The Bible school needs students in order to be effective and fulfill the purpose for which it was started. The stated purpose of most Bible schools is, "preparing full-time Christian servants, giving direction in life choices, and sharpening the skill of those who serve in local churches."<sup>70</sup> The school that is most effective in this project, in the opinion of the author, is Southland Bible Institute in Ashland, Kentucky. This school has as its purpose the training of young men of Appalachia to become workers in the Appalachian region. "Southland Bible Institute was

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<sup>70</sup> Appalachian Bible College, Catalog 1998-2000, (Bradley, WV, 1998) 6.

founded to meet a specific need. Christian workers in this area (Appalachian Mountains) believed that a Bible Institute was needed to train those who had been reached with the Gospel so that they, in turn, may reach others.”<sup>71</sup>

This is not to say that only students from this school could be used. There are other Bible schools from which a home mission could draw personnel. The advantage of Southland is the desire of the school to place students in churches of Appalachia. This school and other schools benefit from an interaction with the churches and home mission agencies because it has a ready supply of students. The churches and home mission agencies are able to draw upon these resources available to them.

The more churches that are established, the greater the pool of potential students for the school, as well as a greater need for Bible college students to pastor these new churches. It is, therefore, an opportunity to place the graduates of the school into churches. It is a training ground as the students practice the training that they have received in the classroom. There are opportunities to fill pulpits and to involve themselves in the ministry of local churches. Most schools have some program to involve their students in practical Christian work, allowing the student to go with the pastor or church leader and labor with him on a day-to-day basis. At Appalachian Bible College the program is called Christian Service assignments.<sup>72</sup> This interaction with pastors and their ministries allows the student to catch the vision and the passion of the pastor who is effective in the work of the Lord.

The process of selecting individuals to areas that God has gifted them must start at

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<sup>71</sup> Southland Bible Institute, Catalog 1997-1999, (Ashland, KY, 1997) 3.

<sup>72</sup> Appalachian Bible College, 36.

this point of the training process. This would require that the Bible school and the home mission board work together in the training process. This is not being done now; therefore it is an ideal that would have to be implemented in the mountain region. The plan would be classroom training of the students takes place as the school trains all of the students. The professors and personnel of the school have contact with the home mission board leadership, the leadership presents the personal needs of the area in which the mission is working. This would mean that the school and mission board are in agreement doctrinally and have the same purpose of planting church in the Appalachian region. During the years of training, young men are observed and channeled into working with a church or community where there is a need to start a church. The student realizes that the training he is receiving is very practical and he is able to see God work first hand in his life as he ministers to a congregation or group of people. The student's work habits, spiritual gifts, and desire to serve are all being evaluated by professors who have had experience working with students. The screening process is completed by the local church with the pastor and congregation placing their approval on the young man. Having the experience and wisdom of the faculty of the school eliminates much of the trial and error that happens today in many communities and churches. It would eliminate a lot of the discouragement that happens to young men who have a lot of zeal but may have not evaluated their gifts and call as closely as may be needed.

The importance of preparing future church leaders means that the school has to develop and maintain the philosophy that the students who populate the school are more than just numbers to be counted. This would be a great benefit to a school because it

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would help to place graduates into positions that might be hard to find. It is a return to the New Testament concept of training and pouring one's life into another person.

Students are viewed and trained in the area where their spiritual gifts are detected, and not just given a vague and general training. Though this is not the view of most Bible colleges today, it saves time and is a better use of the available resources. This approach would help with the need for leadership that was identified as one of the major problems (pages 84 & 85).

Another benefit of the plan for the Bible institutes is that their students gain training as they staff home missions' camp ministries. This is another ministry that is not being done at this time, with the incorporation of the Bible school and home missions. There are other opportunities for work in the camping ministry of a full-time nature for those students who are gifted by God for that type of work. This camp work could be developed into a credit course for the students who are receiving training and practical experience. The professors of the Bible institute could use the camp for summer courses, and the entire camping season is part of the training of the Bible institute. The professors can be models of ministry and the discipleship of new converts. It would appear that even the facilities of the camp or Bible school could serve both the camp and classrooms for the school. The grounds of the school are not used much in the summer except for summer school programs. The grounds of a camp are not used much in the winter except for the occasional retreat. Combining schools and camps would provide maximum use for the facilities that are expensive to build and maintain.

Another benefit for Bible institutes working together with home missions and local churches would be increased enrollment. Young people who are in churches

pastored by graduates will have a greater desire to attend the Bible school to receive training. These young people, and their parents, will see the first hand result of what the graduates are accomplishing. With the home missions' and the local churches' allowance of the Bible institutes to do the general training of leaders, they use their own resources more effectively in other places of emphasis instead of using their facilities for training.

The primary purpose of the school is the training of the personnel needed to pastor the churches and to assist the pastors, which allows the home missions and local churches to focus on different needs. The students of the Bible school could even help in the survey of the communities and help find the need for new churches. The screening and training of the students starts at this level. The Bible institute would have a program for youth workers and camp ministry workers. The institutes could even use the facilities of the home mission camps for retreats for its staff and students.

The Home Mission Agency- One purpose of this project is to help Southern Highland Evangel more effectively accomplish the purpose of the mission. Their basic purpose is to evangelize and establish local churches. The stated purpose of that mission agency according to its constitution is as follows:

The Southern Highland Evangel purposes to organize, own, operate, and maintain an independent organized missionary agency for the purpose of ministering to the spiritual need of the people of the southern mountain region. It shall with the help of God endeavor to bring lost souls to a saving knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to establish believers in the most holy faith, and where possible, to aid in the establishing of New Testament indigenous churches.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>”Purposes” Constitution Southern Highland Evangel, (Pounding Mill, VA, 1992) 1.

In order to fulfill its purpose, a plan is needed to encourage local churches to become indigenous. Many of the churches that are established are struggling to be indigenous, and it may not be possible for some to achieve this status. Under this plan, the communities that do not have the potential of being indigenous because of lack of population will not be ignored, but will be served by a bi-vocational pastor, a retired pastor, or a pastor with another means of support. The home mission agency must develop a plan to encourage these individuals, retired pastors or bi-vocational pastors, to become involved in the ministry of a community that lacks the resources to support a full-time pastor. The mission agency will also have an active list of churches or communities that are interested in a part-time ministry. These individuals would have a means of support because of retirement status. The danger is to become content or satisfied in a community, therefore, a constant focus on growth and advancement must be maintained in the church.

