

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A GLOBAL APPROACH FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH AS
MISSION AGENT AND AGENCY

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By

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ABSTRACT

A GLOBAL APPROACH FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH AS MISSION AGENT AND AGENCY

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Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011

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The purpose of this project is to reclaim the local church's mandate to mobilize disciples to complete the Great Commission. It appears that the evangelical church has abdicated its responsibility of reproducing disciples to other ministries and needs to re-establish disciple-making as its primary focus. Therefore, the project will outline how one church, Calvary Baptist Church in Oshawa, Ontario, Canada, intends to realign itself with the New Testament paradigm of the church as both a mission agent and agency. The potential value will be the development of a clear and effective discipleship pathway leading churches toward a Biblically-balanced "commissional" movement.

Abstract length: 100 words

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my wife Lori who is a true companion and partner in life and ministry but also an editor who sharpens me to be more like Christ in every way. I love you! This project is also dedicated to my children, Jessie, Josiah, Noah and Luke who though young are already becoming “commissional.” Kids, may you love our King Jesus and live out His Kingdom! I would be remiss if I did not also dedicate this work to my parents Dr. Philip and Lelia Stairs who act as continual mentors, theologians and most importantly friends to me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	viii
DEFINITION OF SELECTED TERMS.....	ix
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1. Reflection and Discussion Questions.....	11
CHAPTER ONE – THE PROBLEM OF THE LOCAL CHURCH OUTSOURCING DISCIPLESHIP.....	12
1. Statement of the Problems.....	12
2. Statement of Scope and Limitations.....	24
3. A Brief History of Mission Agencies.....	29
4. Review of the Literature.....	33
5. Description of Methodology.....	42
6. Reflection and Discussion Questions.....	44
CHAPTER TWO – WHY COMMISSIONAL?.....	45
1. A Trinitarian Theology for Local Church Missionalty.....	45
2. The Great Commission of the Church.....	48
3. Kingdom Extension through Kingly Connection.....	54
4. Reproduction Requires Intimacy.....	56
5. Church-based Small Groups as Leadership Incubators.....	60
6. The Requirement of a Cyclical Going and Gathering Strategy.....	63

7. Scriptural Evidence of the “Commissional” Church.....	70
8. Reflection and Discussion Questions.....	71
CHAPTER THREE – FRESH DISCOVERIES ABOUT MISSIONS.....	72
1. Discoveries about Mission Agencies.....	72
2. Discoveries about Commissional Churches.....	81
3. Discoveries about Missionaries.....	93
4. Reflection and Discussion Questions.....	95
CHAPTER FOUR – A STRATEGY FOR A DISCIPLE MAKING MOVEMENT....	96
1. Small Groups as a Catalyst for Making Disciples and Identifying Leaders.....	96
2. Training Leaders through Mentoring and Internships.....	102
3. The Story of Calvary Baptist Church’s Launch towards Mission Agency.....	104
4. An Emerging Paradigm with the Local Church as Mission Agency.....	110
5. Specific Action Steps for Churches to Become Commissional.....	113
6. Reflection and Discussion Questions.....	115
CHAPTER FIVE – TRUE PARTNERSHIPS: A WAY FORWARD BETWEEN THE LOCAL CHURCH AND MISSION AGENCIES	116
1. Reflection and Discussion Questions.....	126
CHAPTER SIX – LESSONS LEARNED.....	127
1. Lessons Learned about Small Groups.....	127
2. Lessons Learned in Attempting to a Be a Mission Agency.....	130
3. Lessons Learned about Being a Mission Agent.....	137
4. Reflection and Discussion Questions.....	140
CONCLUSION.....	141

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Research Survey of Mission Agencies.....143

Appendix B: Research Survey for Commissioned Churches.....144

Appendix C: Original Presentation to Calvary Baptist Church’s Global
Ministries Committee Regarding a Vision for Identifying, Training, and
Sending Missionaries.....145

Appendix D: Small Group Leaders’ Training Manual.....148

Appendix E: Internship Manual.....180

Appendix F: The New Order.....205

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....210

VITA.....219

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DEFINITION OF SELECTED TERMS

ATTRACTIVE – The methodology of inviting those outside the Church to “come and see” what is happening inside it.

CHARISMATICS – Those who believe all of the spiritual gifts, including the sign or power gifts mentioned in the New Testament are still operational in the world today.

COMMISSIONAL – A term coined by Philip D. Stairs (D. Min.) to describe a church whose identity centers around the Great Commission. They are a church 1) going into the world with Jesus, to 2) make disciples of Jesus and 3) bringing them under the obedience and reign of Jesus."

DISCIPLE – A believer in Jesus Christ who is apprenticed in His ways.

MISSIONAL – To identify and go to a particular community as a mission field by living like missionaries representing Jesus Christ and His Kingdom. Being missional starts with considering one's own community as a mission field and having a mindset to reach it with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

MISSIONARY- A believer sent by Jesus to disciple all people groups they encounter. All followers of Jesus Christ are to make disciples, but some are selected by God and affirmed by their local church as vocationally sent to a particular people group with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

PARACHURCH – An organization that has developed since the New Testament era to come “along side” (para) the local church and assist in its mission.

THE CHURCH – Those people “called out” out of the world by God to meet with Him together on the basis of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

THE LOCAL CHURCH – The visible expression of the Church in a localized and gathered community of baptized believers in Jesus Christ who live out the Kingdom of God through the power of the Holy Spirit and have identified qualified elders/pastors as described in the New Testament.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD – The reign of God over creation, particularly in people as they submit to the King of Kings, Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION

God is not a single parent! One cannot become God's adopted child without belonging to Christ's Bride, the Church.¹ As the Early Church Father Cyprian declared, "He cannot have God for his Father who does not have the Church for his Mother."² To use another metaphor, many believe that they can be friends of Jesus and not care very much for His Bride, the Church. However, no husband can be a friend with a person who despises his most beloved. This is especially true of Jesus who "loved the church and

¹ What is the Church? This question is being raised by theologians and Church leaders around the world because many people have thought of the church as a place and not as a people "called out" from the darkness to become light and then sent back to this world with the illuminating message of the gospel. As George Hunsberger points out, "Popular grammar captures it well: you 'go to church' much the same way you might go to a store. You 'attend' a church, the way you attend a school or theatre. You 'belong to a church' as you would a service club with its programs and activities." (George R. Hunsberger, *Missional Church – A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*, ed. Darrell L. Guder, Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998, 80). For more information on how to define the Church, see Elmer Towns and Ed Stetzer, *Perimeters of Light – Biblical Boundaries for the Emerging Church*, Chicago: Moody Press, 2004; Charles Brock, *The Principles and Practices of Indigenous Church Planting*, Nashville: Broadman Press, 1981; Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch, *The Shaping of Things to Come*, Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003; It is interesting that while there is a struggle to universally define the local church, the theme of mutual commitments in Christ is returned to time and again by writers, which is why many Baptist churches in the past recognized a covenantal relationship with one another. Stetzer still believes church members should be in covenant with one another: "A local church is 'associated.' It is not a 'loosely' defined group; it is a group that covenants together." (Stetzer, *Perimeters of Light*, 67) Though covenants have at times become legalistic documents for trying to keep people out of the church, the concept of covenanting together is valid and appropriate for churches and small groups within churches. As Scott Boren explains, "Covenant is a biblical concept that captures the practice of self-sacrificial, other-oriented love. But it is even more than that. It is the process of being clear about how this love will be expressed" (M. Scott Boren, *Missional Small Groups*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010, 104).

² Cyprian, Epist. to Iubianus (#73) 21, in J. Campos, *Obras de San Cipriano*, BAC, 1964), 688-89. This quote has wrongly been attributed to Augustine, but shows that there had been a raging debate as to whether salvation can occur outside the church for hundreds of years. Though the salvation experience usually occurs in the context of the Body of Christ as described in Acts 2:38-47, there are instances of God saving an individual through one-on-one evangelism such as in the case of Philip leading the Ethiopian Eunuch to Christ in Acts 8:26-39.

gave himself up for her” (Ephesians 5:25³). Nevertheless, there is a general dislike of the Church in society today and even among many “believers.”⁴ Some treat Jesus as if He is divorced or at least separated from the Church!

Symptomatic of this attitude is that the Church in North America is not growing! Monitors of Church trends have noticed that Church attendance numbers have either plateaued or declined in recent years despite Jesus still being popular.⁵ Judgment for this phenomenon must start with “the family of God” (1 Peter 4:17) without attacking Christ’s Bride. Honest evaluation of the church will lead to admission of such sins as sexual immorality, abuse of minors, divorce, misappropriation of donated funds, church factions and racism to name a few. All these sins can be summed up by a lack of following Christ’s royal command to “love your neighbour as yourself,” especially those in the church (James 2:8; Galatians 6:10). As Henri Nouwen explains, “When we say, ‘I

³ All Scripture quotations are from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

⁴ The reason the word “believers” is in quotes is to make a distinction between someone who assents to the claims of Jesus and a true believer of Jesus. According to 1 John 4:20, “...anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.” If a person says they love Jesus but not their brothers in the church, then “he is a liar.” (1 John 4:20) A person might not agree with all that the church does, but for them to shun the church gives evidence that they are not a believer. The Apostle John distinguishes a true believer as one, “who loves (his brother) has been born of God.” (1 John 4:7).

⁵ Eileen W. Lindner, ed., *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches* (New York: National Council of Churches, 2010), <http://www.nccusa.org/news/100204yearbook2010.html> (accessed June 22, 2010). Even though there was a 0.49% increase in church membership in 2009, this is not keeping up with population growth. More disturbing is that evangelistic denominations such as the Southern Baptists reported a 0.24% decline in church membership. Source: www.edstetzer.com/2009/new-sbc-data.html (accessed June 22, 2010). Nevertheless, Dan Kimball reports in his book *They Like Jesus, But Not the Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007) that Jesus is still popular in North American society. However, the future trend seems to be that younger people are less interested in Jesus and His Church. According to David Kinnaman, “40% of Americans ages 16-29 in 2007 were outsiders to Christianity, meaning they look at the Christian faith from the outside.” (David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons, *unChristian – What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007, 18). More disturbing is that 38% have a bad impression of Christianity and 49% have a bad impression of Evangelical Christians. (Kinnaman and Lyons, *unChristian*, 25). In Canada, respected sociologist and pollster Reginald Bibby reported that “weekly church attendance amongst 18-34 year olds was 12% in 2000.” (Reginald Bibby, *Restless Gods*, Toronto: Stoddart, 2002, 77). One can surmise that this percentage has only decreased since 2000.

love Jesus, but I hate the Church,' we end up losing not only the Church but Jesus too."⁶
 When "believers" do not love one another, why would those outside the church want to join?

Remarkably, it is not the sins of the Church that are the major reasons for peoples' lost interest in the church. The first reason is that Jesus declared that the world would hate His disciples, so there will always be a natural animosity towards the church (John 15:18). The second reason is that people pursue the distractions of this world and the church has failed to capture the attention of a growing number of people, despite its mandate to "let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). In order to fulfill this mandate, some churches have continued to employ "attractional" strategies in an attempt to draw people to their service and programs. These strategies worked well when the culture was heavily influenced by Christendom, the period from Constantine until the twentieth century,⁷ where there was "an alliance between church and empire."⁸ As Gary Nelson further explains, "The attractional model is really a product of Christendom, in which Christianity was a dominant frame in society."⁹ We are now in the sunset of Christendom as evidenced by some churches still using "attractional" strategies and finding only some success. However, an increasing number of people live in a Post-Christian society where

⁶ Henri Nouwen, 'Forgiving the Church,' *Bread for the Journey: A Daybook of Wisdom and Faith* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), October 27.

⁷ Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon propose that Christendom "began in 313 (Constantine's Edict of Milan) and ended in 1963 (when they were able to go to movies on Sunday in Greenville, South Carolina)." (Hauerwas and Willimon, *Resident Aliens*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989, 17).

⁸ Lee Camp, *Mere Discipleship* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2003), 22.

⁹ Gary Nelson, *Borderland Churches* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2008), 35.

they have not heard of or have been misinformed about the Gospel and certainly do not attend church. Many in society see the church as peripheral or irrelevant. Without recognizing this shift in society, the church will not know how to respond. The church needs to see itself as missionaries to Western society. “Unfortunately most pastors and church leaders have had no missiological training. Consequently they resort to marketing strategies in place of missionary insights in their attempts to reach out to a population that is becoming increasingly distanced from the church.”¹⁰ As Dan Kimball reports, “I have talked to so many people outside the church, who, despite all of the Christian media, evangelistic campaigns, outreach events, and other influences, have never even heard or experienced the gospel.”¹¹ The word “experienced” could be a key. Someone said, “To my grandfather, the church was an experience, to my father it was a tradition, to me it is a nuisance.” This project will attempt to remedy this problem by challenging followers of Christ to go and seek the lost in addition to having them come and see what God has done. A Biblical missionality for the Church must include a going and gathering strategy for making disciples. As Elmer Towns reminds, “Effective evangelism implies winning people in a community and into a community, not just winning them as isolated individuals.”¹² We must remember, “Programs don’t attract people; people attract people.”¹³ When surveying believers as to what brought them to faith, it is almost always another believer.¹⁴

¹⁰ Eddies Gibbs, *ChurchNext – Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry* (Downer’s Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 36.

¹¹ Dan Kimball, *They Like Jesus But Not the Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 236.

¹² Elmer Towns, “Evangelism in a Postmodern World.” *American Society for Church Growth Journal*, no. 13 (Spring 2002): 45.

¹³ Will Mancini, *Church Unique* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 149.

Despite the Church's shortcomings, churches are meant to grow as one Indian pastor declares, "Nothing living that God created is supposed to be sterile, and that includes the church!"¹⁵ In fact, if there is anything in the universe that is meant to grow and prevail, it is the Church, for its founder, the Lord Jesus Christ, promised, "I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it (Matthew 16:18 NASB). Some would read such a statement and look at how the church has grown from its humble beginnings of twelve disciples to nearly 2.3 billion adherents to Christianity today,¹⁶ declare mission accomplished, then live their lives as if all there is left to do is wait until Jesus comes back. However, the church is to "fill everything in every way"¹⁷ because it is the Body of Christ (Ephesians 1:23). Practically, this occurs when the church fulfills its God-given mandate to "make disciples¹⁸ of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe everything I (Christ) commanded" (Matthew 28:19-20 NASB). Such disciples can be identified as those who

¹⁴ According to Dr. Elmer Towns, 86% of people are led to faith in Christ through a friend or relative. (Elmer Towns, "21st Century Tools and Techniques for the Revitalization of the Church," D. Min. class lecture, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, January 13, 2010).

¹⁵ Felicity Dale, *An Army of Ordinary People* (Brentwood: Barna, 2010), 30.

¹⁶ Source: "The Status of Global Mission 2010," <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/sites/default/files/IBMR2010.pdf> (accessed June 22, 2010).

¹⁷ Some have wrongly taken this verse as advocating the reign of the church in the world. In fact, such a view labelled "theonomy," was held by well-known theologians Cornelius Van Til and Paul Tillich and others in the Reformed tradition. Those holding such a view must explain why the Church is not seen reigning on earth until it does so with Christ after He returns according to 2 Timothy 2:12 and Revelation 5:10; 20:6.

¹⁸ The predominate understanding of making a disciple is how deeply a person is assimilated into a church culture so that church values become their values (i.e. political views, moral behaviors, service to our ministries), but as good as these things are, the making of disciples has to be defined as the work of cooperating with the Holy Spirit to "make apprentices of Jesus" (Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission*, San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006, 1.) and thus present them perfect in Christ to God (Colossians 1:28).

love Jesus and discipline themselves¹⁹ to follow Him in order to make other disciples. This definition comes from Jesus' requirement of obedience as evidence of love for Him (John 14:15) and is also based on Jesus' statement to His first disciples, "Come, follow me ... and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19 NASB). Thus, the conclusion can be made that at the very least discipleship is loving Jesus through obedience, resulting in producing other disciples.

Sadly, the church in North America has abandoned its primary responsibility of making disciples, but that mission of making disciples will not be thwarted because it is unstoppable work of God or as Donald McGavran declares mission to be a "divine finding, vast and continuous."²⁰ God has allowed others to fill the gaps that the local church has left vacant. These "others," who have come to be known as the "parachurch,"²¹ include mission agencies, compassion and justice ministries, relief agencies, campus ministries, radio ministries, publishers, and non-church-based institutions of higher learning and training (e.g. Bible Colleges, Seminaries, Christian Liberal Arts Colleges and Universities).²² Many such parachurch ministries have focused

¹⁹ "The link between disciple and discipline is obvious." John Ortberg, *The Life You've Always Wanted* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 50. Ortberg admits his spiritual mentor is Dallas Willard who has been a prophetic voice in encouraging discipline among disciples, mainly through the spiritual disciplines as outlined in his best-selling book *The Spirit of the Disciplines* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 1990).

²⁰ Donald McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 22.

²¹ The term "parachurch" is a general term for any ministries that "come alongside" (παρα, para) the church.

²² The question arises as to the scope that the church is supposed to have in making disciples. Some believe this scope to be large and holistic like Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia does as they have started their own elementary school, high school, university, seminary, television and radio ministry, law school, adoption agency, and residence program for those addicted to alcohol to name a few. The story of Thomas Road Baptist Church's extensive ministry is detailed in Jerry Falwell's books *Falwell: An Autobiography* (Lynchburg: Liberty House Publishers, 1996) and *Building Dynamic Faith* (Nashville: World Publishing, 2005). Others like Tim Keller argue, "The church as an institution is itself

their energies on reaching the lost and caring for the disenfranchised and marginalized in the various “people groups” (τὰ ἔθνη, ta ethne) who now compose the mosaic of contemporary society. These ministries attempt to meet needs the church is not motivated to fulfill. Perhaps part of the reason why parachurch ministries have experienced some success in bringing people to faith in Christ is that the Gospel is their priority, not filling a church building. As Hugh Halter explains, “Church must not be the goal of the gospel anymore. Church should not be the focus of our efforts or the banner we hold up to explain what we’re about. Church should be what ends up happening as a natural response to people wanting to follow us, be with us, and be like us as we are following the way of Christ.”²³ Ironically, when the church follows the pattern of its founder Jesus Christ and serves others rather than itself, the church starts to grow. Therefore, the Church should not be likened to a tsunami that overwhelms a coastline with large waves and then pulls everything back to its source, the sea or in this case the Church. Instead, the Church is more like a series of lakes connected by a river system that is constantly bringing a new flow of water to another region. This is a better metaphor for the extension of the Kingdom of God.

not to do everything it equips its members to do. For example, while the church should disciple its members who are filmmakers so that their cinematic art will be profoundly influenced by the gospel that does not mean that the church should establish a company that produces feature films.” (*Generous Justice*, New York: Dutton, 2010, 144.) It is the belief of this author that more churches should see their role as agents of the kingdom influencing the culture like Thomas Road Baptist Church. A question for the future is whether making disciples needs to occur by creating a Christian sub-culture for training then sending mature disciples into the culture to be missional or sending disciples out to be missional and then bring them back to the churches and their training ministries to reinforce the truths of God’s Word. Liberty University and other schools are attempting to do both by having residential programs and on-line programs that deliver education and training, which seems to be the way of the future. Other Bible Colleges, such as Moody Bible Institute, require that their students to engage the culture around them through a practical Christian ministry while they receive their training. Wherever training occurs it must be “commissional” – a term coined by the author’s father, Dr. Philip D. Stairs that not only reminds believers to be “missional” but that they have been commissioned by Jesus as His ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20).

²³ Hugh Halter and Matt Smay, *The Tangible Kingdom* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 30.

Nevertheless, parachurch ministries should be considered as a God-send and not enemies or competitors with the church. Much can be learned from the parachurch practices of reaching various sub-cultures. Alan Hirsch asserts, “The parachurch phenomenon occurred because the church did not recognize the apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic gifts and instead focused only on the maintenance gifts of shepherd (pastor) and teacher of church leaders and equippers as described in Ephesians 4:11. Therefore, those with such leadership gifting have found the parachurch to be a place to express them.”²⁴ Hirsch’s perspective needs to be unpacked and thoughtfully considered, especially in light of the fact that exegetically the verb “gave” (ἔδωκεν edoken) in Ephesians 4:11 modifies all the phrases that proceed it in the verse, which include “some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to evangelists, some to be pastors and teachers.” Notice it takes all of these leadership gifts for a church to be built up and become mature. (Ephesians 4:12-13) To oversimplify: Apostles²⁵ remind the Church to

²⁴ Alan Hirsch, “The Permanent Revolution.” Breakout Session, AND Conference, Granger, IN, November 5, 2010.

²⁵ In the New Testament (and in this paper), there is no distinction between apostle and missionary. Missionary is a term Christians have adopted as being sent, usually abroad. The word missionary comes, “from the Latin *mitto* – ‘I send.’ A missionary is therefore a ‘sent one.’ ‘Apostle,’ from the Greek word ἀποστελλω (apostello) – ‘I send,’ is a synonym for missionary, and the latter and more familiar word may be substituted for the former throughout the New Testament without altering the sense.” Robert Hall Glover and J. Herbert Kane, *The Progress of World-Wide Missions* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1960), 3. Furthermore, Cranfield, commenting on Andronicus and Junias, who are described as “outstanding among the apostles” in Romans 16:7 further explains how the term ἀποστελλω (apostello) “must be given a wider sense as denoting those itinerant missionaries who were recognized by the churches as constituting a distinct group among the participants in the work of spreading the gospel.” C.E.B Cranfield, *Romans – A Shorter Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), 377. John Stott also reminds us that “the word ἀποστολος is used to describe the ‘messengers’ in John 13:16; 2 Corinthians 8:13; Philippians 2:25.” (John R.W. Stott, *Baptism and Fullness*, London: InterVarsity Press, 1975, 99). We must recall Jesus sends all of us when He declared in Matthew 28:19 “Go” or better rendered “as you are going.” This commission is based on the pattern of Jesus’ own mission from God, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 20:21). Will Mancini suggests we replace the overused word “mission” with “mandate which in Latin literally means to give into one’s hand. The image is of one passing the baton or of Jesus handing you holy orders. It is not just a piece of paper you carry but the authority of Christ Himself, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.” *Church Unique* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 121.

go to the lost and multiply churches. Prophets call people to holiness. Evangelists go and win the lost. Pastors shepherd the Church. Teachers teach people and explain God's Word. It seems time to once again to ensure the full complement of leadership gifts are being used to equip the Church as it plants and staff local churches in the future.²⁶ Of course, every believer is called to "do the work of an evangelist" regardless of our gifting (2 Timothy 4:5). In fact, if the church reclaims its rightful mandate of making disciples and not just resourcing those the parachurch is making, God's Kingdom can extend and fulfill the Great Commission much more effectively.²⁷

But why not just let the parachurch make disciples? Simply stated, the parachurch alone is not equipped to make fully mature disciples. In fact, "most parachurch ministries will agree that they are not structured to minister to someone through all the stages of his or her life. Therefore, the constant theme of the parachurch group is that their objective is to reach certain target groups and to channel them into local churches."²⁸ Clearly, the

²⁶ Utilizing the full complement of leadership gifts describe in Ephesians 4:11-12 should not be perceived as reinstating the offices of apostle or prophet as found in Ephesians 2:20 because they were foundational to the beginning of the Church. Furthermore, leadership giftedness should not be so narrowly focused that leaders cannot take on multiple roles of leadership such as missionary and pastor. Timothy would be an example of one who was a missionary with Paul (Acts 16:3) but was also sent to Thessalonica as an "interim pastor" to strengthen the church there (1 Thessalonians. 3:2).

²⁷ Some might wonder where did the term "The Great Commission" comes from as it is not used in the Scripture. According to John Kaiser, "Since at least the time of Justinian von Wlez (1621-68), Dutch missionary to modern-day Surinam, the final instructions of the risen Christ to his disciples have been aptly called the 'Great Commission.'" John Edmund Kaiser, *Winning on Purpose* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 52. The word commission is pregnant with meaning since it reminds the Church of its "co-mission" with Jesus and its future reward in the same way workers are often paid by commission. In other words, the Church as Mission Agent will share the harvest that it works for (1 Corinthians 9:10-11).

²⁸ Frank Tillapaugh, *The Church Unleashed* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1982), 22. The original goal of many in the "parachurch" was to support the local church in making disciples. However, this goal shifted over time so that many parachurch organizations came to see themselves as autonomous from the local church and self-supporting and even worse, self-existing entities. Now, many mission organizations are rethinking their relationship with the church and want to become partners in ministry with the church. These were the findings discovered from interviews with twenty mission agency partners conducted for this project using questions found in Appendix B, and reported in chapter three.

local church is meant to function as the primary agent and agency of Christ's mission to make disciples by winning, training, and sending people into the world to reproduce more disciples. Such disciples do not work alone but serve and witness together using their spiritual gifts to multiply other disciples. When these disciples gather, they form churches and, as more disciples are made, more churches are planted.²⁹ As Fuller Seminary

Professor Eddie Gibbs explains this was the experience of the early church:

In the first two and half centuries of its existence, as recorded in the New Testament and by the Apostolic Fathers, before the conversion of the Emperor Constantine. It is also the kind of church that is experiencing such phenomenal growth in Africa south of the Sahara, in Latin America and parts of Asia. These churches ...are the fruit of missionary initiatives from the West.³⁰

It is the hope of this project to recapture the missional impulse of past and present missionary initiatives so that believers see themselves as missionaries to their culture.

²⁹ One of the distinctions between the church and parachurch in the past has been that parachurches do not start churches. In other words, only churches give birth to churches. As Neil Cole forthrightly explains the reality: "Some parachurch ministries exist to reach college students. They insist on being in the parachurch camp for many reasons. Since they need to raise their support from the church and to exist to serve the church, they never want to be seen as competing with the church. Because they are 'parachurch', they do not start churches (unless it happens to be overseas where the new churches wouldn't be seen as competitive with their support base), so this organization does not function as a church." *Organic Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), 109. However, this past distinction is not necessarily the philosophy of some current mission organizations. For example, the mission statement of Pioneers International is, "initiating church planting movements in partnership with the local church."

³⁰ Eddie Gibbs in the forward of Alan J. Roxburgh and Fred Romanuk, *The Missional Leader* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), xii.

Reflection and Discussion Questions

1. Why can discipleship not be separated from the local church?
2. Does your church employ attractional strategies, missional strategies or both and in what ways? Which of these strategies are predominate and why?
3. Does your church have a discipleship strategy? Is your present strategy of discipleship effective? Why or why not?
4. Do you believe the North American Church is in decline? If so, why?
5. According to Ephesians 4:11-12, the gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are all needed for building up the Church. Do you see all of these gifts being exercised in your local church? If so, how? If not, why not?
6. How can the gifts of apostles, prophets and evangelists be better expressed in your local church and community?

CHAPTER ONE – THE PROBLEM OF THE LOCAL CHURCH OUTSOURCING DISCIPLESHIP

Statement of the Problems

The problem of churches outsourcing disciple-making is multi-faceted and complex. As one starts to examine the problems, it can feel overwhelming and daunting to even attempt to tackle. If the problems were only about methods, then one would have to employ strategies for leading behavioral changes. However, the shift that is needed to reverse the decline of churches growing in North America will be nothing short of a movement of God. Churches, and in particular church leaders, will have to adopt a whole new (actually ancient) mindset, theology and philosophy of mission. This will take great sacrifice on the part of those who are blazing the trail for a return of the local church as a mission agent and agency. Leaders of this movement will be misunderstood and accused of being controlling of people and resources. Nevertheless, the Church cannot afford to keep missions as it is presently operating. The reward is worth the risk!

However, leaders must start with understanding the problems. The first problem has already been described in the Introduction – without making disciples the Church stops growing and exists only for itself. C.S. Lewis understood this phenomenon and describes it well: “There exists in every church something that sooner or later works against the very purpose for which it came into existence. So we must strive very hard, by the grace of God to keep the church focused on the mission that Christ originally gave to

it.”¹ The “something” Lewis described is identified by Alan Hirsch as “comfort, convenience, safety and security.”² In other words, churches frequently create a sub-cultural environment that too often is self-focused and self-concerned. Some might blame those of a Calvinistic perspective, who advocate that church exists for the elect only, as the cause of the problem. As Presbyterian Pastor George Hunsberger explains, “The Reformers and their immediate successors believed that the commission Jesus left with the apostles – to disciple the nations – was fulfilled in the first century.”³ However, decline in North American churches has no respect for theological persuasion, except for the Charismatics who seem to be experiencing incremental growth.⁴ Simply put, when churches stop evangelizing the lost, they stop growing. To use the words of Rob Wegner from Granger Community Church in Granger, Indiana, “We must not just measure the church’s seating capacity but also its sending capacity.”⁵

Related to the problem of churches giving up their central task of making disciples is that the laity becomes underutilized when ministry is done by only the few. The ministry provided is usually performed by either experts or professionals (staff) who can deliver “quality” ministry to meet the needs of the congregation. Consumerism drives

¹ C.S. Lewis, quoted in W. Vaus, *Mere Theology, A Guide to the Thought of C.S. Lewis* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004), 167.

² Allan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006), 43.

³ George R. Hunsberger, *Missional Church – A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*, ed. Darrell L. Guder (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 80.

⁴ Eileen W. Linder, ed., *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches* (National Council of Churches: New York, 2010), <http://www.nccusa.org/news/100204yearbook2010.html> (accessed June 22, 2010). This source reports that charismatic denominations such as the Assemblies of God and Church of God (Cleveland, TN) in the U.S. grew by 1.27% and 1.76% respectively in 2009. Of course, numerical growth is only one indicator of spiritual maturity and needs to be not the sole measurement of effectiveness and spiritual vitality.

⁵ Rob Wegner, “Attractional Building Blocks of a Missional Journey.” Plenary Session, AND Conference, Granger, IN, November 4, 2010.

this mindset where “professionals” provide goods and services while the rest of the church pays and enjoys services rendered. Greg Ogden warns pastors not to reinforce this mindset by thinking, “As a pastor I take care of things spiritual so that the rest of the church can enjoy the temporal.”⁶ One danger of this ministry situation is overexertion. When one part of the human body is overworked, it becomes fatigued and eventually wears out, causing other parts to malfunction. In the case of a torn knee ligament, there needs to be replacement and rehabilitation. This could be likened to staff members in a church who become burnt out and need to be replaced. In the case of overexertion by a major organ like the heart, the body dies. Similarly, churches are dying because their hearts are not working well and they have “forsaken their first love” (Revelation 2:4 NASB).

Furthermore, the Protestant Reformation’s cry for “the priesthood of every believer” seems to have been forgotten as we pay professional clergy to do ministry and create lay passivity. We must remember is that it takes the whole Body of Christ to make disciples. First Corinthians 12 makes it clear that all members of the Body of Christ are necessary. Paul reiterates this point in Ephesians 4:11-12 where he explains that Christ “gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.” Leaders serve by equipping the people for the work of ministry - God’s people are to actually do the work. Therefore, it is not good enough to be missions-

⁶ Greg Ogden, *Unfinished Business: Returning the Ministry to the People of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 89.

minded⁷ and give money to God’s work both locally and around the world, for each member of Christ’s Body must be missional⁸ or better yet “commissional”⁹ and be personally involved in making disciples.