It is necessary for the home mission agency to survey communities that might need a Bible-teaching church (see chapter two for definition). Under the plan, the home mission agency evaluates the local communities and towns to see what type of churches are there as well as the needs of the region. This work is done by interviewing community residents, looking in the phone book, driving through the town, and talking to pastors of churches in the community. Young people from the Bible school along with mission personnel are used in this survey work. One of the young men who is doing the survey may become burdened for that community. If the students are from that region, they may have towns and communities in which they are burdened to see a local church established. In this way the home mission and the Bible institute work together.



Once the community is surveyed, the home mission agency evaluates that information and decides if there is a need for a local church to be planted. How would this decision be made? There would have to be the absence of a local church that is Bible-teaching and Bible-believing (see chapter two for definition). The number of people in the community who see the need of starting a church must justify a new church plant. The economic factors of the community must be analyzed. There must be a place to meet and financial capability available. All of this is the responsibility of the leadership of the home mission agency. The director of the home mission agency (or its representative) then goes to Bible colleges and churches with definite places in mind that are in need of a Bible-teaching church. He presents the need and allows God to direct individuals to visit and catch a vision for the community. The home mission's director is able to present the need of a community that is ready for a person to establish a local church or help a local church.

This process has a definite advantage over the process that is now used. Southern Highland Evangel basically waits for people to come into the area, and then finds a place to use them after God has called them. There must be an orientation process that allows one to become familiar with the area and what is going to be involved in the process of working in the culture and the church. When survey work is done ahead of time, the vision is easier to catch. The potential pastor knows that he can start the work in an area that is open and ready for a local church. The fact that there is an identified need is an attractive feature to most young Bible college graduates.

The home mission agency trains the future church planter in the culture into which he is about to be placed. If he is a native this will not be a long period, but there needs to

be an introduction to the ministry and the particular area of service. Staff who have been effective in the ministry can handle this. The mission must develop an introduction to the culture, the purpose of the mission agency, policies to follow, and a general training time for the new candidates. This is not in place now, but this paper should be a great help in achieving this purpose. This will allow the church planter to have someone to turn to during the difficult times. It develops a relationship between older and younger staff and allows them to spend time in prayer and concern for one another. It is a form of mentoring that could be a great help to a young couple.

After a man hears God's call to go to an area ready for a church, he must deal with the problem of getting to that field and supporting his family. There needs to be some incentive for churches and pastors to become indigenous. The pastor who is going to come to a new community presents the burden to his home church and to other contacts that he has. This needs to be limited to three to six months. They are placed on the field with the promise by the home mission agency of full support. The amount is determined by the mission based upon each community and the number in family. Most mission agencies have figures that are used as guidelines. (An example would be Southern Highland Evangel—single worker \$715; Married couple \$1100; each child through grade school \$88; each child in high school \$132; each college student \$264). The amount of support that the family achieved is supplemented by the home mission agency. The first year, they receive one hundred percent of their need. Each year the support is reduced by the home mission agency by a determined percent until they are on their own after a pre-determined number of years. This can be modified under the wisdom of the leadership of the mission to meet the needs of the area. The candidate is to raise some of the support.

They are serving a community, so it is ideal that the church increases the salary as the church grows each year. The local church would understand that this pastor and family are becoming more and more of their responsibility. It causes the pastor to be diligent in trying to get the church to grow so that he has the resources that he needs. This will let the church know that this outside support is not going to be given indefinitely to the couple. The church must plan for the day when they are going to be responsible for the support of their pastor.

Another advantage is in the area of raising support for the family. It is very effective to have a couple come to a missions conference, tell about the community to which God has called them, and share the work that has been accomplished up to this point. Pastors and churches are looking to support people who are definite about God's call in their life, and who are seeing church growth. There is much vagueness today about missions and the giving of money by the missions programs of churches. It is impressive to a pastor and missions committee to see a family knowing what God has called them to do and doing it effectively.

Each year the home mission agency evaluates the couple and the work they are doing. This would be done through reports that have been submitted to the board, and personal interviews conducted with the workers, (a copy of this evaluation form is found in appendix E). It may be that after a year the family realizes that God is directing them into another area. It is hoped that the Bible institute has screened the workers and channeled them into the proper church or community, but sometimes only working on the front lines defines one's purpose in life. The camp that the home mission operates could be a source of ministry for a few who are not called into local church work.

The incentive is that each year an evaluation is going to be done on the couple and the church. They are going to have to come before the official board of the mission and give an account of the resources used and success. The financial position of the church is evaluated at this time. The board makes decisions based of this information concerning the future as well. The church is encouraged to take more responsibility for the pastor. The pastor, realizing that he is going to be evaluated, works towards being completely supported by his congregation. The home mission agency keeps in contact with the church, and when the church becomes indigenous, it should support the home mission financially, allowing other churches to be established in the region.

When starting a church, there is the need of a constitution; therefore a sample constitution is in place by the home mission board (see Appendix B). Much of the organizational work is done to help the young pastor. This is not a mandatory constitution but is available if needed.

The mission raises money to fund this program from churches both in and out of the region. The director participates in missions conferences, explains the needs and the plan, and, in turn, others catch the vision of the mission. Having different churches excited about the work of the home mission eases the problem with the number of youth that are attending summer camps. In the surveys, it was observed that summer camps have been a great help to many of the local churches. In the past, many campers were recruited for camps by the public school visitation carried on by home missions organizations. With the closing of public schools to this type of activity, the result has been a decrease in the number of campers. The source for campers today should be the local churches that are either being established or that have been established. Under the

plan, youth from these local churches attend the camp and become saved or encouraged to live for God, and dedicate their lives to God. Many of the missionaries and pastors today either accepted Christ or dedicated their lives to service at camp. It is a place that youth from the churches could work in the summer and grow as they are in contact with other youth who are serving God. These area churches are the means of support for that camp, not only by supplying campers, but also with finances.

In order for this plan to work, there are definite guidelines in place to control funds. The evaluation process has to be in place to direct the different individuals.

The problems of personnel and getting them on the field of service are being addressed. The need for the home mission to have a purpose, objective, and strategy is one of the most pressing needs to be addressed. This is the beginning of the home mission having a definite plan and purpose in the establishing of local churches.

The Local Church- The third part of the process is the local church itself, the end result of the program. Much has been stated about the place of the church, but it does need to be addressed.

The local church needs to be organized and to have an established constitution and bylaws stating the doctrinal statement and giving direction. This may be a new church or an existing church that is being helped by a missionary couple. The church must do all that it can to encourage the pastor and his family during the days of establishing the church. The church must not have unrealistic expectations of what will happen in these early days. It takes time to move a pastor's family into the area and get them established.

The local church needs to understand its relationship to the home mission board. The board does not control it, but it can be a great help with the finances of the mission and in the personal needs that a growing organization has. The home mission can be a great source of information to help the local church with decisions that must be made. The key is the fact that the home mission does not control the local church but is there to be a help when needed. The home mission board is a great source of fellowship and encouragement to the newly established local church. The local church should have a desire to see more churches established and to see the home mission organization as the means to achieve that purpose. The local church can be a great help with the running of the camp and the maintenance of the buildings and the facilities. It can be a financial help to the camp. It can support the people who are called of God to establish other churches in the other times when campers are on the grounds.

The local church should realize the need of the Bible institute and encourage its youth to be trained in the Bible before they are placed into service. As noted in the characteristics of mountain culture, the mind-set of the mountaineer is that pastors do not need to be trained. Local churches need to help change these ideas. Churches can insist on having a trained pastor and can encourage their young men to go for training. The advantages become more and more apparent as more and more churches are established.

The need of outreach needs to be a constant message of these churches. Being able to look beyond themselves to the needs of other communities and countries is a great concern.

Churches that have been established by the home mission agency should help with the planting of new churches in the area. Once the church is able to care for all of the

bills and the salary of the pastor they should be encouraged to continue supporting the fund of the home mission to bring more pastors into the area. This has not been a policy, and should not be a demand, but the need of the area should be presented to the churches that have a tie to the mission organization. This would involve local churches in the work of missions on a firsthand basis, and would keep them involved in church planting.

The local churches would be looking for young men who are called of God to work as leaders of churches. They would encourage these youths to attend the Bible school where they could be trained and prepared for the ministry. This would allow native pastors to have the background to lead a church, and have the home church concerned with one of their own. The home church would be much more concerned about a sister church if they were personally involved because one of the young men who grew up in their church would be its pastor.

This plan would call for a great deal of cooperation between the church, camp, mission board and the Bible school. It could be that the home-mission board and the Bible school could be under the same leadership to fulfill this purpose. This would allow for the same facilities to be used year around, thus saving a great deal of resources.

## Conclusion

It is easy to see that there is a great need for churches to be planted in the Appalachian region of this country. Many have been established and are very effective in the work that they have accomplished, but the work is not done. Resources must be used effectively if the Great Commission is going to be achieved. Churches must constantly evaluate their mission by lining up with the plan that Christ left us to fulfill in the Great Commission.

The Appalachian region is a unique region of the country and it takes a special person to be effective in the ministry in this region. There is a place for individuals who have been imported from outside the region: many native mountaineers have been saved by their efforts and much work has been accomplished. The individuals who have been most effective are those who made and kept long-term commitments. They have loved the people of the mountains. They did not condescend to the people or look upon themselves as "God's gift" to educate and bring the mountaineer up to their level. These qualities are going to be effective in any place of service, but especially the area of Appalachia.

The need of leadership has impressed the author as this study was accomplished. The development of leadership that is consistent with the New Testament is going to have the greatest impact on indigenous churches being established and maintained in the mountains. The challenge is there to develop that leadership.

The home mission must realize the great potential that abounds with the youth of



the area to become pastors and workers in the area. The mission that effectively uses the youth of the mountains by working with the Bible institutes and local churches will be the most effective in ministry.

The plan that the author projects in this paper will allow many of the groups to be able to draw from each other. Many churches today are very concerned about the resources that are given to missions. Any group that is able to present a plan to use the resources effectively will gain a hearing from many missions committees. Christ expects us to be good stewards of the resources that he has entrusted to His people. Therefore, He will be honored when a plan to fulfill His will is put into place. God is a God of order and He expects us to be people of order as well.

As this project is brought to a close we must remember that the people of Appalachia need to hear the good news of the Gospel. God gives the command and the resources to accomplish that plan. His promise must be claimed for the people of the Appalachian Mountains.

God has invested the lives of many people and resources in this region of the country. There are many mission boards established with the single purpose of establishing churches and bringing the Gospel to the people who populate the mountains. The need is great as there are still many communities that are without a Bible-teaching church. The job of establishing these churches needs to be done as effectively and efficiently as possible. If the institutions that are identified in this plan will pull together and use the people and ministries at their disposal, the necessary leadership will be put in place.

The author will close with a promise from God that He will never assign a task

that He does not give the grace and resources to accomplish. Therefore, He will give the necessary wisdom and resources to achieve this task that is a part of His will. “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” Mark 16:15. “...and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.” Matthew 28:20.

## Appendix A

### CHURCH OPERATIONS MANUAL

This operations manual will include two parts: a worker's covenant that will define the minimal requirements for anyone who performs a job in the church, and a brief set of job descriptions that may be expanded to meet the needs of the church.

#### Workers Covenant

These are the minimal requirements for a person to perform a job at the church:

1. Workers should be saved, baptized, and active and loyal members of this church.
2. Workers should agree with the basic doctrinal position of the church which follows:
  - a. We believe in the verbal inspiration and authority of the Scripture, inherent in the original writings and God-breathed. We believe the Bible reveals God, the fall of man, the way of salvation, and God's plan and purpose of the ages.
  - b. We believe in one Triune God, eternally existing in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
  - c. We believe in the deity and the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

- d. We believe that salvation is "by grace alone", plus nothing and minus nothing. The conditions for salvation are repentance and faith.
- e. We believe that men are justified by faith alone and are accounted righteous before God only through the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
- f. We believe in the "Blessed Hope": the personal, imminent, pre-tribulation, and pre-millennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- g. We believe in the everlasting conscious blessing of the saved and the everlasting conscious punishment of the lost.

\* For a more detailed doctrinal statement, see the constitution of the church.

- 3. Workers should practice separation from the world and from any activity that would bring reproach upon their Savior or their church.
- 4. Workers should dress modestly at all times as a sign of their separation from the world.
- 5. Workers should display a passion for souls to be won to Christ in their personal lives, in missions, and in their church.
- 6. Workers should attend all of the services of the church that they are able to attend, being an example to others in the church and to those whom they work.
- 7. Workers shall be giving members of the church and support the work of the church.
- 8. Workers shall faithfully carry out the responsibilities that they have agreed to accept. They should be performing the responsibilities outlined in their

job description.

9. Workers shall seek to improve in their duties by participation in any training program the church may offer, support, or recommend.
10. Workers shall cooperate with the church leadership and seek to build unity and harmony among the other workers.