A second problem of outsourcing the fulfillment of the Great Commission to parachurch organizations such as mission agencies is that missionaries sent out by agencies often do not have a local church-focused ministry, which makes for immature and incomplete disciples of Christ.¹⁰ It takes the Body of Christ as they observe

⁷ There needs to be a distinction made between mission and missions. Missiologist David Bosch distinguishes the two terms: “Mission refers primarily to the *mission Dei* (God’s mission), that is, God’s self-revelation as the One who loves the world, God’s involvement in and with the world, the nature and activity of God, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church is privileged to participate. *Missio Dei* enunciates the good news that God is a God-for-people. *Missions* (the *missiones ecclesiae*: the missionary ventures of the church), refer to particular forms, related to specific times, places or needs, of participation in the *mission Dei*. (*Transforming Mission*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2002, 10.)

⁸ The word missional has been used to describe many different approaches, including the emergent church and seeker-sensitive movements. However, Alan Hirsch provides a clearer definition, “the missional church is a community of God’s people that defines itself, and organizes its life around, its real purpose of being an agent of God’s mission to the world (*The Forgotten Ways*, 82). Unfortunately, the word missional can be offensive and inflammatory, especially to older generations of Christians. Their rebuttal to the missional movement is that they were missional and evangelistic to their generation. Therefore, to propose that the church must now become missional is not accurate. Evangelistic churches of yesteryear were missional as well if they understood mission to be a mindset not just a method or task of the church. One distinction from past evangelistic methods might be what Allan Hirsch calls the “extractional strategy” of church. Hirsch believes being missional means going to the lost without asking them to leave their cultural context. Instead, the newly reached are to stay in their circle of influence and bring the Kingdom of God to their community. This seems to be truncated because a going and gathering strategy is needed. Jesus Himself came into people’s contexts to reach them but then “called them out” (ἐκκλησία, *ekklesia*) so they could be changed to His likeness and go back into the world with His Kingdom message (John 17:15-19). However, some would question such a strategy in light of Paul’s exhortation to “come out from them and be separate” (2 Corinthians 6:17). The only way to not lose the distinctiveness of Kingdom living is holiness accompanied with incarnationality.

⁹ The author’s father, Dr. Philip D. Stairs, came up with this term as a response to the popular missional terminology being used today. Others might claim the term commissional, but he was the first this author had heard use it.

¹⁰ One might even make a case that without the local church acting as “the pillar and foundation of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15) that mission organizations drift toward liberalism. The Young Men Christian Association (YMCA) serves as an example of a one-time missional effort that was not based in a local church. Founded in 1844 in London, England by George Williams and his eleven friends, the YMCA was intended to be “a refuge of Bible study and prayer for young men seeking escape from the hazards of life on the streets.” (Source: <http://ymca.net/history/founding.html>, accessed January 28, 2011.) Now the

everything Jesus commanded in the context of community to build up disciples “until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13). Also evident, is that discipleship is a process.¹¹ When churches or parachurch ministries have emphasized salvation only as personal conversion and not a process, people do not see a need to be together and grow in Christ-likeness. In contrast, when apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers equip and mobilize disciples as a life-long process of growing and sharing their faith, maturity is realized. The strategy of how church leaders should equip and mobilize Christ’s disciples will be unpacked in this project. It is the belief of this author that the local church is to be the incubator for developing fully mature disciples and nurturing productive ministry leaders.

Parachurch organizations that exclude the local church¹² from the process of training and commissioning leaders also fail to meet the Biblical criterion of “time-tested” leadership. The Scripture clearly outlines in 1 Timothy 3:10 that a leader must be tested first, “They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.” In fact, time-tested leadership can be observed in all the Biblical

YMCA is Christian in name only, or less as the organization in the U.S. has come to be known as “The Y” and is open to all faiths.

¹¹ Scott McKnight provides a pithy summary of the common view of soteriology; “For far too many, conversion is seen as a birth certificate instead of a driver’s license...Conversion is a marriage rather than the marriage certificate.” (“What is the Gospel?” *Next Wave*, December 2005, <http://the-next-wave-ezine.info/issue85/index.cfm?id=8&ref=ARTICLES%5F%20THE%20BEST%20OF%202005%5F140>. (accessed December 31, 2010). McKnight is challenging the church to not only put the emphasis on justification but also sanctification in our approach to evangelism.

¹² In fairness to mission organizations, they often ask their recruits to have a pastoral reference in the application process. This acknowledgement of the local church is appreciated. However, the concern of this author is that the church’s involvement in mission selection is too far along in the process, which promotes individuals trying to determine God’s will without the benefit of God’s community. It also creates the potential for hurt of the applicant as a pastor has to redirect them away from a mission’s trip for which they are not ready.

leaders from Moses to Paul who underwent significant periods of preparation where their character was shaped.¹³ Parachurch ministries that circumvent the church as an incubator of leaders will continue to suffer from underdeveloped leadership because unity with the local body of Christ is implied as a characteristic of maturity. (Ephesians 4:1-16) An example of this oft-repeated phenomenon is when Bible College or Seminary degrees become the standard for ministry leadership candidacy, despite graduates having no ministry experience and only ministry theories to apply to a church or missions context. A better system of leader development is to have a man serve under the tutelage of a seasoned pastor(s) and then have the church send the man to a seminary for specialized training, all the while serving in a local church. Mission's leader Michael Griffiths agrees: "So often, the missionary societies have gone to the Bible colleges to recruit missionaries, and while this is perfectly understandable, it would be more appropriate if we came to you in the local churches."¹⁴ Chuck Smith, founder of Calvary Chapel, advocates such a practice in his memorable line quoted by Mark Driscoll in his book *Confessions of Reformission Rev.*, "Most churches call the trained, but our churches train the called."¹⁵ The United Pentecostal Church understands this phenomenon and has seen growth in countries like Columbia using this philosophy. "We felt that a student should be called before going to the Bible Institute to study and that the local church should be his proving ground, not the Bible Institute."¹⁶ Nevertheless:

¹³ To gain a better understanding of this phenomenon, read Reggie McNeal's *A Word of Heart* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000).

¹⁴ Michael C. Griffiths, *Who Really Sends the Missionary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), 12.

¹⁵ Mark Driscoll, *Confession of a Reformission Rev.* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 178.

¹⁶ Donald C. Palmer, *Explosion of People Evangelism* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), 88.

Churches committed to developing their own leadership must also recognize the limitations of the “in-house” apprenticeship training approach. This can result in a narrow vision and in producing leaders who only know how to do what is already being done. What’s more, ministry competencies do not consist simply in technical expertise. For a church to operate as a transformational missional presence in any society, be it traditional, modern or postmodern, leaders requires theological and missiological preparation as well as the development of ministry skills.¹⁷

This project will describe an attempt to make leadership training more church-based through an internship program developed at Calvary Baptist Church while still seeing the value of formal theological education provided by Bible Colleges and Seminaries. (See Appendix E for a sample of an internship program.)¹⁸

The hope of such an internship program is to remedy one of the major shortfalls of ministry development, which is the failure to learn team ministry. A failure to relate to others well is probably the greatest hindrance to mission advancement. The “independent operator” in mission ultimately fails because mission is relational in nature. Even the Apostle Paul, who is often portrayed as the great missionary frontiersman, was almost always a part of a missionary team. Colin Marshall and Tony Payne have observed in their study that “up to one hundred names are associated with the Apostle Paul in the New Testament, of which around thirty-six could be considered close partners and fellow laborers. Paul uses two names for them: fellow workers (συνεργοί, *sunergoi*) and ministers or servants (διδάκονοι, *diakonoi*).”¹⁹ Paul understood that experiencing team ministry produces maturity, exhibited by “the fruit of the Spirit in love, joy, peace,

¹⁷ Gibbs, 87.

¹⁸ This internship program was adapted from Godfrey Thorogood when he was a staff pastor at The Met in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, and used with his written permission.

¹⁹ Colin Marshall and Tony Payne, *The Trellis and the Vine* (Kingsford: Matthias Media, 2009), 112.

patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control” as listed in Galatians 5:22-23. Furthermore, notice the fruit of the Spirit are only exhibited in community. This undoubtedly is because the church countervails selfishness, the enemy of the Spirit. Therefore, the church and particularly small groups are the best places to evidence the Spirit’s fruit in one’s life because they force people to be close to others, relate to others and have their rough edges smoothed through accountability.

Another problem that occurs when agencies do not include the church in their leadership selection is that they tend to overlook people who are “weak” and do not pass the agency’s diagnostic testing. Probably, many of the apostles, including the Apostles Paul and Peter would not have been approved by a mission agency because of physical or educational limitations. In contrast, there are many churches who have selected leaders who are “weak” and “shame the wise” simply because they have proven themselves faithful (1 Corinthians 1:18-25; 2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Therefore, if leaders are grown and matured in the church, when they are sent out, they will have the affirmation of the church’s calling and support when difficulties arise and they want to quit. The local church can also fully stand behind *their* sent missionaries in prayer, financial support and encouragement.

Some might question what makes the church more qualified to identify, train and send disciples to fulfill the Great Commission, particularly when they are failing to send many vocational ministers of the gospel into the harvest fields.²⁰ This is a legitimate

²⁰ Symptomatic of churches not engaging in mission is their lack of commissioning missionaries. Though we have sent many short-term missionaries at CBC, we have only commissioned two couples from our membership to be full-time vocational missionaries in the past ten years. This is a higher percentage than the average U.S. Southern Baptist Church which “sends one missionary per eight churches” according to Ted Telford in *Today’s All-Star Mission Churches* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001), 93. Nevertheless, in order to fulfill the Great Commission, we need to be identifying, training and sending many more missionaries both locally and globally. There are simply not enough missionaries to fulfill the

concern, especially since many have received spiritual benefits from parachurch ministries. For example, the author's own father-in-law, Mike Henry, is the manager of two Christian radio stations in Medicine Lodge, Kansas, and God has used him to bless his community, including the salvation of some of the stations' listeners. This author had also been the beneficiary of many parachurch ministries, and God has used them to make him more like Christ, including Liberty University, the recipient of this paper. However, as I stated earlier, parachurch organizations have filled gaps the church has failed to address. Furthermore, while the church may not be better at delivering specialized ministries, it is ordained by God to mature disciples (Ephesians 4:13). The parachurch can be an extension of the church, but it should not be delivering ministry separate from it.

Another problem with the parachurch being the primary sender of disciple-makers is that it sets up a business or transactional partnership between the parachurch and church. The church starts to feel like they are only a source of income and not a true partner who gives and receives. Rick Warren succinctly describes this attitude: "The message from most mission and parachurch organizations to the local church is essentially 'Pray, pay, and get out of the way.'"²¹ Even Michael Griffiths, the one-time General Director of Overseas Missionary Fellowship, confessed:

Most would agree that the relationship between home churches and foreign missions is under strain. They have not divorced each other, but frequently, they seem estranged, formal and failing to communicate

Great Commission. According to Missiologist Patrick Johnstone, "In 2001 there were 201,928 missionaries in the world, which is one missionary for every 30,032 people. Of the 201,928 missionaries, 7001 were from Canada and 64,084 from the United States." (Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk, *Operation World – 21st Century Edition*, Waynesboro: Paternoster Lifestyle, 2001, 747-750.)

²¹ Rick Warren, "The P.E.A.C.E. Plan," Saddleback Community Church, <http://www.saddleback.com/story/6213.html> (accessed November 12, 2010).

with each other. Like nagging wives, missionary societies complain that the churches are not supplying them with enough men or enough money.²²

When parachurch agencies and missionaries adopt such an attitude, they fail to realize that God has entrusted the developed nations with ministry dollars and those churches must be good stewards of such resources. This includes coming alongside or partnering with the missionaries to serve and advance God's Kingdom in strategic ways and not serve only as a financial donor to mission. Therefore, a new paradigm of doing mission and relating to missionaries and mission agencies will be proposed in this project.

Parachurch organizations often have championed the value of autonomy, a value learned from certain Protestant churches and ministers. Parachurch ministries enjoy the freedom of functioning without the dictates on polity and practices of an ecclesiastical headquarters. Missiologist Ralph Winter calls this the "sodality" factor.²³ However, some independent churches and parachurch groups (those without an outside body to whom they are accountable) have taken autonomy to the extreme and have separated themselves from the Body of Christ at large. First Corinthians 12:21 corrects this thinking and clearly shows that we need one another, "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you!' And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!'" Individualism and total

²² Griffiths, *Who Really Sends the Missionary*, 5.

²³ Ralph Winter, "The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission" (paper presented to the All-Asia Mission Consultation, Seoul, Korea, August, 1973.) http://www.uscwm.org/uploads/pdf/psp/winter_two_structures_gods_redeptive_mission.pdf (accessed December 29, 2010). Winter's paper is seminal to this project because it explains the history of how the church and mission agency were at one time together then separated in the Protestant Reformation. However, his definition of sodality is opaque: "a modality (denomination or congregation) is a structured fellowship in which there is no distinction of sex or age, while a sodality is a structured fellowship (mission agency) in which membership involves an adult second decision beyond modality membership, and is limited by either age or sex or marital status." Nevertheless, Winter's explanation that sodalities are "regulated but not administered by modalities (congregations)" is a major tenet of this project and will be expanded upon in chapter five.

independence are great inhibitors to being commissional. In contrast, interdependence is the Biblical model of relationships, not radical autonomy.

A less obvious example of radical autonomy is the common practice of leader selection by ministries. Instead of receiving the recommendation, even commission, of ministers in the way that Timothy was sent to Thessalonica - “We sent Timothy, who is our brother and God's fellow worker in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith,” (1 Thessalonians 3:2) ministries now select their leaders through a professional and bureaucratic process with the use of resumes and profiles outlining their education, ministry experience and theological views. Others are left to figure out God’s call on their life on their own.²⁴ Contrast this practice with a fully developed discipleship model where leaders are selected based on observation within the church. Such a practice emphasizes internal as opposed to external hires. Disturbingly, hiring externally often employs business strategies, as opposed to fasting and prayer recorded in Acts 13:1-3, as the means to discerning God’s will. We seem to have forgotten that we are to, “Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matthew 9:38). Using secular hiring practices has decimated many ministries where a leader has been “called” based on a good resume or favorable interviews. However, these external hires often do not understand the established

²⁴ Maybe missionary leaders and pastors should stop making appeals for people to volunteer to become missionaries. Why? First, because believers are already called to be missionaries (Matthew 28:18-20), so the only question left is where to go with the Kingdom message. Second, disciples of Christ do not volunteer for missions; they are sent forth as missionaries. Third, volunteering is often an act of pride since people think they have the competencies to do the job when in fact God uses our weakness to show His strength.(2 Corinthians 12: 9-10). Mission requires humility as the “called” heed Solomon’s words, “Let another praise you, and not your own mouth” (Proverbs 27:2). Fourth, as Michael Griffiths poignantly reminds, “The most that an individual can do is express his *willingness*. Others must determine his *worthiness*. The individual may be *free* to go, but only his church knows if he is really *fitted* to go.” (*Who Really Sends the Missionary*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1974, 16.)

ministry's culture, and often do not receive loyalty from their inherited staff. Conflicts and resignations cause setbacks to the mission of making disciples. However, those who are selected from within already have an established trust and the ministry can go forward without a major loss of momentum.²⁵ Ministries can avoid becoming ingrown by continuing to make new disciples who bring their own unique flavor to the ministry and leadership potential but still have the trust of the ministry because they become a known commodity.

Lastly, there is the problem of stewardship. Many ministry dollars and Kingdom²⁶ resources are spent on administrative overhead. A study of the author's own church's mission budget reveals the average mission agency takes 10-14% of support for administration, which equals \$50,000-\$75,000 a year given to overhead for such items as member care, ministry oversight, and professional expertise.²⁷ If all of these benefits were fully realized, then it might be a good investment. However, a number of missionaries have been left alone by their sending agencies and are accountable to no one. This has proven disastrous and has been the cause of some missionaries having to leave the mission field. Furthermore, in our situation at Calvary Baptist Church, \$50,000-\$75,000 could support another staff person to oversee such care of our own missionaries.

²⁵ Another loss that occurs when there is a leadership vacuum due to a pastoral transition is that the demographic the pastor was ministering to seems to lose spiritual vitality. This is most acute when a youth or young adults pastor leaves a church.

²⁶ This paper defines the Kingdom of God as the reign of God in people's lives as they submit to the King of Kings Jesus Christ. Christ inaugurated His reign while on earth, making it a "present reality" (Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989, 105) with tangible results of righteousness now (Matthew 6:33). However, the Kingdom of God will culminate when Christ returns to set up his literal reign on earth (Revelation 5:4).

²⁷ This figure is based on a \$486,589 budget for Missions at Calvary Baptist Church, Oshawa, in 2010.

Statement of Scope and Limitations

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate how a local church should be the agent and agency of mission. Before describing how this can be done, mission needs to be defined. Simply, our mission is making disciples of all nations by teaching them to observe everything Jesus commanded. To put it another way, “The task of the church is to make the invisible kingdom visible through faithful Christian living and witness-bearing.”²⁸ This is also why it is better to say, “That the church does not have a mission as much as the mission has a church.”²⁹ Robert Webber echoes this thought: “The church’s mission is to be the presence of the kingdom.”³⁰

Some might think making disciples of all nations is an impossible task. However, we would do well to remember that: 1) Jesus has been given all authority and He is with us through the Holy Spirit to accomplish the task (Mathew 28:18, 20). Since Christ, the all-powerful One, is making disciples through us, the mission can be accomplished: 2) “All nations” means all people³¹ groups (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη, panta ta ethne), which indicates that the people groups within the geographical region and sphere of influence of a local church are the discipleship responsibility of that church. In the case of Calvary Baptist Church (CBC) in Oshawa, Ontario, Canada, our responsibility is to reach our community,

²⁸ J.I. Packer, *Concise Theology: A Guide to Historic Christian Beliefs* (Wheaton: Tyndale Publishers, 1993), 194.

²⁹ Allan Hirsch, “Small Groups and the Mission of God,” posted February 20, 2008. <http://www.smallgroups.com/articles/2008/smallgroupsandthemiissionofgod.html?tCode=F21CA9D41A&dCode=E54591F76F> (accessed June 26, 2010).

³⁰ Robert H. Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002), 133.

³¹ “In most cases, ἔθνος (ethnos) is used of men in the sense of a people.” Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament – Vol. II* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999), 368.

of which eight percent are visible minorities.³² However, not factored into these statistics is our local university population at the University of Ontario Institute for Technology (UOIT), which is seventeen percent visible minority,³³ including many international students. CBC could have a profound effect on making disciples of all nations if we were able to win international students to Christ while they are here in Oshawa, with the goal of sending them back to their home countries often inaccessible to Western missionaries. As Michael Griffiths reminds, “Evangelical churches serving university communities probably have more potential missionaries than they could hope to support on their own.”³⁴

To better understand how churches can become more missional, this project will recount the story of the recent launch of CBC into the missional “deep” as a mission agency. The project will research the mission agencies that CBC supports in order to discover their perceived relationship to the local church. It will also research some different sized churches that have transitioned to “missional” from attractional. This will be followed by establishing the Biblical and theological basis for the local church being the agent and agency of mission. On this biblical foundation, a fully developed discipleship model and plan will be proposed then enacted. This plan will include a process of reaching the lost, maturing and multiplying disciples, developing small groups, and commissioning leaders with the goal of creating local missionary outposts with the

³² Statistics based on the latest census information from Statistics Canada. <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/data/popdwell/Table.cfm?T=201&S=3&O=D&RPP=150> (accessed June 26, 2010).

³³ Statistics provided by the Office of the Provost at the University of Ontario Institute for Technology <http://www.uoit.ca/assets/Section~specific/About~UOIT/CUSC%202007%20Report.pdf> (accessed June 26, 2010).

³⁴ Griffiths, 31.

hope of planting new churches. As this process unfolds, the paper will record lessons learned and make recommendations for other churches attempting a similar transition, including reflection and discussion questions at the end of each chapter.

The parameters of the paper will be limited in the following ways. First, this paper is neither advocating nor trying to eliminate the need for parachurch organizations, especially international mission agencies. There does, however, need to be a clearer partnership and working relationship of churches with mission agencies.³⁵ This project is an attempt by Calvary Baptist Church to be commissional to its community in the limited geographical area of Durham Region in Ontario with special focus on a two mile square block identified by our church as RTHR (pronounced Arthur).³⁶ International mission agencies will continue to provide value to our sent missionaries. Second, this paper is not attempting to transition CBC from an attractional³⁷ church to one that is entirely missional. Why? First, there needs to be both a gathering and going strategy to mission.

³⁵ Note that this project is focusing on the Church's effort to work better with mission agencies and not vice-versa. Others within the parachurch can make their own suggestions for greater partnership. One good resource for such suggestions is "Friend or Foe? Church and Parachurch." *9 Marks eJournal*, Volume 8, no. 2 (March/April 2011). <http://www.9marks.org/ejournal/church-and-parachurch-friends-or-foes.html> (accessed March 6, 2011).

³⁶ RTHR is an acronym that our Student Ministries Pastor Dwayne Francois proposed and the Pastoral Team adopted to describe the block between Ritson Road, Taunton Road, Harmony Road and Rossland Road in Oshawa, where CBC's campus is located. RTHR is economically diverse and no other church building is located in this area so CBC sees it as its neighborhood to reach for Christ.

³⁷ The attractional church could be defined as one which attempts to attract people to their campus to hear the Gospel through services, programs and events. In contrast, the missional church goes where unbelievers live (i.e. neighborhoods) or socialize and makes disciples of them without asking those new disciples to leave their context. This enables the new follower of Christ to make disciples in their context as opposed to immersing them back into the missionary's church of origin. The church needs to be thought of as sent people, not just a place to congregate. As Tom Nebel and Gary Rohrmayer further define, "A missional church is one that joyfully plays a sacrificial role in the growth of God's work at home, cross-culturally and abroad...and in counting the cost of truly fulfilling their mission, they are not intimidated by that cost." *Church Planting Landmines* (Carol Stream: ChurchSmart Resources, 2004), 133-136. To remember the difference, attractional emphasizes "Come and see!" where missional emphasizes "Go and reproduce!"

Jesus sent out the disciples to seek the lost (Matthew 10:16) but once the lost were found they gathered with other believers (Hebrews 10:24-25). Second, the attractational nature of CBC is too imbedded in the church's culture. It would also be confusing to CBC as this author has promoted the attractational model in the past. Instead, CBC might become a hybrid of attractational and missional and then plant a commissional church. It most likely would be easier to be fully commissional in a new church than to transform an old one. Jesus Himself said, "Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved" (Matthew 9:17). This is not a criticism of the old wine or wineskins (i.e. past methodology) such as that proclaimed by the Baptist Bible Fellowship in the 1950's to encourage church planting: "It is easier to give birth than raise the dead"³⁸ but a simple statement that starting fresh with a focused commissional ministry philosophy is easier than transitioning an established church.³⁹ Ed Stetzer, who has planted new churches and pastored established ones, says, "It is more difficult to transition a church than to plant a new one."⁴⁰ Third, this project is not

³⁸ Dave Earley, *Innovate Church*, ed. Jonathan Falwell (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2008), 156.

³⁹ Leading change is very challenging and one of the pitfalls is the use of language. The word "missional" might derail people from becoming more missional since they believe that they already are, which could be true if they are seeking to be God's witnesses through their corporate or church's outreach in their community. Therefore, when leading change it would be prudent to not use potentially pejorative terminology. Artie Davis wisely writes, "This is just my opinion, but I see a danger in labelling yourself in connection with a term that is man-made and describes a methodology that is subjective at best, and can change quickly. I think our methodology should be done in accordance with how God leads at the place and culture we are in." Artie Davis, "Missional-Biblical-Attractational? How Should We DO Church?" [artiedavis.com...the relentless pursuit of the missing piece](http://artiedavis.com...the-relentless-pursuit-of-the-missing-piece), entry posted November 22, 2010, http://artiedavis.com/2010/11/22/missional-attractational-biblical-how-should-we-do-church/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+ArtiedaviscomBlog+%28artiedavis.com+%C2%BB+Blog%29&utm_content=Google+Reader (accessed November 27, 2010).

⁴⁰ Ed Stetzer, "Church Revitalization" (lecture, FEBToronto Pastor's Seminar, Etobicoke, ON, September 30, 2009).

recommending that Calvary Baptist Church's present missionary force be affected or feel threatened in any way. The goal is to pave a way for the church to go forward commissionally. Fourth, this thesis is not calling for the local church to support missionaries at one hundred percent levels as it would put a missionary at risk of losing all their support if something happened to their sending church. Instead, the project is attempting to create a working model where like-minded churches in the same geographic region can become "minority stakeholders" in a missionary's ministry, demonstrating interdependence between churches.⁴¹ Fifth, the project intends to produce a scalable model that can be employed in churches of any size. An intended result will be a fully developed ecclesiology that encourages "preaching centers, missionary outposts,"⁴² "organic faith communities,"⁴³ and churches meeting in "proximity spaces."⁴⁴ However, this project is not advocating a house church model or having no

⁴¹ The concept of churches supporting missionaries sent from other churches has Biblical precedent in the Philippians support of Paul (Philippians 4:18) and John's commendation of Gaius for taking care of "brothers, even though they were strangers to you" (3 John 5-6).

⁴² Mark Postma, one of CBC's missionary partners serving in the Czech Republic, introduced the author to this term in his 2009 ordination thesis. His paper is entitled 'Preaching Stations of the Church of the Brethren in the Czech Republic: Past, Present and Future'. Mark prefers the term "preaching station which is a location beyond the site of the local church, guided by the elders of the mother church, where the gospel is regularly proclaimed."

⁴³ Will Mancini, *Church Unique* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 226.

⁴⁴ This term is borrowed from Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch in *The Shaping of Things to Come* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), 24. They clarify the term in their statement, "By proximity spaces, we mean places or events where Christians and not-yet-Christians can interact meaningfully with each other." Proximity spaces seems to be adapted from Ray Oldenburg who coined the phrase "The Third Place" in his book *The Great Good Place* (New York: Paragon Books, 1991) which conveys an informal meeting place where people gather to socialize. They are "third places" along with the first place (home) and second place (the workplace.) Others believe that being missional must "almost always lead us into unexpected, messy, but grace-filled places." Karen Stiller and Willard Metzger, *Going Missional* (Winnipeg: Word Alive Press, 2010), 14.

church buildings like the “Go Preachers”⁴⁵ promoted a few generations ago in Eastern Canada.

A Brief History of Mission Agencies

When did the church stop functioning as the missionary agent and agency? Protestants, especially Baptists, might be tempted to think that mission agencies began when William Carey, “the father of modern missions, started the Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel amongst the Heathen (later shortened to the Baptist Missionary Society) in 1792 and thus the formation of other missionary societies because churches as institutions did not usually support missions,”⁴⁶ but that would be ‘chronological snobbery’⁴⁷ to quote C.S. Lewis. Surprisingly, “after the New Testament, very little is said of any missionaries going from place to place, like Paul and Barnabas had done. It is clear that the enormous spread of the Gospel in those first few centuries was not due to full-time missionaries, but rather to the many Christians who traveled for other reasons – slaves, merchants, exiles condemned to work in the mines and the like.”⁴⁸

If this is the case, then the early Christians were very commissional in their lives. However, as time went on and the Church became institutionalized under Constantine, missions became something one did as opposed to what one was - a witness of the gospel wherever they went. Groups who assumed the role of bringing the gospel to others

⁴⁵ “One of the Go Preacher’s main platforms was to vehemently condemn church buildings, and insist on meeting only in homes.” Bill Drost, Mike Wieteska, Lorna Wieteska, *Man With A Destiny: Bill Drost The Pentecost* (Burlington: Welch Publishing Company, Inc., 1983), 5.

⁴⁶ Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity – Vol. 2* (San Francisco: HaperSanFrancisco, 1985), 306.

⁴⁷ C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*. (London: Harvest Books, 1955), 207.

⁴⁸ Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity – Vol.1* (San Francisco: HaperSanFrancisco, 1984), 99.

evidence this. Monasteries and monastic orders were such groups and predecessors of the modern day mission agencies. Today monks are known for being cloistered from the world but that was not their original intent. An example is St. Patrick who brought the gospel to Ireland in the fifth century and “soon monasteries were formed. The Irish then began sending missionaries to other countries, notably to Scotland. The most famous of these missionaries was Columba, who went to the small island of Iona with twelve companions in A.D. 563, founded a monastery which became the center of missions to Scotland and eventually to Angles and Saxon territories.”⁴⁹ All of this was done with the blessing and under the jurisdiction of the Church in Rome, “though not under bishops like in other territories but under monastic leaders.”⁵⁰ Therefore, for the first fifteen centuries after Christ, the Roman Catholic Church functioned as mission agent and agency.⁵¹ As Darrel Guder explains, “The complex history and development of the religious orders through the Middle Ages are the most obvious example of this duality of local and parolocal structures.”⁵² Ralph Winter goes further when he states: “During a lengthy period of time, perhaps a thousand years, the building and rebuilding of the modalities was mainly the work of the sodalities. That is to say the monasteries were uniformly the source and the real focal point of new energy and vitality which flowed

⁴⁹ Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity – Vol. 1*, 235.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 236. It is interesting to note that it was monastic leaders who administered monastic missionaries in their missionary efforts. In a sense, these monastic leaders, called abbots, were able to give structure to the mission while maintaining freedom, not unlike modern day mission agency leaders.

⁵¹ The term that the Roman Catholic Church uses to describe these Orders is confraternities.

⁵² Darrel Guder, *Missional Church* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 75.

into the diocesan side of the Christian movement.”⁵³ Then the Protestant Reformation occurred and the Western Church was divided because “Luther rejected sodalities,”⁵⁴ even though he had previously belonged to one as an Augustinian monk in the Roman Catholic Church.

Surprisingly, it was not the newly formed Protestant churches that emphasized fulfilling the Great Commission, but the Roman Catholic Church. In fact, some missional efforts of the Roman Catholic Church were created as a response to the Reformation, the prime example being the Society of Jesus, commonly known as the Jesuits, founded by Ignatius Loyola. In the sixteenth century Ignatius Loyola, after seeing a vision from God and wrestling through his own sinfulness, dedicated himself:

To the service of the church and her mission. He then went to the Holy Land and upon returning to Spain, a small band gathered around him, drawn by his fervent faith and enthusiasm that made solemn vows of poverty, chastity and obedience to the pope. This band was formally approved as a monastic order in 1540 by Pope Paul III and came to be one of the main instruments of the Catholic offensive against Protestantism. The Jesuits, however, did not set aside their original missionary commitment and soon hundreds were labouring in the Far East and the New World, especially as educators.⁵⁵

The Jesuits are today an active group still under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church and have started highly respected universities such as Loyola University in

⁵³ Ralph Winter, “The Two Structures of God’s Redemptive Mission” (paper presented to the All-Asia Mission Consultation, Seoul, Korea, August, 1973.) http://www.uscwm.org/uploads/pdf/psp/winter_two_structures_gods_redeptive_mission.pdf (accessed December 29, 2010).

⁵⁴ Ralph Winter, “The Two Structures of God’s Redemptive Mission” (paper presented to the All-Asia Mission Consultation, Seoul, Korea, August, 1973.) http://www.uscwm.org/uploads/pdf/psp/winter_two_structures_gods_redeptive_mission.pdf (accessed December 29, 2010).

⁵⁵ Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity – Vol. 2*, 117.

Chicago and Boston College in Boston. Jesuits have even been labelled “God’s marines”⁵⁶ because of their zeal for the Roman Catholic mission.