## Job Descriptions

These job descriptions describe the basic tasks that are needed for a church to function. There are others positions that may be added in the future or according to the area that the church serves. All of these officers should agree to the workers' covenant of the church. This list is intended to be a sample that could be a guide in establishing the officers of the church:

### 1. Pastor

- a. Purpose: The pastor is to be the spiritual leader of the church and assume responsibility for the worship services of the church. He is to see that things are functioning as they should and is to be respected by the members of the church.
- b. Duties: The pastor has a number of duties that he must oversee--
  - He shall lead the worship services of the church and see that God's Word is preached and presented.
  - He is responsible for all committees of the church.
  - He is to oversee all the activities of the church.
  - He is to administer the ordinances of the church.
  - He is to be the moderator of all the business meetings of the church.
- c. Term: He shall serve until the Lord moves him or he denies the doctrinal statement of the church and is removed by the process outlined in the

constitution.

- d. Accountability: He is accountable to the Lord and to the deacon board of the church.
- e. Qualifications: He shall have at least a three year Bible institute degree, be able to lead others, and demonstrate the gifts of the office of the pastor.

## 2. Deacons

- a. Purpose: This job is necessary for the oversight of the church. These men act as mediators between the pastor and the congregation.
- b. Duties: The deacons have a number of duties which they perform.
  - They are to prepare and assist in serving the Lord's Supper.
  - They are to assist in the ordinance of baptism.
  - They are to assist the pastor in the spiritual supervision of the church.
  - They are to examine with the pastor all matters pertaining to the discipline of members, and any other matters that threaten to disrupt the peace and harmony of the church.
  - They should be appointed and serve on the committee to search for a new pastor if the church finds itself without a pastor.
  - They will perform any other duties helpful to the pastor.
- c. Term: They will serve a three-year term. They will be allowed to serve two terms and then must be off the board for one year before being able to return to serve. They will be elected at the annual business meeting of the church. They shall be elected by a majority of the vote of the

congregation. The number is set in the constitution.

- d. Accountability: The men are accountable to the pastor of the church and the congregation of the church.
- e. Qualifications: The qualifications for deacons are prescribed in the New Testament. Acts 6:3 and I Timothy 3: 8-13 give the church the qualifications that God expects.

### 3. Trustees

- a. Purpose: These men shall care for the property of the church and be sure that the property is kept in a state that is honoring to God.
- b. Duties: They are to hold the property in trust and be charged with the repair, maintenance, and preservation of the property. They shall perform any other duties that the church may need to have accomplished in reference to the building and property.
- c. Term: They shall be elected by a ballot at the annual business meeting of the church. They are elected for two year terms and may succeed themselves as many times as the congregation deems wise. The number will be set by the constitution of the church.
- d. Accountability: The trustees are accountable to the pastor and the deacons of the church, who represent the congregation of the church.
- e. Qualification: They must have a knowledge of repairs and tools.



#### 4. Treasurer

- a. Purpose: He shall be charged with the receipt and custody of all monies of the church.
- b. Duties: He shall pay from the monies received by him, the salary of the Pastor and other bills of the church, which have been duly approved. He shall keep accurate records of accounts, showing all receipts and disbursements, and shall give a report to the church at its regular business meetings or at such other times as the church may determine. He shall give a complete written report to the church at the annual business meeting, showing the receipts and disbursements for the fiscal year.
- c. Term: He shall be elected to a two year term at the annual business meeting of the church. He may serve as many terms as the church elects. He must be elected by a majority of the membership of the church.
- d. Accountability: The treasurer is accountable to the pastor and the deacon board of the church. He will not handle money or count money by himself but always have another person present to protect his reputation.
- e. Qualifications: He must be able to handle numbers and keep books for others to see. He must be a person of honesty and above reproach.

#### 5. Clerk

- a. Purpose: He shall keep all the records of the proceedings of the church.
- b. Duties: He shall keeps all records, including a register of all members of the church; write letters of dismissal and letters of transfer ordered by the

church; give notice of church business meetings; acquaint all in the church about any official action taken by the church which may affect them; and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the church. The clerk shall prepare a complete report to be given at the annual business meeting of the church.

- c. Term: He shall be elected to a one year term at the annual business meeting of the church. He may serve as many terms as the church decides.
- d. Accountability: The clerk is accountable to the pastor and the deacon board of the church.
- e. Qualifications: He should be able to take minutes well and to give reports. He should know how to type and to compose a good letter.

## 6. Sunday School Superintendent

- a. Purpose: He shall serve as head and director of the organized Sunday School.
- b. Duties: He shall be responsible for the teachers of the Sunday School, seeing to all of the substitute teachers when needed. He shall have meetings with the teachers about methods of teaching and will help them to be more effective in their teaching. These meetings should be quarterly and planned so that all the teachers can attend. He shall do all in his power to make this a teaching, evangelizing, and out-reaching department of the church. He shall be responsible for the entire Sunday School program.
- c. Term: He shall be elected to a two year term at the annual business meeting of

the church. He may serve as many terms as the church elects him.

d. Accountability: The Sunday School superintendent is accountable to the pastor and the deacon board of the church.

e. Qualifications: He should have good organization abilities. He should be able to lead individuals and be a person who has some creativity.

## Appendix B

### CONFESSION OF FAITH AND CONSTITUTION OF \_\_\_\_\_ CHURCH

#### Article I

##### Preamble

We, the members of the \_\_\_\_\_ Church of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, do establish the following constitution and do voluntarily submit ourselves to it.

#### Article II

##### Name

The name of the church shall be \_\_\_\_\_ Church of \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Article III

##### Purpose

The purpose of this church is the edification of Christians through the teaching of God's Word, the salvation of souls, the world-wide proclamation of God's grace through the shed blood and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary, the promotion of

Godly worship, and the defense of the faith.

#### **Article IV**

#### **Articles of Faith**

##### 1. The Holy Scripture

We believe the Holy Scripture of the Old and New Testaments to be the verbally inspired Word of God, to be the final authority for faith and practice, inherent in the original writings, to be infallible, and to be God-breathed (II Timothy 3:16,17; II Peter 1:20,21; Matthew 5:18; John 16:12-13).

##### 2. The Godhead

We believe in one Triune God (I John 5:20), eternally existing in three persons-- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19), co-eternal in being, co-identical in nature, co-equal in power and glory, and having the same attributes and perfection (Deuteronomy 6:4; II Corinthians 13:14).

##### 3. The Person and Work of Jesus Christ

A. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God (Hebrews 1:13), became man (John 1:1,2,14) without ceasing to be God, having been conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:35) in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful men.

B. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished our redemption through His death on the cross (I Peter 2:24) as a representative, vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice; and that our justification is made sure by His literal physical resurrection from the dead (Romans 3:24, 25; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:3,5).

C. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where, as our High Priest, He fulfills the ministry of Representative, Intercessor, and Advocate (Acts 1:9-10; Hebrews 9:24, 7:25; Romans 8:34; I John 2:1,2).

#### 4. The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person; He is equal with God the Father, and God the Son and the same as they in nature; He was active in creation; He convicts the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11); He is the super-natural agent in regeneration, baptizing all believers into the body of Christ, indwelling, sealing, guiding, empowering and filling the believer (I Corinthians 12:12-14; Romans 8 and 9; Ephesians 1:13-14; John 16:13; I John 2:20-27; Ephesians 5:18).

#### 5. Total Depravity of Man

We believe that man was created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27), but that in Adam's sin, the race fell, inherited a sinful nature, became alienated from God, and man is now a sinner both by nature and choice

(Romans 3:22-23; 5:12). Man can only have sin taken care of by his identification with Christ on the cross; therefore, man can do nothing to remedy his lost condition (Romans 3:22-23; Ephesians 2:1-3).

#### 6. Salvation

We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace (Ephesians 2:8-10) and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ whose precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:7; I Peter 1:18-19).

#### 7. The Eternal Security and Assurance of the Believers

A. We believe that all the redeemed, once saved, are kept by God's power and are thus secure in Christ forever (John 6:37-40; 10:27-30; Romans 8:1,38,39; I Corinthians 1:4-8; I Peter 1:5).

B. We believe that it is the privilege of believers to rejoice in the assurance of their salvation through the testimony of God's Word which, however, clearly forbids the use of Christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh (Romans 13:13-14; Galatians 5:13; Titus 2:11-15).

#### 8. Nature of the Believer

We believe that provision is made for victory of the new nature over the flesh by the power and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and that all claims to the

eradication of the flesh in this life are un-Scriptural (I Peter 1:14-16; Romans 6:13, 8:12-13; Galatians 5:16-25; Colossians 3:10).

#### 9. Separation

We believe that all the saved should live in such a manner as not to bring reproach upon their Savior and Lord, and that separation from all religious apostasy, all worldly and sinful pleasures, practices and associates is commanded by God. We further believe that the Scripture plainly teaches that those born again should not marry or have other entangling alliances with unbelievers (II Timothy 3:1-5; I John 2:15-17; II John 9-11; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1).

#### 10. Missions

We believe that it is the obligation of the saved to witness by life and by word to the truths of the Holy Scripture and to seek to proclaim the Gospel to all mankind (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8; II Corinthians 5:19-20).

#### 11. The Ministry and Spiritual Gifts

A. We believe that God is sovereign in the bestowment of all His gifts; and that the gifts of evangelists, pastors, and teachers are sufficient for the perfecting of the saints today. Speaking in tongues and the working of sign miracles gradually ceased as the New Testament Scriptures were completed and their authority became established (I Corinthians 12:4-11; II Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:7-12).



**B.** We believe that God does hear and answer the prayer of faith in accordance with His own will for the sick and afflicted (John 15:7; I John 5:14-15; James 5:14-16).

## 12. The Church

**A.** We believe that the church, which is the body and the espoused bride of Christ, is a spiritual organism made-up of all born-again persons of this present age (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:25-27; I Corinthians 12:12-14; II Corinthians 11:2).

**B.** We believe that the establishment and continuance of local churches is clearly taught and defined in the New Testament Scriptures (Acts. 14:27; 20:17; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11).

**C.** Concerning the ordinances of the church, we believe there are two such ordinances for this age: the Lord's supper (I Corinthians 11:23-29) and water baptism of believers (the immersion of the believer in water) (Romans 6:3-11).

## 13. Dispensationalism

We believe in the dispensational view of Bible interpretation but reject the extreme teaching known as "Hyper-Dispensationalism," such as that teaching which opposes either the Lord's Table or water baptism as the Scripture means of testimony for the church in this age (Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 2:41,42; 18:18; I Corinthians 11:23-26).

14. The Personality of Satan

We believe that Satan is a person, the author of sin and the cause of the fall; that he is the open and declared enemy of God and man; and that he shall be eternally punished in the Lake of Fire (Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-17; Matthew 4:2-11; 25:41; Revelation 20:10).

15. The Second Advent of Christ

We believe in the "Blessed Hope" of the personal, imminent, pre-tribulation, and pre-millennial coming of the Lord Jesus Christ for His redeemed ones; and in His subsequent return to earth, with His saints, to establish His Millennial Kingdom (I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Zechariah 14:4-11; Revelation 19:11-16; 20:2-6; I Thessalonians 1:10; 5:9; Revelation 3:10).

16. The Eternal State

**A.** We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men: the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:46; John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:5-6,12-13).

**B.** We believe that the souls of the redeemed at death are absent from the body and present with the Lord where, in conscious bliss, they await the first resurrection when spirit, soul, and body are reunited to be glorified forever with the Lord (Luke 23:43; Revelation 20:4-6; II Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:23; 3:21; I Thessalonians 4:16-17).

**C.** We believe that the souls of unbelievers remain, after death, in conscious

misery until the second resurrection when the soul and body reunite and they appear at the Great White Throne Judgment, and are cast into the Lake of fire, not to be annihilated, but to suffer everlasting conscious punishment (Luke 16:19-26; Matthew 25:41; II Thessalonians 1:7-9; Jude 6,8; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 20:11-15).

## 17. Human Relations

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity should be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, pedophilia, adultery, and pornography are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. We believe throughout the whole of Scripture, heterosexuality is both assumed and affirmed as God's order of creation (Genesis 2:24; 19:5-29; 26:8-9; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1:26-29; I Corinthians 5:1; 6:9; I Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4).

## **Article V**

### **Membership**

#### 1. Qualifications

The membership of this church shall be composed of such persons who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Who, having been examined by the deacons for approval, have been baptized by immersion, subscribing to the doctrinal statement.