In contrast, why did mission agencies emerge as separate entities in the Protestant tradition? Protestants initially were more focused on survival as they were persecuted by the Roman Catholics. They did not have time to focus on the lost as much as reforming the church. It was not until later that “Protestant Christians found themselves with no assembled missionary tradition, no gathered experience and little knowledge of the practical problems to be faced.”⁵⁷ As Ralph Winter points out, “Protestants had no mechanism for mission for almost three hundred years.”⁵⁸ Therefore, William Carey and his contemporaries like Adoniram Judson had to pave a new path, which also meant creating organizations that would allow for sodality without being seen as opposition to the church since most of the Baptist Missionary Society’s members “were ministers within the church.”⁵⁹

Not surprisingly, the taste of independence from the local church created a greater hunger for it. Autonomy from the church was seen as advancing the mission.⁶⁰ Church

⁵⁶ This term is a self-description by American Jesuits as found on their website <http://www.jesuits-chi.org/vocations/stories/knapp.htm>, (accessed December 8, 2010).

⁵⁷ Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2000), 160.

⁵⁸ Ralph Winter, “The Two Structures of God’s Redemptive Mission” (paper presented to the All-Asia Mission Consultation, Seoul, Korea, August, 1973.) http://www.uscwm.org/uploads/pdf/psp/winter_two_structures_gods_redeptive_mission.pdf (accessed December 29, 2010).

⁵⁹ Ruth A. Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1983), 115.

⁶⁰ A notable exception was John Wesley’s Band and Class Meetings, which made disciples and extended mission greatly in the eighteenth century without attempting to leave the Anglican (Episcopal) church. As Michael Henderson explains, “Wesley’s groups in Georgia were not voluntary agencies, which existed alongside the church. Rather, they were divisions of the congregation.” (D. Michael Henderson, *John Wesley’s Class Meetings*, Nappanee: Francis Asbury Press, 1997, 45.) Wesley was an Anglican priest

bureaucracy only got in the way of fulfilling the Great Commission. Nevertheless, money was still needed and since churches pooled the greatest amount of missions minded individuals, mission's agencies fished for funds out of church pools. This is where we still find ourselves today. Some mission agencies function as extensions of the church, especially those that are denominational in nature, while other "organizations develop a particular role over against the local church by picking up a ministry that is underdeveloped within congregations or neglected in denominational programs."⁶¹ Even so, the future is hopeful because there seems to be a desire by mission agencies and churches to become true partners in fulfilling the Great Commission. This joyous phenomenon will be reported on later in this project.

The Review of the Literature

Many writers have contributed to this thesis and belief that the church should be the mission agent and agency. All of their books are included in the Bibliography. However, the books that have made most the greatest impact are Dallas Willard's *The Great Omission*,⁶² David Yonggi Cho's *Successful Home Cell Groups*,⁶³ Gary Nelson's *Borderland Churches*⁶⁴ and Alan Hirsch's *The Forgotten Ways*.⁶⁵ Other seminal books used in this project will also have brief reviews.

until the day he died but was forced to preach in the open air fields of the United States, which eventually led to the formation of Methodist church.

⁶¹ Guder, *Missional Church*, 74.

⁶² Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006).

⁶³ David Yonggi Cho, *Successful Home Cell Groups* (Alachua: Bridge-Logos Publishers, 1981).

⁶⁴ Nelson, *Borderland Churches*.

⁶⁵ Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006).

When the author first started as a pastor, he had the privilege of serving under Dr. Rick Cryder at Geneseo Evangelical Free Church in Geneseo, Illinois. At that time, Dr. Cryder was finishing his Doctor of Ministry dissertation at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (TEDS) on the spiritual disciplines, using many of his visiting professor Dallas Willard's insights. Dr. Cryder's teaching had a profound personal impact as the author learned to practice the spiritual disciplines and then teach them to others. Willard's books on spiritual formation have been foundational to the author's own spiritual journey, with *The Great Omission* profoundly shaping the author's thinking on discipleship. A compilation of Willard's articles attempting to reclaim Jesus' essential teachings on discipleship, the book urges disciples to be apprentices of Jesus, a reality that can still occur in our modern North America context. In other words, God is not finished with the church on this continent because:

The primary mission field for the Great Commission today is made of the churches in Europe and North America. That is where the Great Disparity is most visible, and from where it threatens to spread to the rest of the world. Our responsibility is to implement the Great Commission right where we are, not just to raise efforts to do it elsewhere. And if we don't, it won't even be implemented "over there."⁶⁶

Willard explains that the Great Commission is advanced through personal spiritual formation and discipleship, which affect the soul and mind and body.

The second book that encouraged me to pray for a moving of God's Spirit in my church was David Yonggi Cho's *Successful Home Cell Groups*. Of all the books on small groups, this book by the pastor of the largest church in the world is pre-eminent, not just because Cho has probably had more impact on the proliferation of small groups than any other leader in church history, but also because his heart for God is on full display in the

⁶⁶ Willard, *The Great Omission*, xiii.

book. It reads less like a how-to-manual, though it does have much practical application, than a story of how God led Cho on a journey to transition his church to cell groups.

The book begins with a description of how God had to change Cho's heart from one of pride to brokenness. As a young man, he set out to build the largest church in Korea. Through sheer effort, he built his church to twenty-four hundred attenders, at age 28, was burnt out from fatigue to the point of developing a heart condition, which God did not heal for ten years. He devotes a whole chapter to describing how personal ambition is the key to disaster. Cho explains that he needed to be re-educated, through careful study of the Scriptures, to understand that he was not to grow the church by himself. He instead released evangelism and discipleship to his church members who would lead small groups in their neighborhoods. However, when he went to cast the vision of small groups for the church, his Deacons Board acknowledged that small groups were Scriptural but argued they were not practical. Cho persevered and made the controversial decision to recruit women as the driving force behind cell groups. Though there were many hurdles and demonic attacks to overcome, God started blessing and multiplying these groups to over twenty-five thousand cell groups. Cho believes churches will grow if they are having fellowship with Holy Spirit, setting specific goals for growth, and using cell groups as their evangelistic strategy. It is hard to argue against such a proven model of church growth.

Gary Nelson's *Borderland Churches* illuminated the church's role in the Canadian landscape. Gary was the General Secretary of Canadian Baptist Ministries and Vice President of the Baptist World Alliance until he recently assumed the post of President of Tyndale University in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. Nelson writes from a

Canadian perspective, meaning that he understands living and ministering in a post-Christian and post-modern context. He notes: “As Canadians, we live in a country in which a deep cultural marginalization of the church has been taking place for years.”⁶⁷

The book is a clarion call for the church to realize that Christians are now considered societal outcasts who must become missionaries, seeking to illustrate the reign of Christ in their lives to a passive-aggressive culture. Such a tactic will be the only way to make disciples in the new Canadian reality. Nelson’s insights are so relevant that the author joined a book club of younger leaders in CBC who wanted to study his book after he spoke at CBC recent Missions Conference.

The missional church has received much attention in Christian circles over the last few years. One of the promoters of the missional church movement is the Australian Alan Hirsch, who sees himself as a missionary to the West. I have read most of his writings but the best is his book *The Forgotten Ways*, which is a call for the complete reorientation or reactivation of the mission of the church. The book is particularly beneficial for church leaders living in post-Christian societies like Europe and Canada because Hirsch describes his story of planting a church among people hostile to Christianity in the urban center of Melbourne, Australia. Hirsch calls on present-day believers to return to primitive Christianity where “Jesus is Lord, disciples are made, and there is a missional-incarnational impulse that drives ministry. Included in being missional is an apostolic environment which enables a multiplying movement through organic systems and

⁶⁷ Nelson, *Borderland Churches*, 2.

communitas (community with a mission beyond themselves).”⁶⁸ Hirsch was able to define and articulate principles and practices that until then had only been vague theories.

Robert Coleman’s classic book *The Master Plan of Discipleship*,⁶⁹ must be included in this list as it shaped the author’s thinking on discipleship as a young pastor, motivating him to follow the model of Jesus. The book promotes the idea that discipleship is most effective through small groups rather than one-on-one encounters or in mass meetings. Coleman also advocates that multiplication of disciples be expected of Jesus’ followers.

Another contributor to the project was the book *AND – The Gathered and Scattered Church* by Hugh Halter and Matt Smay.⁷⁰ There is always the danger of overcorrecting a problem and this book addresses the challenge of going “missional” without having a place to gather the lost once they are found. Their first inspiring book, *The Tangible Kingdom*, describes the planting of a missional church with a follow-up strategy of growing new disciples into a mature church. However, their follow-up volume, *AND – The Gathered and Scattered Church*, helps answer some of the theological and practical questions being raised by the missional church movement such as how to transition from attractional to attractional *and* missional.

For those seeking to be more conversant with the Emerging Church Movement, *Emerging Churches*, written by Fuller Seminary professors Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger, provides a well researched history of the movement with case studies in both

⁶⁸ Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 24.

⁶⁹ Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Discipleship* (Old Tappan: Spire Books, 1987).

⁷⁰ Hugh Halter and Matt Smay, *AND – The Gathered and Scattered Church* (Grand Rapid: Zondervan, 2010).

England and the United States. The Emerging Church movement is germane to understanding the Missional Church movement because churches that began in the Emerging Church have now transitioned into a missional church. Gibbs and Bolger describe Emerging Churches as ones that: “1) Identify with Jesus, 2) transform the secular realm, and 3) live highly communal lives. Because of these three activities, they 4) welcome the stranger, 5) serve with generosity, 6) participate as producers, 7) create as created beings, 8) lead as a body, and 9) take part in spiritual activities.”⁷¹ These characteristics describe a Church trying to find its way in the new reality of post-Christendom, but since ministry philosophies are ever-changing, this book written in 2005 is a little dated. Nevertheless, Gibbs and Bolger help church leaders understand the journey the Church in the West has traversed.

*The Prospering Parachurch*⁷² by Wesley Willmer, David Schmidt, and Martyn Smith is written from the perspective that the parachurch is the vehicle God is using to expand His work around the world. The book provides a historical appreciation for the parachurch and a strategy for making the parachurch prosper, with tips on how to secure donors, board members and create a forward-thinking ministry. There is also a section on the relationship with the Church, which correctly challenges the parachurch to be accountable to the Church and clarify the roles of the Church and parachurch. Though this book is antithetical to this project’s thesis, it was helpful in understanding the parachurch movement and its intentions.

⁷¹ Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger, *Emerging Churches* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 45.

⁷² Wesley K. Willmer, J. David Schmidt and Martyn Smith, *The Prospering Parachurch* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998).

David Platt is the young pastor of The Church at Brook Hills, a four thousand member congregation in Birmingham, Alabama, who has challenged his church to live counter to the American Dream of prosperity and instead bless God's mission around the world. He writes about his church's experience in *Radical*,⁷³ which has become a New York Times Bestseller. Some think Platt is promoting a poverty gospel as an overreaction to the prosperity gospel.⁷⁴ However, Platt's understanding of mission is that everyone must sacrificially disciple all nations. Please read this book! It will challenge you personally and give you a church-based sense of mission.

Whether your church is attempting to develop a missions strategy or already has established one, Tom Telford's *Today's All-Star Missions Churches*⁷⁵ will provide you with creative ideas from leading missions churches in the United States. Telford travelled across the country observing which churches were exhibiting excellence in missionary care, encouraging children to think missionally, developing national leadership and even inviting missionaries to be on staff of a local church. It was his last insight that made a major contribution to this project, which will be unpacked in Chapter Six. Every missions committee should read *Today's All-Star Missions Churches*.

For those interested in learning how their church can become missional, *Shaped by God's Heart*⁷⁶ written by Milfred Minatrea is an excellent primer. Minatrea builds a case for the local church becoming missional from Scripture then identifies nine essential practices of missional churches which include: having a high threshold for membership,

⁷³ David Platt, *Radical* (Sisters: Multnomah Books, 2010).

⁷⁴ James MacDonald and Mark Driscoll accused Platt of such at The Elephant Room, a one-day simulcast on March 31, 2011 billed as leading pastors discussing current hot-topics in the Church today.

⁷⁵ Tom Telford, *Today's All-Star Missions Churches* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001).

⁷⁶ Milfred Minatrea, *Shaped by God's Heart* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004).

being real but not religious, teaching to obey rather than to know, rewriting worship every week, living apostolically, expecting to change the world, ordering actions according to purpose, measuring growth by capacity to release, not retain and finally placing Kingdom concerns first. To determine how well your church is accomplishing these missional practices, at the end of each chapter there is a missional practice assessment. This diagnostic tool, along with inspiring stories from other missional churches, make *Shaped by God's Heart* a must read for church leaders.

Another book that does well at assisting churches is Will Mancini's *Church Unique*.⁷⁷ The subtitle "How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture, and Create Movement" summarizes well the author's reason for writing the book. Mancini reminds churches that God has given them a unique assignment to reach the people in their community and that they need to ascertain their specific calling without emulating another church's vision. Mancini also warns against long term strategic planning but instead encourages churches to develop their "Kingdom Concept" by asking three questions: 1) What are the unique needs and opportunities where God has placed us? 2) What are the unique resources and capabilities that God brings together in us? 3) What particular focus most energizes and animates our leadership? Using these questions and following the framework Mancini provides will advance any church in its effort to fulfill the Great Commission.

Some books seem to spawn many other works because of their significant ideas. David Bosch's *Transforming Mission* is such a book. Bosch is considered by many as the grandfather and guiding theologian, along with Lesslie Newbigin, in the missional church

⁷⁷ Will Mancini, *Church Unique* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2008).

movement. Many of the other books used in this project refer to Bosch repeatedly. Bosch was a missiologist at the University of South Africa until he died in a car accident in 1982 just as the seeds for the missional concept were being planted. Bosch's book is an in-depth study of mission beginning in the New Testament up until the 1980s. He emphasized the *missio Dei* (mission of God) as God's overriding impetus for actively engaging this world. *Transforming Mission*, with its foundational theology, is required reading for anyone seriously considering adopting a commissional mindset.

Finally, *Confessions of a Reformission Rev.*⁷⁸ by Mark Driscoll was influential in the project. Written by a younger pastor of one of the fastest growing churches in the United States, despite being located in one of the least churchied cities – Seattle – this book is the transparent story of the hard lessons Mars Hill Church experienced as a missional church plant which started in 1996 with twelve people and grew to nearly ten thousand in attendance in 2006. What makes this book so insightful is that Driscoll has taken the time to reflect theologically on his church's journey.⁷⁹ He has been able to critique the Emergent Church Movement calling it “the latest version of liberalism...which accommodates postmodernity”⁸⁰ while distancing himself from it despite being initially connected with the movement. Instead, he has become one of the most influential younger pastors and the founder of the Acts 29 church planting network. He advocates the emerging church which he defines as “a growing, loosely connected

⁷⁸ Mark Driscoll, *Confession of a Reformission Rev.* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006).

⁷⁹ Another helpful insight Driscoll provides is a succinct explanation of how Christian groups interact with culture. The choices are: Gospel + Culture – Church = Parachurch; Culture + Church – Gospel = Liberalism; Church + Gospel – Culture = Fundamentalism; and Gospel + Culture + Church = Reformission (Driscoll's term for mission). (Driscoll, 15.)

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 21.

movement of primarily younger pastors who are glad to see the end of modernity and are seeking to function as missionaries who bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to emerging and postmodern cultures.”⁸¹ His comments on attractional and missional ministry are worth the price of the book. He warns, “The growing criticism between the attractional and missional camps is in large part unnecessary, because they are working for the same goal – the reaching of lost people for Jesus – but simply using different methods, methods that are complimentary, not contradictory.”⁸² Driscoll further states: “Attractional churches need to transform their people from being consumers to be missionaries outside of the church. Missional churches need to gather crowds to their church so that hard words of repentance can be preached in an effort to expose people’s hearts.”⁸³ Readers should beware of Driscoll’s crude language in the book, yet his understanding and practice of missionality makes the book a must read for this project.

Description of Methodology

This thesis project will study how one church (Calvary Baptist Church in Oshawa, Ontario, Canada) has attempted to become a mission agent and agency to the place God has uniquely positioned it in Durham Region, Ontario, Canada.