## 2. Duties

- A. To themselves: The duties of members to themselves shall be the acquisition of religious knowledge, constant progress in grace and spirituality, and consistency of external conduct.
- B. To the Church: It shall be the duty of each member of the church to faithfully attend the Lord's day and mid-week services, to invite and encourage others to attend, their own church by personal presence and financial aid, to be friendly and sociable to members and others at the meetings of the church, and to contribute regularly to the expense of the church.
- C. To the Brethren: The duty of members to their brethren shall be to cultivate and cherish brotherly love, to visit and sympathize with those in affliction, to help those in need, to regard their reputation tenderly, to admonish them for their faults affectionately, and to strive for their spirituality, benefit, and prosperity.
- D. To the Pastor: It is the duty of members at all times to honor, esteem, and love their pastor; to pray for him fervently and daily; to submit to him in the Scriptural exercise of his official authority, and to manifest a tender regard for his reputation.
- E. To the Outsiders: It is the duty of members to bear a prudent testimony

against evil practices to those who are not connected with the church; to so live as to represent and commend the Savior both by work and deed; to be exact in paying all debts and performing all promises; to live in a peaceable manner; to perform offices of kindness and charity; to set an example of industry, honesty, and generosity; and, as opportunity and ability may enable, to commend the Gospel of Christ unto them.

### 3. Admission of Members

A. By Baptism: Any person professing faith in Christ as personal Savior, giving evidence of the new birth and accepting the principles of faith and practice as adopted by this church, may, upon baptism, be received into membership by vote of the church.

B. By Letter: Members of other churches of like faith and order who have satisfied the board as to their Christian experience may be received by the vote of the church by virtue of their letters granted by said churches.

### 4. Discipline

The discipline of the membership of the church shall be based upon the Scriptures in Matthew 18:15-17 and I Corinthians 5.

A. Non-Attending Members: The name of any member physically able to attend, but not attending for a period of six months without giving satisfactory reason for

such absence, shall be placed on the non-attending list. Members of the non-attending list shall not have voting rights, and, after six months absence without satisfactory reason, may be erased from the roll of membership.

B. Suspension of Members: It shall be within the province of the official board to order a review of the membership whenever they deem it necessary. At this time, members who seem to manifest flagrant sin, or a seriously wrong attitude toward the life and work of the church, shall be investigated for the purpose of remedying this serious weakness in their Christian lives. It shall be within the province of the official board to either drop from the membership roll or place on a passive membership roll the person or persons in question.

## **Article VI**

### **Government**

The government of this church, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, is vested in the body of believers who compose it and have the final vote, and is facilitated through the Pastor and the board of deacons.

Such members as are in full and regular standing and are 18 years of age or over may vote in the business transactions of the church and serve as its officers.

**Article VII**

**Boards**

A. Board of Deacons

There shall be two boards of the church. The first board is the deacon board which will be concerned with the spiritual aspects of the church and will be composed of the pastor and deacons. The following questions must be answered in the affirmative to be on this board:

1. Are you saved?
2. Are you praying for God's blessing on this church?
3. Do you have a desire to seek the salvation of souls?
4. Is it your desire to cooperate and assist in the work of this organization to preserve the unity of the spirit?
5. Do you, without reservation, support the doctrinal statement of this church?
6. Do you meet the qualifications of I Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3?

B. Board of Trustees

The second board shall be the board of trustees who will be concerned with the physical aspects of the church properties and will consist of the pastor and trustees who must answer the following in the affirmative:

1. Are you saved?
2. Are you praying for God's blessing on this church?

3. Do you have a desire to seek the salvation of souls?
4. Is it your desire to cooperate and assist in the work of this organization to preserve the unity of the Spirit?
5. Do you, without reservation, support the doctrinal statement of this church?

## **Article VIII**

### **Officers**

The officers of the church shall consist of Pastor, Deacons, Trustees, Treasurer, Clerk, and Sunday School Superintendent. All officers above, except the Pastor, shall be elected by ballot at a business meeting of the church in the month of January and take office the first of February. Other officers may be created from time to time as the need may arise.

#### 1. Pastor

A. The Pastor shall be elected to serve an indeterminate term. He shall be in full accord with the doctrines and practices of this church. Voting shall be by ballot, and a three-fourths majority of all members present shall be required for election.

B. The Pastor shall give the church a notice in writing not to exceed sixty days and not less than thirty days of his intention to discontinue as Pastor.

C. The Pastor shall be moderator of the church and a member ex-officio of all



boards and committees.

D. It shall be required that the candidate for pastor be in total agreement with the doctrinal statement of the church. The pastor shall be charged with the oversight of the spiritual welfare of the church; he shall preach the Word of God to the edifying of the church and the salvation of the un-regenerate; he shall have in his charge all stated services of public worship; he shall administer the ordinances and perform other duties relevant to his office.

## 2. Deacons

A. The qualifications for deacons shall be such as are prescribed and set forth in the New Testament (Acts 6:3; I Timothy 3:8-13).

B. The duties of the deacons shall be as follows:

- (1). Prepare the elements and table for the Lord's Supper and assist in serving the same.
- (2). Assist the pastor in the spiritual supervision of the church.
- (3). Examine with the pastor all candidates for church membership, recommending such as they consider eligible for the same.
- (4). Have charge of all matters pertaining to the discipline of members, and any other matter that threatens to disrupt the peace and the harmony of the church.

### 3. Trustees

The duties of the trustees shall be as follows:

- (1). Hold the property of the church and be charged with the repair maintenance and preservation of the church.
- (2). Superintend any improvements that are not entrusted to a special committee.
- (3). Perform such other secular duties as may be proposed from time to time by the church. The trustees are at all times servants of the church as subjects to its corporate action.

### 4. Treasurer

The church shall elect the treasurer from its membership at each annual election. He shall be charged with the receipt and custody of all monies. He shall pay from the monies received by him the salary of the pastor and all other bills of the church which have been duly approved. He shall keep an accurate record of accounts, showing all receipts and disbursements, and shall give a report to the church at its regular business meetings or at such other times as the church may determine. He shall also give a complete written report to the church at the annual business meeting showing the receipts and disbursements for the fiscal year.

### 5. Clerk

The church shall elect a clerk from its membership at each annual election of

officers. He shall keep a complete record of the proceedings of the church having charge of all records; keep a register of all members of the church; write letters of dismissal and letters of transfer ordered by the church; give notice of church business meetings; acquaint all in church about any official action taken by the church which may affect them; and perform other church duties as may be prescribed by the church. The clerk shall prepare a complete report to be given at the annual business meeting.

6. Sunday School Superintendent

The church shall elect from its membership at each annual election of officers a Sunday school superintendent for the ensuing year. He shall serve as head and director of the organized Sunday School and shall do all in his power to make this a teaching, evangelizing, and out-reaching department of the church.