1. Chapter one introduces the present problems facing the local church in fulfilling its primary role as disciple-maker. In order to understand the road ahead for the church as a mission agency, this chapter provides a historical perspective on mission agencies. The chapter also includes an explanation of what precipitated Calvary Baptist Church’s transition to a mission agent and agency, the parameters of the project, and a review of major writings that have influenced the project.

⁸¹ Ibid, 22.

⁸² Ibid, 26.

⁸³ Ibid, 27.

2. Chapter two introduces the Biblical and Theological basis for the project.
3. Chapter three provides the findings of research on mission agencies and selected missional churches. The project will research the mission agencies represented by nearly one hundred supported missionaries of CBC as to their stated relationship with the local church. The questionnaire used in the research can be found in Appendix A under the heading “Research Survey of Mission Agencies.” The second part of the research will include an interview with a missionary from a mission agency who used a local church to gain access to a community, instead of the local church gaining access to a community through a mission agency. The interview will also include the church’s pastor. Subsequently, there will be a study of three churches of varied size, denomination and location that each have attempted to become a mission agency. The first church studied will be Grace Bible Church in Escondido, California, a Reformed Baptist church of about two hundred and fifty in attendance. The second church examined will be Granger Community Church in Granger, Indiana, a non-denominational, multi-site megachurch. The third church assessed will be Bridletowne Park Church in Agincourt, Ontario, Canada, that has had three missionaries serve on their staff with a mandate to reach out to different ethnic groups in their community. A “Research Survey for Missional Churches” can be found in Appendix B.
4. Chapter four details the plan to create a discipleship pathway that begins by going to non-believers in the community, winning them to Christ, making disciples through small groups, multiplying groups, establishing missionary outposts and eventually planting new churches. This plan will include a strategy to identify, train and multiply leaders and small groups. Also included will be a proposal to create a mission agency based in CBC, which must meet the legal requirements of a registered and incorporated charity with the Canadian Government. The hope is that other Canadian incorporated churches which happen to read this thesis project will benefit from these findings.
5. In light of the research findings, chapter five proposes a way forward where local churches and mission agencies can truly partner and cooperate in fulfilling the Great Commission.
6. Chapter six describes the lessons learned, along with the positive and negative benefits observed. How the church overcame any obstacles will also be explained.

Reflection and Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the major problems of the local church outsourcing discipleship to other ministries?
2. If you belong to an established church, how might you encourage your church to become more missional?
3. What advantages and disadvantages do you foresee in planting missional churches instead of transitioning your present church to become missional? Do you try both?
4. What new insights did you learn from church history about the relationship between the Church and mission agencies? What past methods of church structure could be adapted in your church to become more missional?
5. What recommended book(s) are you going to start reading?

CHAPTER TWO – WHY COMMISSIONAL?

Why should the local church function as the agent and agency of God’s mission? More importantly, is there a Biblical and theological basis for the local church functioning as God’s mission agent and agency? If Scripture is to be the authoritative guide for all Christian practice, does the thesis proposed find Scriptural support? These questions are of utmost importance and if they cannot be affirmed positively, the thesis can only be presented as an option among others for doing mission. However, it is the contention of this author that not only can one find support in the Scriptures for the Church being God’s agent and agency of mission but that the reason why the Church so functions is because mission is grounded in the Trinity and the Church is integrally linked to God as the Bride of Christ.

A Trinitarian Theology of Local Church Missionalty

Scripture reveals that because God loved the people of this world even before they realized it, He enacted a plan as Sovereign over the universe to send His Son to earth to rescue them from their rebellion. The Apostle John summarizes this truth, “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins” (1 John 4:10). Now that God has rescued a people called the Church, He expects them to demonstrate that same powerful love for others. This is the simple answer why the local church should function as the agent and agency of God’s mission – Christ is King over all, He loves and wants to rescue people from an opposing kingdom

ruled by Satan (Ephesians 2:1-5), and the Church as Christ's Bride acts as "helper"¹ in His mission. This theme of God's Sovereignty is found throughout Scripture, but one of the most important declarations is by David. "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it... Who is he, this King of glory? The Lord Almighty – he is the King of glory" (Psalm 24:1, 10). What is particularly telling about David's song is that he himself was a king (vassal), yet submitted to a greater king (suzerain). Michael Horton explains the ancient history of kings relating to one another, especially in treaty-making:

In the Scriptures, God adapts international political treaties of the ancient Near Eastern world to His relationship with creatures. In these ancient political treaties of pagan nations, there were suzerains (great kings or emperors) and vassals (lesser kings or tribal leaders) and the gods were called upon as witnesses. However, only in Israel was the nation's God himself the treaty maker: the great King, Lord of the covenant.²

In Psalm 24, one finds David's recognition that Yahweh is the ultimate king and that He is offering people everywhere covenantal blessing. God as the suzerain sets the terms and conditions for those entering His throne room and David is simply acting on his King's authority to communicate Yahweh's decrees, which is David's role as vassal.

In the New Testament, one of David's descendents is born who picks up David's declaration of Yahweh's reign: "'The time has come,' he said, 'The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!'" (Mark 1:15) However, this is not another vassal declaring the reign of a suzerain, but actually the Suzerain incarnate! Yahweh sent

¹ The term "helper" or "helpmate" (KJV) in Genesis 2:18 applies to all brides if one believes that there is a creative order as described 1 Corinthians 11:3, "the head of the woman is man" and I have chosen to transfer it to the Church, which is Christ's Bride as proclaimed in Ephesians 5:25-27. This is not to imply the Second Adam, Jesus, was lonely and needed a partner or complement like the First Adam. Instead, Christ has invited His Bride to join Him in His work as He makes her more beautiful through His grace of adding more believers (Ephesians 5:27; 1 Corinthians 3:9).

² Michael Horton, *The Gospel-Driven Life* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), 27. Other scholars support Horton's claim. "The kingship of God in the psalm has analogies to such ancient Near Eastern concepts, but also differences." Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1-50 (Word Biblical Commentary) Volume 19* (Waco: Word Books, 1983), 213.

His Son Jesus, to earth, because He loved the world (John 3:16). Jesus came to establish a kingdom that would last, but humans were not able to “ascend God’s holy hill” (Psalm 24:3) due to their unclean hands and impure hearts, so the King had to first purchase humans for God (Revelation 5:9). He did that by dying for them on another holy hill in Jerusalem. Then, because the King had redeemed them as His loyal subjects, He made them “a kingdom and priests,” (Revelation 5:10) a role that best demonstrates God’s reign. As a “royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9), the church is to function in such a way that “pagans (those belonging to the kingdom of darkness) ... see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us” (1 Peter 2:12). Finally, “The King of glory may come in,” (Psalm 24:7) - His glory is the ultimate reason for mission! As John Piper correctly reminds us, “Missions is not God’s ultimate goal, worship is.”³

Until that appearance of the triumphant King Jesus, all those who submit to God as their King are to act on His behalf with the same Kingdom extending message and ethics that Jesus proclaimed and lived. Jesus commanded this of His followers in John 20:21: “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” Since Jesus was sent by God the Father, His followers are also sent!⁴ As well, followers do not go alone but with the power of the Holy Spirit⁵ because, immediately after Jesus makes this declaration the text says: “And with that he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’” (John

³ John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), 15.

⁴ As the late missiologist David Bosch asserts in his seminal book *Transforming Mission*, “The term ‘mission’ presupposes a sender, a person or persons sent by the sender, those to who is sent, and an assignment. The entire terminology thus presumes that the one who send has the authority to do so.” (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2002), 1.

⁵ Michael Green notes, “So far from the Spirit being the possession of the Church, the Spirit is what creates, validates and energizes the Church.” (*Evangelism in the Early Church*, Guildford: Eagle, 1970, 179.)

20:22). It is both telling and empowering to realize that Kingdom extension is grounded in the truth that God the King sent His Son and the Holy Spirit (John 15:26) to earth to create a kingdom of people who in turn are sent to live out the Kingdom message.⁶ The Kingdom of God is ever-expanding because the Triune God is on a mission and we as His loyal subjects are to go with Him on this crusade, not to kill people but to give them eternal life!

The Great Commission of the Church

Before the King ascended to heaven, Jesus decreed that His disciples were to “go and make disciples of all nations,⁷ baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20 NASB). The question is how the command is to be accomplished? Are individual believers supposed to embrace this command and do their best alone to fulfill the Great Commission or is the strategy to have some like-minded individuals band together to reach certain groups within society? Both strategies have been used with limited success, but both neglect to utilize God’s ultimate instrument in fulfilling His Mission – the Church. Instead, the New Testament teaches that there is one King over all, Jesus Christ, and the Church as His loyal subjects are to demonstrate His reign everywhere. As the Apostle Paul declared, “God placed all things under his (Christ) feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the

⁶ The phrase “bringing the Kingdom to people” used here rather than the commonly used phrase, “bringing people to the kingdom” is not just semantics. Why? It is the king who brings people into His Kingdom and uses us to bring the Kingdom to them. Salvation is always initiated by God (John 6:44)!

⁷ David Mays correctly reminds that discipleship must have global impact: “The word ‘make’ is not in the Greek text. Actually, ‘disciple’ or ‘teach’ (KJV) is the transitive verb, though the thought isn’t complete until you name the object. And the object of ‘disciple’ is ‘all nations.’ Thus the core of the Great Commission is not ‘make disciples’ but ‘disciple all nations.’” David Mays, *The Mission Leadership Team* (Stone Mountain: The Mission Exchange, 2010), 116.

fullness of him who fills everything in every way” (Ephesians 1:22-23). It is this concept of the church “filling everything in every way” that needs to be rekindled in the hearts and minds of believers. As Clarence Jordan proclaims, “The crowning evidence that Christ lives is not a vacant grave, but a Spirit-filled fellowship. Not a rolled-away stone, but a carried-away church.”⁸ Or as Ed Stetzer declares, “For years we have believed that the church has a mission. Actually, the mission has a church.”⁹ Therefore, the church must not relax and wait for the world to come to it. Instead, the church is a group of people literally “called out” from living under the dominion of darkness to go back into the world with a message from the King of Kings, Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:12-13). Jesus commanded us to make disciples “‘as you go’ or ‘as you are going’, meaning ‘wherever your travels take you in this life’ – even to the ends of the earth.”¹⁰ Or to state it another way, “Sending is not something you do, but being sent is something you are.”¹¹ Jesus reiterated this point when He declared in Acts 1:8, ‘You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.’”

Jesus’ commission is summarized with a prayer when He prayed to God the Father in John 17:18, “As you sent me into the world, I have sent them (all those the Father had given Jesus – v. 6) into the world.” Jesus repeated this commission of sending His disciples throughout the Gospels. The initial occurrence was soon after Jesus called them to be disciples, when He sent them out “as sheep among wolves” to preach the

⁸ Clarence Jordan, *The Substance of Faith and Other Cotton Patch Sermons by Clarence Jordan*, ed. Dallas Lee (New York: Association, 1972), 29.

⁹ Ed Stetzer (sermon, Innovate Conference, Lynchburg, VA, May 18, 2010).

¹⁰ Tom Nebel and Gary Rohrmeyer, *Church Planting Landmines* (Carol Stream: ChurchSmart Resources, 2004), 77.

¹¹ Will Mancini, *Church Unique*, 34.

message that “The kingdom of heaven is near” (Matthew 10:7, 16; Luke 10: 3, 9). A good question Neil Cole raises about these verses is, “Why would the Good Shepherd send us to the wolves?”¹² Wolves usually kill sheep. However, if we remember that “wherever we go, the Shepherd goes”¹³ we will be emboldened to go to people hostile to the gospel, which is becoming an increasing reality in Canada. Our fears are relieved because we have a Good Shepherd with a “rod and staff that comfort (and protect) us” (Psalm 23:4). To put another way, emphasizing Jesus as the Shepherd-King, wherever we go the King goes!

Matthew 10:7 also displays a strategy that is too often overlooked by churches in their discipleship efforts¹⁴ but has been maintained by parachurch ministries. Jesus did not wait long after calling His disciples before having them go and teach what they experienced. In fact, He “gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness” (Matthew 10:1). Too often church leaders, present company included, have funnelled new believers through a discipleship curriculum that emphasizes the basics of systematic theology and, at best, some spiritual disciplines. We think that new believers need to be well trained in doctrine before sharing their faith, when in reality they have the power of the Holy Spirit indwelling them who “will guide them into all truth” (John 16:13). Jesus advocated this perspective and would often leave somebody who knew very little other than the basic gospel to share with others. Such was the case

¹² Neil Cole, *Organic Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 172.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ The reason why some churches have rejected this passage as a paradigm for an evangelism strategy is that they believe the mandate was directed only to the first disciples. However, if later Jesus commanded the disciples to observe everything He commanded, then Matthew 10 and Luke 10 are legitimate practices for disciples throughout the ages. Picking and choosing Jesus’ commands is a dangerous practice.

with the cleansed Gerasene Demoniac who Jesus instructed, “Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you” (Mark 5:19). When new believers are not encouraged to immediately share with others what Christ has done in their lives, they often miss the opportunity to spread the Gospel to their unsaved friends and family because they soon immerse themselves in Christian friends and activities.

This is also why baptism should not be delayed as it so often in many evangelical churches. We find in the New Testament that people surrendered themselves to the King and Lord Jesus Christ and were immediately baptized, not dissimilar to those who publicly declare their allegiance to their new country after they have immigrated. Pledging allegiance to their new ruler was also the practice in Biblical times, as demonstrated when Jewish leaders declared that they had “no king but Caesar” (John 19:15). Maybe this is why Peter declared baptism as “the pledge¹⁵ of a good conscience toward God?” (1 Peter 3:21) Believers now have a new king, Jesus Christ, and must immediately and publically declare their allegiance to Him.

The Ethiopian Eunuch was the prime example of one making such a rapid declaration of allegiance to Jesus Christ. When Philip explained the gospel to the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8:26-40, he believed and asked “Why shouldn’t I be baptized?”

¹⁵ The word “pledge” (ἐπερώτημα, eperotema) is a hapax legomenon and it is debated whether it refers to a “request or decision,” the latter being a formal answer to questions raised by another. In this case baptism is a response to God in answer to questions placed by the baptizer (e.g. ‘Do you commit yourself to follow Christ?’) Peter H. Davies, *The First Epistle of Peter – The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 144. Others argue that ἐπερώτημα can mean prayer so that “we may translate 1 Peter 3:21, ‘Not putting away of outward filth, but prayer to God for a good conscience.’” Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament – Vol. II* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999), 688. How the word is translated speaks more to the “form” of baptismal declarations. The important emphasis of believers making a pledge before God with Christ as their King is reinforced by the context which states in verse 22 that Christ is “at God’s right hand – with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.”

...Then Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.” (v. 36, 38) Maybe it is time to re-establish this practice in our churches, especially since most parachurch ministries still recognize baptism as a task of the church. Some church leaders are advocating for such a practice:

If we were to follow Christ’s example and deploy new believers immediately in ministry (not leadership – 1 Timothy 3:6), we would see how quickly they are forced to pray, trust in God, listen to the Holy Spirit and find answers. This would solidify their commitment on a much deeper level. They also would learn to suffer for Christ’s sake, which is an important pattern that Jesus and Paul set for us. (Philippians 1:27-29) Perhaps this is why baptism was done so quickly in the New Testament. It was a chance for a brand-new believer to make a stand publicly for his or her new Lord, driving a stake in the ground to declare allegiance to the Triune God.¹⁶

Unlike the Ethiopian Eunuch who probably had some understanding of baptism, due to His conversion to Judaism and seeing the mikvehs¹⁷ (מִקְוֵה - ceremonial cleansing baths) in Jerusalem, the forerunner to baptism (Hebrews 9:10), the unchurched have no context to understand baptism. Consequently, this requires those making disciples to teach new believers about the meaning and importance of baptism, teaching that should not be delayed. Baptism should occur soon after.

Why would Jesus leave new believers without His direct apprenticeship? He understood that most people learn best when they are forced to explain their beliefs, which causes them to be motivated to learn more. This is not to suggest that teachers of God’s Word are not necessary since Ephesians 4:11-13 clearly states that Christ gave gifts, including teachers, to the church so that members “may be built up...in the faith

¹⁶ Ibid, 132.

¹⁷ Bible Teacher and Holy Land expert Ray Vander Laan, in his video series *That the World May Know*, (“Faith Lesson 18: Living Water” 1996. VHS. Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Films.), introduces the idea that mikvahs were used as baptismal “tanks” by the early church when they baptized three thousand people in one day. (Acts 2:41) Biblical evidence of ceremonial washings being a forerunner to baptism is the use of the word βαπτισμοῦ interchangeably in Hebrews 6:2 and 9:10.

and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature.” However, when new believers declare what they have experienced by declaring “I was blind and now I see” (John 9:25), they become powerful heralds of Jesus and are strengthened in their own faith. This was also true of the Apostle Paul who was blinded by the Lord Jesus, healed by God and then given the Holy Spirit. Acts 9:20-23 records what happens next: “Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God...Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ. After many days had gone by, the Jews conspired to kill him.” The formula of growth in the New Testament seems to be: belief in Christ, baptism, discipleship by a smaller group or individual, proclamation of the Gospel by the new believer and often persecution for their faith.¹⁸ Though some still “fall away” as Jesus prophesied because of “trouble or persecution” (Mark 4:17), for the most part following this discipleship pathway leads to maturity.

Yet, such discipleship cannot be accomplished through one’s own strength. What truly strengthens believers in the Kingdom of God is that, wherever they go, the King goes. For the King Himself, Jesus, declared that “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” and then promised, “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18, 20) (Note that this promise of Jesus was given to the disciples plural - ἐγὼ μεθ’ ὑμῶν εἰμι πάσας, ego meth umen eimi pasas – implying the church could be included in of this commission, not just individual disciples.) The church

¹⁸ Notice that leadership is not mentioned as the key to growth. Tom Bandy in The Convergence eBook Series Forward of John Kaiser’s *Winning on Purpose* declares, “Leadership has been the key to growth for many of the most dynamic mega- and micro-churches today.” (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2006), 13. Bandy is not alone in this belief as many have emphasized the importance of church leadership. However, though leaders can plant and water seeds, it is “only God, who makes things grow” (1 Corinthians 3:7).

can therefore function as ambassadors of the Kingdom (2 Corinthians 5:20): ambassadors commissioned to represent the King on earth, not exercising their own authority. Michael Horton aptly asserts: “The apostles are not lords, but ambassadors. Ambassadors do not create their own job descriptions, policies or agendas, but announce, explain, defend, and apply the agenda of their head of state.”¹⁹ Lee Camp also declares, “The task of God’s people is not to ‘run things’ – that is God’s job for he alone is sovereign.”²⁰ It is the church’s commissioned role as a group to be the King’s agents by “displaying and advancing God’s reign and rule in the world.”²¹ Remember, “The kingdom gives rise to the church, not the other way around.”²² Therefore, “The church does not build the kingdom, but receives it”²³ and brings it to the world.²⁴

Kingdom Extension through Kingly Connection

How does the church bring the Kingdom of God to a lost world? Not by force but by fruitfulness.²⁵ The church is Christ’s Body; a living organism meant to multiply. In fact, Jesus has some harsh words for organisms that do not reproduce, “I am the true vine,

¹⁹ Horton, *The Gospel-Driven Life*, 127.

²⁰ Camp, *Mere Discipleship*, 83.

²¹ Joshua Harris, *Dug Down Deep* (Sisters: Multnomah Books, 2010), 208.

²² Gibbs and Bolger, *Emerging Churches*, 96.

²³ Horton, *The Gospel-Driven Life*, 182.

²⁴ It is important that “the terms ‘church’ and ‘kingdom’ be kept distinct. ‘Kingdom’ describes salvation from the God-ward side; to adopt it for institutional use is to risk thinking that salvation is of the church rather than of the Lord.” Edmund P. Clowney, *The Doctrine of the Church* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1974), 34.

²⁵ Jesus seems to contradict the above statement in Matthew 11:12 when He declares, “From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.” However, the “forcefulness” described by Jesus is not physical force but active aggression against the kingdom of darkness. As D.A. Carson explains, “The kingdom (of God) has come with holy power and magnificent energy that has been pushing back the frontiers of darkness.” (D.A. Carson, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary – Volume 8*, ed. Frank Gaebelein, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984, 266.)

and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit...if anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned” (John 15:1-2, 6). This is a sobering reminder that we must produce fruit or we will be disconnected from Jesus. Clearly, Jesus is always fruitful so the problem is not Him (the Vine) but us (the branches). However, we can be confident that we will bear fruit and show ourselves to be Jesus’ disciples if we remain in Christ. (John 15:7-8) In fact, we have been appointed to *go* and bear eternal fruit, (John 15:16 emphasis added) – the character of Jesus in people’s lives developed and revealed over time. As Bill Fay says, as quoted by Tom Nebel and Gary Rhormayer, in *Church Planting Landmines*, “Success isn’t leading someone to Christ. Success is acting your Christian life, sharing the gospel and trusting God for the results.”²⁶ Will Mancini goes as far to declare, “You can teach what you know, but only reproduce what you are.”²⁷ This follows what Jesus taught His disciples, “By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?” (Matthew 7:16) In commenting on this verse D.A. Carson states:

From a distance the little black berries on the buckthorn could be mistaken for grapes, and the flowers on certain thistles might deceive one into thinking figs are growing. But no one would be long deceived. So with people! One’s “fruit” – not just what one does, but all one says and does – will ultimately reveal what one is.²⁸

What is required is getting close enough to people’s lives to inspect their fruit over time! “Getting close” is vital for both those trying to bear fruit and inspect fruit in others. Any good fruit will be an attractive likeness to its progenitor as you watch it grow. As apples

²⁶ Nebel and Rohrmeyer, *Church Planting Landmines*, 59.

²⁷ Mancini, 133.

²⁸ Carson, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary – Volume 8*, 190.

eventually come from apple trees, Christians come from Christ!

Reproduction Requires Intimacy

Reproduction, whether in the spiritual or natural realm, always occurs first at the cellular level. As Dr. Rod Dempsey insightfully reminds, “Multiplication is always the result of intimacy.”²⁹ This is why the cell or small group best illustrates the method Jesus and His early disciples employed to grow and extend the Kingdom of God. Some might argue that cell groups are only one of many methods to do mission. However, since the goal of Jesus Christ’s followers is to emulate His character and actions, methods should be sourced in how Jesus originally apprenticed His followers. Jesus could have employed any number of different strategies such as a one-on-one mentoring, formation into triads, or gathering larger groups. Though Jesus interacted with and taught His followers individually (Mark 2:14), in groups of three (Matthew 17:1) and in larger groups (Mark 6:34), He most often discipled them as a group of twelve (Mark 3:14). The evidence of Jesus’ focus on His work in the disciples is found at the end of His earthly ministry when Jesus recalls in His prayer to the Heavenly Father in John 17:6, “I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.” As David Platt has observed, “Jesus talks repeatedly about the small group of men God has given him out of the world. They were the work God had

²⁹ Dave Earley and Rod Dempsey, *The Pocket Guide to Leading a Small Group* (Houston: Touch Publications, 2007), 118. Rod Dempsey expands on this statement in his D. Min. thesis project where he attempts to source multiplication of small groups in God’s first recorded command to humans in Genesis 1:28, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.” Though multiplication is a principle found in Scripture, the authorial intent of Genesis 1:28 is not multiplication of small groups but having children. Rod Dempsey, “A Strategy to Transition a Traditional Church Educational System to a Small Group System.” (D. Min. Thesis. Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004), 20.

given him. They were, quite literally, his life.”³⁰ It was this group who He charged with making disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20) and whom God used as heralds of the life-changing message of the gospel to the world!³¹ Therefore, as followers of Jesus, we should use His model of discipleship – multiplying missional small groups.³²

Not surprisingly, the Early Church understood this model as evidenced by how they organized themselves after Jesus ascended into heaven. They did not only want to make converts who proclaimed one thing and lived another like the teachers of the Law and Pharisees³³ (Matthew 23:15). The Book of Acts reveals that the early followers of Christ met in “homes” (2:46; 8:3), which means that groups could not be large and had a greater opportunity to be authentic. In fact, the early church was a house church network that “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (2:42) and then met in larger gatherings at the Temple (2:46; 5:12), presumably to worship together and hear the apostles teach. Meeting in homes enabled believers to “observe everything Jesus commanded” (Matthew 28:20 NASB)

³⁰ Platt, *Radical*, 89.

³¹ One of the most influential Christian leaders to understand Jesus’ method of having a message become contagious was John Wesley who saw “the Methodist movement grow from twenty thousand to ninety thousand followers in the U.S. in the space of five or six years in the 1780s...Wesley realized that if you wanted to bring about a fundamental change in people’s belief and behaviour, a change that would persist and serve as an example to others, you needed to create a community around them, where those new beliefs could be practiced and expressed and nurtured...The lesson of John Wesley is that *small, close-knit groups have the power to magnify the epidemic potential of a message or idea.*” (emphasis added, Gladwell, *The Tipping Point*, 172-174.)

³² A term borrowed from M. Scott Boren, *Missional Small Groups* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010).

³³ Being commissional must include proclaiming and practicing Kingdom living otherwise we are only “making converts.” Sadly, teaching that some will only be converts has taken hold in many churches creating different “classes” of church members. Leroy Eims in his widely used book *The Lost Art of Disciple Making*) articulates this view by “presenting the Christian life on three possible levels: the convert, the disciple and the worker.” (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978, 124). This is problematic because it espouses that some can remain at the convert and disciple levels without becoming fully devoted to Christ and His service.

and, as they lived out these commands, “enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47). Therefore, witness is the fruit of believers³⁴ loving “one another” (John 13:34-35) with small groups providing the optimum environment for loving one another.³⁵ Why? Simply because, when people engage in a small group, they can tangibly live out the other “one anothers”³⁶ found in the New Testament.

One such “one another” that stands out as almost exclusive to small groups is having “fellowship with one another” (1 John 1:7). By its very nature, fellowship best occurs in the context of small groups. As Larry Crabb suggests, “The center of Christian community is connecting with a few.”³⁷ The New Testament word for fellowship is the often misunderstood term “κοινωνία (koinonia),” which contains the idea of “mutual abiding, participation, union, to give someone a share in something.”³⁸ Therefore, fellowship is personal interaction which provides opportunity for in-depth knowledge of

³⁴ Craig Van Gelder succinctly states, “Fellowship itself is a powerful witness.” (*The Essence of the Church*, Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000, 153.)

³⁵ Church planting veterans Jim Griffith and Bill Easum warn against “neglecting the Great Commandment in pursuit of the Great Commission.” *Ten Most Common Mistakes Made By New Church Starts* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2008), 5.

³⁶ The “one anothers” are: “love one another” (John 13:34), “instruct one another” (Romans 15:14), “accept one another” (Romans 15:7), “honor one another” (Romans 12:10), “be devoted to one another” (Romans 12:10), “live in harmony with one another” (Romans 12:16), “greet one another” (Romans 16:16), “agree with one another” (1 Corinthians 1:10), “serve one another in love” (Galatians 5:13), “bear with one another in love” (Ephesians 4:2), “be kind and compassionate to one another” (Ephesians 4:32), “forgive one another” (Ephesians 4:32), “speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs” (Ephesians 5:19), “submit to one another” (Ephesians 5:21), “teach and admonish one another” (Colossians 3:16), “encourage one another” (Hebrews 3:13), “spur one another on to love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24), “confess your sins to one another and pray for each other” (James 5:16), “offer hospitality to one another” (1 Peter 4:9), “clothe yourselves with humility toward one another” (1 Peter 5:5), “fellowship with one another” (1 John 1:7), and “do not slander one another” (James 4:11).

³⁷ Larry Crabb, *Connecting* (Nashville: Word Publishing, 1997), xiii.

³⁸ Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament – Vol. III* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999), 808.

one another, accompanied by accountability. It often requires geographic proximity and doing “life together.”³⁹ Biblical fellowship should not be confused with simple friendship or social activity since true fellowship is reminding one another of the commonality we have in Christ and our obligation to follow Him. Even within the Godhead, we see fellowship occurring between God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, in which we are invited to participate (2 Corinthians 13:14; 1 John 1:3). Fellowship, grounded in the nature of God, in part explains why fellowship was particularly emphasized in the Early Church who “devoted themselves to... fellowship” (Acts 2:42).

Nevertheless, fellowship alone is not the goal of the church. As Mark Driscoll warns, “Without a clear definition of what a missional church community is and does, tragically, community will become the mission of the church. Consequently, the goal of people will be to hang out together in love like the family they never had.”⁴⁰ In contrast, Driscoll argues that fellowship must be accompanied by the Biblical idea of hospitality. “Many Christians wrongly think that hospitality is the welcoming of fellow Christians into their homes and church for friendship. But that is fellowship. Hospitality is when

³⁹ This term was coined by Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his book of the same title, *Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Faith in Community* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 1978). To reiterate the importance of geography in relationships, sociologists have found that “proximity overpowers similarity. In one well-known study, a group of psychologists asked people living in the Dyckman public housing project in northern Manhattan to name their closest friend in the project; 88 percent of the friends lived in the same building, and half lived on the same floor. In general, people chose friends of similar age and race. But if the friend lived down the hall, then age and race became a lot less important. In other words, we’re friends with the people we do things with as much as we are with the people we resemble. We don’t seek out friends. We associate with the people who occupy the same small, physical spaces we do.” (Gladwell, *Tipping Point*, 35.) This is why Randy Frazee encouraged neighborhood small groups in Pantego Bible Church in Arlington, Texas and reports on their success in *The Connecting Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001). Though neighborhood groups are an important missional endeavor, it should be noted that in colder climates, it is more challenging to relate to neighbors who cocoon themselves in their homes, as has been noted by Sarah Lanier in her book *Foreign to Familiar – A Guide to Hot- and Cold-Climate Cultures* (Hagerstown: McDougal Publishing, 2000).

⁴⁰ Driscoll, 32.

Christians welcome strangers, especially non-Christians, into their homes, lives and church.”⁴¹ Remember, welcoming strangers can often mean welcoming Jesus (Matthew 25:35). When fellowship, believers living out their commonality in Christ, is combined with hospitality, the entertainment of non-Christians, the church starts to live commissionally, and the reproduction of disciples will soon be forthcoming.

Church-based Small Groups⁴² as Leadership Incubators

It is through such Biblical fellowship, first with Christ then with others, that God’s assignments start to be realized. This is why smaller groups within churches can make the best incubators for leaders. Leaders rise to the surface as they use their giftedness and are observed over time. In Acts 13:1-3 we find a description of men serving the Lord by using their spiritual gifts in a local church:

In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

Notice from this verse that it was within the local church context where leaders were identified and selected for mission abroad. Unlike today, these leaders did not volunteer for mission. Starting in Acts 11:22 where “*the church at Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch*,” it is significant that in all the subsequent ‘sendings’ of missionaries in Acts, the emphasis made by Scripture is never upon the individual volunteering or upon his own

⁴¹ Ibid, 126.

⁴² This term distinguishes between small groups that occur in parachurch organizations and those that are based in the church.

subjective sense of call, but always upon the initiative of others.”⁴³ Michael Griffiths goes on to say:

Later, when Barnabas and Paul parted company, we are told that Barnabas “took Mark” (Acts 15:39) and Paul “chose Silas” (Acts 15:40) “and departed being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.” Subsequently, Paul “wanted” Timothy “to go with him” (Acts 16:3, though we are pointedly reminded that “he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium,” so that the congregations then were consulted and involved in his going out. The volunteer system is thus suspect on *biblical grounds*. It cannot be justified from the New Testament, and the best one can scrape up from the Old Testament is the call of Isaiah (Isaiah 6:8).⁴⁴

The church today must return to this practice of selecting leaders to call itself Biblical.