## **Article IX**

### **Meetings**

Public services shall be held regularly, both morning and evening on the Lord's day and prayer meeting one night each week. The Lord's table shall be commemorated on the first Sunday of each month.

Business meetings of the church may be called by the Pastor or official board at any time upon notice being given the Sunday proceeding the called meeting. There will be an annual business meeting of the church during the month of January. The pastor or

two-thirds of the membership may, if necessary, call an emergency meeting at any regular stated service.

## **Article X**

### **Finances**

The church will be financed only by the tithes, offerings, and contributions made on a free-will basis (Malachi 3:8-10; II Corinthians 9:6-8). No sales, suppers, or any such activities shall be held in the church or elsewhere for the purpose of raising church funds.

The church shall maintain at all times a missions program. Special mission offerings may be taken at any time upon the discretion of the pastor and deacons.

No property (worth over \$500) shall be bought or sold without a majority vote of the membership in a special business meeting no less than ten days after announcement is made at a Sunday service.

## **Article XI**

### **Fellowship**

As a New Testament church cannot "join" anything outside of itself but only affiliate therewith on the grounds of fellowship, this church declares itself to be in fellowship with the Southern Highland Evangel and shall refrain from calling as its pastor or leader one who is not in doctrinal or ecclesiastical agreement with the Southern Highland Evangel, or who maintains a position of affiliation or agreement with the National Council or World Council of Churches or other such apostate organizations.

**Article XII**

**Dissolution Clause**

In the event it becomes necessary to dissolve and terminate the activities of this church, the officers of the church shall distribute the remaining assets to the Southern Highland Evangel and any other tax exempt religious organization which has a similar doctrinal statement and which could qualify under Section 1, 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

**Article XIII**

**Amendments**

This constitution may be amended at any congregational business meeting by a two-thirds vote of the ballots casts, the amendment having been approved by the official board and having been read to the church at a regular Sunday service no less than ten days before being voted upon.

## Appendix C

### Letter and form sent for survey

Dear Pastor,

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to read this letter and fill out the survey.

My name is Timothy Compton; I have been the pastor of Hurricane Baptist Church for the last fourteen years. The church is located in Buchanan County, Virginia in a rural setting. After completing school the Lord burdened my heart to help this church become a self-supporting, indigenous church. The church is very close to this goal, but not there yet; therefore the reason for this survey. There is a great need for Bible-teaching churches in our mountain region. The only way to achieve this is to follow the Lord's program for this age of planting local churches. There must be a more effective way to do this than what is happening now. I am involved with a mission, Southern Highland Evangel, whose goal is to plant indigenous local churches. I would appreciate your help and insight in this very important area. The only ones who really have anything to offer are the pastors who are out there doing the job each day.

This is to be the subject of my doctor of ministries thesis from Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary. Any help you can provide for me would be greatly appreciated. I do not know of any other type of work that has been done in this area. If you know of something I would appreciate that information.

My heart is to see strong, local churches that can support themselves established in our mountain region. I am a native raised in this region and assure you that this information will be used in a positive light.

Enclosed you will find a survey sheet and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Thank you for taking time to answer this letter and providing this information. If you need to call me for any reason, I will provide my phone number.

In Christ's Service,

Timothy Compton

## Church-planting Survey

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Church Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

1. Are you a native of the Appalachians mountains?  Yes  No

2. Would you consider yourself a church planter?  Yes  No  
 -How would you define the term church planter?

3. Is it your goal for your church to become indigenous?  Yes  No  
 -How would you define the term indigenous?

4. Have led a church to become indigenous?  Yes  No

How long did it take?  Less than 5 years;  5-10 years;  10-15 years;  
 15-20 years;  more than 20 years

If the church is not indigenous how long have you labored there?

Less than 5 years;  5-10;  10-15;  15-20;  over 20 years

5. Are you  supported as full-time pastor,  bi-vocational,  supported home missionary, or  other?

6. Give some advantages of your status (according to question 5)?

7. Give some disadvantages of your status (according to question 5)?

8. What is your educational background? (check all that apply)

High school graduate

Bible Institute graduate

Bible College graduate

College Graduate

Seminary graduate

Involved in continuing education

9. What methods, programs, ideas or factors have been effective in causing your church to grow?

- Visitation (home or hospital) Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Leadership Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Youth meetings Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Revival meetings Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Missions Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Other Why? \_\_\_\_\_

10. What methods, programs, ideas, or hindrances have you encountered in effective church growth?

- Visitation (home or hospital) Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Leadership Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Youth meetings Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Revival meetings Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Missions Why? \_\_\_\_\_
- Other Why? \_\_\_\_\_

11. How have Bible camps, home-missions, and public school visitation been a help or hindrance to your church's growth?

12. What do you think are think are the largest obstacles for the church planter in our mountain culture?

13. What advice would your give to the new church planter that just came into our culture?

14. Could you share names and addresses of church planters you know who have planted or are planting church in our culture?

15. Could you give the names and addresses of church planters that have left because of discouragement?

(please use the back if you need more room)



## Appendix D

### Interview with Rev. Harry Ramsey

Interviewer: “Mr. Ramsey, do you believe that Appalachia Mountain Culture is different than other cultures?”

“Yes, I do believe that mountain culture is different. I have noticed over the years as I have been in the mountains involved in ministry that there is a clannishness, not as bad as it used to be, but still there is a clannishness among the people. There is resistance to acceptance of outsiders. A person who comes to minister to the mountain culture needs to be patient. They need to allow themselves to be accepted as individuals before they attempt to share with them. I find that the mountain culture is more resistant to receive and accept new ideas, and perhaps what I might call some more progressive teaching of the doctrines of the Bible.”

Interviewer: “How would you define an indigenous church?”

“To me an indigenous church is a church that is self-supporting. It is a self-propagating church and self-governing church. By self-supporting, I mean that the finances come in through the people who attend the church. It is not supported by outside means. By self-propagating I mean that it is progressive or aggressive enough that the

people are reaching out into the community. It is self-governing as an independent, church has its own officers, and conducts its own affairs."

Interviewer: "How many mountain churches do you know that have become indigenous?"

"Well, the sad answer to that question is very, very few. As my wife and I have been thinking and talking, there is only one church that I know of that has reached indigenous status. I am aware of a number of churches that once were at mission status that have now become indigenous, but very, very few mountain churches."

Interviewer: "What would you say was the main reason or contributing factor for the one church becoming indigenous?"

"I think two things enter into that. First would be solid Bible teaching. The mountain people sadly have been misinstructed concerning what a church should be. They have been taught that the preacher should not be paid; that you should not have a full-time pastor, and so there needs to be re-education from the Word of God. I think the second ingredient would be an aggressive pastor. By aggressive I don't mean overbearing, I simply mean a pastor who sees the indigenous status as a goal to seek, and aggressively leads his people in that direction."

Interviewer: "What would you say was the overriding reason for the ones who have not reached indigenous status?"

"I think that there are two overriding reasons. I've already alluded to the one: misinformation in the mountains by some of the mountain religious groups. But I would mention what I would refer to as a missionary mentality. This is a mentality I've observed in missionaries coming in from the outside of the culture. They come in with their own support, and the mentality so often is that this is a little mission work and that's the way we like it. The goal seems to be, 'We will keep this a little missionary work, and we get our support. We don't really need to bring this church to an indigenous status because we have our support, and we'll just minister to the folks from this angle.'"

Interviewer: "What major obstacles have you observed in the establishment of indigenous mountain churches?"

"We have alluded to some of this: the old mountain religions, the primitive, and the hard-shell influences in the mountains where they actually teach against indigenous status and teach against paid preachers. The obstacle would be this missionary status mentality that we've already talked about: the welfare mentality. There is in the mountains an economic problem, which can have a bearing and can be an obstacle in a church reaching indigenous status. Many of the people find themselves unemployed, or they are employed at lower wages than folks out of the mountain regions, and so the finances can be an obstacle."

Interviewer: "What advice would you give to the new church planter who just entered mountain culture?"

"I just talked to an individual today on the telephone and probably the advice I gave him would be the advice I would give anyone. When you come into the mountain culture, you commit yourself to a long ministry of loving the people, of accepting the people where they are because only as you love them and accept them where they are, are they going to accept you and love you. A person who comes into the mountains to minister needs to understand that they're going to need to be there long enough to be accepted by people who may be resistant to accepting outsiders. So it's going to be a living in the community, living among them and letting them see your quality and your worth and then slowly teaching and instructing them from the Word of God, 'line upon line, precept upon precept.' I believe that mountain ministry is a long-term commitment and is not something that is going to be accomplished overnight."

Interviewer: "What changes have you observed in mountain culture in your years of evangelism?"

"I grew up in the mountains, so I can go back even further than my years in evangelism. There was a time when the people in the mountains had innocence about them. They were protected from the outside world. But now with satellite dishes in many yards and a greater accessibility to the outside world by way of television and the media, there has been a loss of that innocence. There has been a breakdown, perhaps not

as much as in some other areas, but there has been a breakdown in the family structure. Families are not as close as they once were. I think one of the things we discovered a number of years ago in the mountains was that the church was kind of the social center, and I think the church has lost that status. It is no longer the social center. So I see those as changes in the culture in the years I've observed it."

Interviewer: "Has public school visitation been a help in establishing indigenous churches? Why or why not?"

"I do not believe that public school visitation has been a great help in establishing indigenous churches. I appreciate the work that many missionaries have done in going into the schools and some few still continuing that type of ministry, but it seems that it is often very difficult to translate that over into the church. Perhaps one of the reasons is because it reaches children. The Lord Himself told us that we should permit children to come unto Him. The way to grow an indigenous church is to reach the parents. One must reach the father and mother because if the father is reached, and often even if the mother is reached, she will bring the children; but if you reach only the children, it's seldom that they bring the parents. So I believe that though much has been accomplished and I'm sure that boys and girls have come to know Christ because of public school visitation, I do not believe that it has had a great impact at all upon the building of indigenous churches."

Interviewer: "In your opinion have home missions been a help in establishing indigenous

local churches? Why or why not?"

"I believe that as I look back over a number of years, again, I appreciate those who have come into the mountains to minister. Many of them had to come in with outside support because there was no support for them in some of the little coal mining communities and in areas where they were ministering. But I believe that as far as establishing indigenous churches, many of the missionaries who have come into the mountains have not come here with that goal. So I would say that home missions, in my opinion, has had little impact on establishing and building indigenous churches. Perhaps again it goes back to this home mission mentality which does not really teach or aggressively pursue indigenous status. Part of that might be again because they have outside support they have perhaps less motivation to help the church reach indigenous status. I would say there have been many people reached, many people saved, many come to know Christ, but as far as impacting in the mountains the establishing and building of indigenous churches, I believe that home missions has had little impact."

Interviewer: "In your opinion, has the bi-vocation or the tent-maker pastor been more successful in leading churches to become indigenous than maybe the home missionary has?"

"Yes, I believe that is true. I believe that a bi-vocational pastor, though he may have to work to support himself or to support his family while he is ministering, is teaching the people that there is a need to be come indigenous. So, yes, in my opinion, a

bi-vocational pastor would probably have a greater impact in the mountains in establishing an indigenous church than an outside missionary."

Interviewer: "Thank you very much"

## Appendix E

### Evaluation Form and Annual Report

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer all questions that pertain to you and your ministries. Husbands and wives may complete a joint report. Please sign and return one copy by April 15, 1999 and keep the other for your file.

To be completed by mission workers who pastor a church.

A. Enter the approximate average attendance in the services conducted by your church.

Sunday school \_\_\_\_\_; Sunday A.M. worship \_\_\_\_\_; Sunday P.M. service \_\_\_\_\_; Children/Junior Church \_\_\_\_\_; Mid-week Bible study \_\_\_\_\_; Youth Meeting \_\_\_\_\_; Bible club \_\_\_\_\_; Other \_\_\_\_\_;

B. Please list other ministries that you perform.

C. Finances:

What is your expected monthly income?

(1). Promised monthly support	\$ _____
(2). Wages and salaries (from church you pastor)	\$ _____
(3). Social Security	\$ _____
(4). Other monthly income	\$ _____

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor

Spouse



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## VITA

Timothy William Compton

### PERSONAL

Born: January 30, 1955

Married: Annette L. Roland, May 14, 1983

Children: Krista LeAnne, born April 2, 1985

Timothy William II, born December 20, 1986

### EDUCATIONAL

Th. B., Appalachian Bible College, 1977

M. Div., Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary, 1981

### MINISTERIAL

Ordination: October 9, 1982, Faith Bible Church, Clinchco, Virginia

### PROFESSIONAL

Pastor, Hurricane Baptist Church, Davenport, Virginia, September, 1982- June 1996

Pastor, Wayside Chapel, Bucyrus, Ohio, June, 1996-present