How did the early church identify and train leaders to be sent? In Acts 13:1-3, the leaders’ training occurred as they used their giftedness and were recognized for their fruitfulness, a method of leadership development which should still be employed today.⁴⁵ Furthermore, notice that there was not one preacher but multiple prophets and teachers, using their giftedness to strengthen the church, a clear call for environments such as small groups where leaders can exercise their gifts. Most preachers and teachers develop in smaller groups and classes rather than in speaking to the masses.

⁴³ Griffiths, 12. Such an observation follows the pattern of Christ choosing His disciples as well. David Bosch shows once again how Jesus’ pattern of the Kingdom was different. “In Judaism of Jesus’ time it was the talmid’s (the Aramaic word for disciple) prerogative to choose his own teacher and attach himself to that teacher. None of Jesus’ disciples, however, attach himself of his own volition to Jesus. Some try to do so but are discouraged in no uncertain terms (Matthew 8:19ff; Luke 9:57ff; 61ff). Those who do follow him are able to do simply because they are called by him, because they respond to the command, “Follow me!” The choice is Jesus’, not the disciples’.” (*Transforming Mission*, 37)

⁴⁴ Ibid, 13.

⁴⁵ Another example of a church leader being recognized for his Scriptural knowledge and spiritual gifts as he exercised them was Apollos. Yet, Apollos needed more training which he received in the home of Priscilla and Aquilla (Acts 18:24-26). Notice that Apollos received supplemental training outside of the church and inside a smaller group (i.e. triad). This may be precedent for church-based theological education by extension, which was further recognized by the church in Achaia who welcomed Apollos as a teacher (Acts 18:27-28).

Also evident from Acts 13:1-3 is that the identification and commission of missionaries occurs while worshipping and fasting, a practice that seems to be lost in many Baptist churches today. Instead, missionary candidates are required to fill out profiles, applications, and assessments. In contrast, the Antioch congregation prayed and fasted, the Holy Spirit spoke and Saul and Barnabas were affirmed by the church as missionaries. The Church must re-establish this practice of worship, prayer and fasting as it seeks to identify, train and send missionaries. Some have for, as Donald Palmer reports, “Most of the Pentecostal leaders and pastors interviewed in Columbia consider the continual practice of prayer and fasting to be a principal factor in their growth.”⁴⁶ Non-Charismatics might dismiss this strategy because they believe the Book of Acts is not normative for the church today, but the author's father, Dr. Philip Stairs, a Pentecostal turned Baptist, has a good response to such thinking. “The Book of Acts might not be normative for church doctrine, but it is for life and ministry.”⁴⁷ We should expect the Holy Spirit to save people and use the church to introduce and display the Kingdom of God.

After identifying then sending disciples (missionaries) into a given community, what strategy should they employ to spread the Kingdom? The answer can be found in Acts 14:21-23 where Paul and Barnabas “preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples...strengthening the disciples...appointed elders for them in each church, and with prayer and fasting, committing them to the Lord.” Then Paul and Barnabas left for other towns to do the same, finally returning to their home base in

⁴⁶ Palmer, *Explosion of People Evangelism*, 135.

⁴⁷ A quote from a discussion I had with my father, Philip D. Stairs (D. Min.) at the FEBCentral Pastor's Conference on June 2, 2010, at Muskoka Bible Conference.

Antioch, and “reported on what God had done through them” (Acts 14:27). Clearly, early church missionaries were sent from and made accountable to the local church. Such a strategy proved immensely productive and is still producing results in places such as India.⁴⁸ The North American church must adopt this commissional and Biblical strategy once again.

The Requirement of a Cyclical Going and Gathering Strategy

If churches adopt a commissional strategy of going to the lost and incarnating themselves in their community, what happens when churches start bearing fruit? In other words, what does one do with those “found”? It has previously been suggested that the newly “found” should not be extracted from their context to become a part of an already established church community though this might work for those who have been poorly church-ed or have some religious memory. Instead, it seems that churches should be planted for those newly found - there should be a gathering strategy. However, what should this gathering strategy look like? Should people be asked to leave their homogeneous unit⁴⁹ to become a part of an already existing local church? This next section will address such questions by observing the church in the New Testament era.

⁴⁸ The author witnessed this firsthand in Kolkata, India, in April 2010 when training indigenous pastors who preach, disciple, appoint elders and then plant a new church in another location.

⁴⁹ The Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP) is a term coined by Donald McGavran in his book *Understanding Church Growth* to describe a mission’s strategy to accommodate “people who like to become Christians without crossing racial, linguistic or class barriers.” (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990, x.) McGavran’s teaching did much good and helped stimulate the church growth movement. However, apparently, “South African theologians have pointed out that the invocation of this principle in mission laid the groundwork for apartheid.” (Horton, *The Gospel-Drive Life*, 194) Nevertheless, Frost and Hirsch see “the HUP as a correct mission’s strategy, while working toward heterogeneity with mature Christians in community.” (Frost and Hirsch, *The Shaping of Things to Come*, 52.)

What should a gathering strategy look like? Before this question can be answered, we need to be reassured that believers should gather together. Hebrews 10:25 is often cited as the clearest command to assemble: “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” Exegesis of this verse indicates that the author does not give an imperative or command as much as an exhortation. (This is why the author uses a negative participle - μη ἐγκαταλείποντες, *me egkataleipontes*.) However, the lack of an imperative does not mean that the exhortation should be considered optional. The author of Hebrews was aware of the persecution his audience was experiencing, so some were fearful of meeting because they might be exposed as followers of Christ. Nevertheless, the Biblical writer exhorts the believers to assemble together to “encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day (of Christ’s return) approaching.” Therefore, we can conclude from Hebrews that gathering together is needed because of the great encouragement it provides and the reminder that Christ is coming back, so we must persevere.

The newly formed church in Jerusalem also evidences a going and gathering strategy. The early believers were described by Luke in Acts 5:42 as ones who met, “Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.” Notice how pregnant with description this verse is! Jesus’ first followers understood that they were to be making disciples every day. They did so in large gatherings, such as the Temple, and in smaller settings like their neighborhoods and houses. Luke’s previous account in Acts 2:41 sheds further light that God added three thousand converts in one day, “making the early church

an immediate megachurch.”⁵⁰ Furthermore, there was no distinction between the secular and sacred in their minds, since Christ reigned when they were worshipping in the Temple (cf. Acts 2:46-47) and when they were in their homes. They sought out the religious people but also “gave to anyone as he had need” (Acts 2:45). Finally, the first disciple-makers knew that they had to explain the good news about Jesus Christ before they preached (proclaimed) the need to follow Him. Similarly today, the church needs to send teachers of God’s Word out into our society because many in our post-Christian culture have very little, if any, knowledge of the Bible, the gospel or Jesus. This then needs to be followed up by the preaching (εὐαγγελίζω, euaggelizo) of the gospel (Romans 10:14).

It appears that the early followers of Christ learned their continual going and gathering strategy from their Master.⁵¹ Jesus would go to certain cities or locations preaching the Kingdom of God and healing “every disease and sickness”⁵² (Matthew

⁵⁰ Driscoll, 31.

⁵¹ It could be postulated that Jesus’ regular custom of going to synagogue as a worship gathering (Luke 4:16), sets precedent for His followers to do likewise when they regularly gather for worship.

⁵² There is debate as to whether Christ’s followers today should still be using miraculous signs to attract people to Christ and the Gospel. Those who argue for using healing and other miracles as an attractional strategy use Matthew 10 and Luke 10 as guides for evangelism, especially Jesus’ command, “Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons” (Matthew 10:8; Luke 10:9). These verses demonstrate that God may choose to heal somebody in order to open their hearts to the Gospel message, but these imperatives should not be the guiding force of our evangelistic tactics. Why? Though Jesus saw some turn to faith in Him when He did the miraculous such as raising Lazarus from the dead (John 12:11), in the end very few followed Jesus despite His giving ample evidence of being the Messiah. In fact, in Matthew 16:1, “The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven.” Jesus’ response was “a wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.’ Jesus then left them and went away” (Matthew 16:4). Therefore, we are never to pursue signs in and of themselves, even as an evangelistic strategy, because signs by their very nature are only meant to point us in certain directions. If God wants to heal somebody through our prayers, then that is His prerogative. God may do so as He did in Acts 14:3 when Paul and Barnabas went to Iconium and “the Lord confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders,” which most likely included healings as occurred in Lystra (Acts 14:8-10). It is interesting to note that like Jesus, healings performed by the Apostles were in response to faith (Acts 14:9; Matthew 9:28 *et al*). However, since Jesus pointed to His death and resurrection as the

4:23; Mark 1:15). Then, “large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him,” (Matthew 4:25) and Jesus would take the opportunity to teach the people. In fact, this was His usual practice: “Again crowds of people came to him, and as was his custom, he taught them” (Mark 10:1). Sometimes these crowds were extremely large and even followed Jesus into such remote places (John 6:2; Mark 6:35) that they needed to have their physical needs met, so Jesus miraculously fed them. However, Jesus was never satisfied with “gathering” being the end goal.⁵³ When the crowds followed Jesus after he miraculously fed them, he called them to a higher level of discipleship by saying, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you” (John 6:53).

At other times, “Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said, ‘If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters – yes, even his own life – he cannot be my disciple’” (Luke 14:25-26). Will Mancini remarks on Jesus’ discipleship training tactics:

Whenever the largest crowds were gathered in the gospels, Jesus had an agenda for training the twelve more than he did for teaching the crowd. We do the opposite today. We build everything around the crowds coming to worship, and we’re lucky if we get all of our leaders together once or twice a year.⁵⁴

only sign that would be given, we should continue to point people to Christ’s death and resurrection as the only sign people really need. An example of doing so is Lee Strobel’s *The Case for Christ* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), which gives historical and corroboratory evidence of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection.

⁵³ Theologian Michael Frost asserts, “Community is not the goal in itself. We find happiness as an incidental by-product of pursuing love, justice, hospitality, and generosity.” Michael Frost, *Exiles* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006), 108.

⁵⁴ Mancini, *Church Unique*, 220.

It would be prudent to consider Jesus' methods as following a harvest pattern. He goes to the harvest fields, gathers the harvest, sifts out that which was good, and then scatters more seed for even greater future abundance. Churches today must adopt this same harvest strategy of cyclical going, gathering, sifting⁵⁵ and scattering.⁵⁶

However, an obvious question arises - why didn't Jesus command his disciples to plant churches? It is always difficult to argue from silence and therefore we are only left to speculate. Nevertheless, two possible explanations come to mind. The first is that when piecing together Jesus' command to make disciples in Matthew 28:18-20 and the other "one another" commands in the New Testament, a going, growing and gathering strategy was assumed. Some go as far to say, "There is no distinction between missions and church planting."⁵⁷ Obviously, by the fifth chapter of Acts, the gathered disciples were being called the church so that assembling together as churches is ordained by God (Acts 5:11). The Apostle Paul also addressed many churches in his letters so once again there is an assumption that the church was ordained by God. The second, and more important answer, is that the New Testament records very little about the organization and structure of the church. Structure and organization are secondary concerns since the church is not an end in itself. Sadly, we have lost our way and "the idea driving many churches is to

⁵⁵ Sifting people seems to contradict Jesus' command not to pull out the "weeds" because in doing so they might pull up the good wheat as well (Matthew 13:28-29). However, when Jesus "sifted" out his true followers, He was not evicting people from His Kingdom or His Church. Instead, He was inviting them to true Kingdom living, which is costly but rewarding (Luke 9:23-26; 14:28-33). Likewise, our sifting of people is demonstrated when we challenge them to fully follow Christ and bear fruit.

⁵⁶ Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch sees the scattering of the church as positive, "A helpful way of looking at the post-Christendom church is to see not disorder but a diaspora." (*The Shaping of Things to Come*, 13.)

⁵⁷ Rod Dempsey, (lecture, "Small Groups," Doctor of Ministry Class, Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, Lynchburg, VA, May 20, 2010).

create a church that meets the needs of its members.”⁵⁸ Jesus knew the human condition is always bent towards safety, stability, comfort, selfishness and self-fulfillment. If He had commanded that churches were to be planted, He would have instituted the Church as an organization and not a multiplying organism. Instead, Jesus brilliantly focused on making disciples of individuals knowing they would gather together. This is why the newly formed Jerusalem was dispersed through persecution (Acts 8:1). God used persecution to advance His mission! Now, if we will still follow Jesus mandate to make disciples, churches will be planted organically because humans intrinsically assemble together.⁵⁹ As Alan Hirsch proposes, “We need to focus on planting the gospel and then let the Lord plant churches.”⁶⁰

The last question in this section seems to have already been addressed: Should people be asked to leave their “homogeneous unit” to become a part of a local, already existing church? You might think the answer is that people must not only gather after being found but go to others with the same message they have now embraced. As has been emphasized, “Church is not a spectator sport.”⁶¹ Nevertheless, the question still exists as to whether the newly found seek only to reach those within their own cultural and community context. The New Testament addresses this question directly by showing that the Kingdom of God bridges even the greatest of cultural barriers – Jew and Gentile.

⁵⁸ Robert Lewis, *The Church of Irresistible Influence* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 57.

⁵⁹ A negative example of this phenomenon is found at the Tower of Babel when people gathered together to build “a name for themselves.” (Genesis 11:1-4)

⁶⁰ Alan Hirsch, “The Permanent Revolution,” (lecture, AND Conference, Granger, IN, November 5, 2010.)

⁶¹ Michael J. Coyner, “Church is Not a Spectator Sport,” Indiana Conference of the United Methodist Church. <http://inumc.org/news/detail/702> (accessed December 3, 2010).

Paul succinctly explains that the Gospel is for both cultures in Romans 1:16, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.” Both Paul and Peter, as described in Acts 10-11, had to constantly remind the church that the gospel was for both cultures. In this respect, the missional movement will fail if it only makes disciples within a monoculture or homogeneous community. The Great Commission is always cross-cultural in nature, which is why Jesus said to “go and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). Otherwise, the prize that Christ obtained at the Cross, pictured by the Apostle John in Revelation 5:9, “with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation” is just a mirage. But it is not a mirage – heaven is a multicultural mosaic! Praise God! Being commissional requires being cross-cultural disciplers.

Scriptural Evidence of the “Commissional” Church

1. The Great Commission in the Gospels and Acts
 - a. Authoritative – Matthew 28:18-20 “Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
 - b. Gospel-Driven – Mark 16:15 Jesus “said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.’”⁶²
 - c. Global in Scope – Luke 24:46-47 Jesus “told them, ‘This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.’”
 - d. Father Sent – John 20:21 “Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”

⁶² This verse is not included in the earliest manuscripts of Mark’s Gospel, which may cause some to question its validity. Nevertheless, Mark does record Jesus’ declaration: “And the gospel must first be preached to all nations,” (Mark 13:10) which could be considered a gospel-driven Great Commission statement.

- e. Spirit Empowered – Acts 1:8 Jesus said to them, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
2. The Church’s Role as Mission Agent of the Kingdom of God
 - a. Christ is King over the Universe and His Church Embodies His Reign - Ephesians 1:19b-23 “That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.”
 - b. Christ’s Conferral of the Kingdom of God to the Church – Luke 22:29 “And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me.”
 3. The Kingdom Message that the Church is Commissioned to Bring to the World
 - a. The Kingdom of God is Near – Matthew 10:7 Jesus said, “As you go, preach this message, ‘The kingdom of heaven is near.’”
 - b. The Truth – 1 Timothy 3:15 “...you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.”
 - c. Reconciliation to God – 2 Corinthians 5:16-20 “So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone and the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.”
 - d. The Gospel – 1 Thessalonians 2:4 “...we speak as men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel.”
 4. The Local Church Commissions Missionaries
 - a. Acting as Agents of the Holy Spirit – Acts 13:1-3 “In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.”
 - b. Acting as Agency for the Mission – Acts 15:40 “Paul chose Silas and left, *commended by the brothers* to the grace of the Lord. He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.” (emphasis added)

Reflection and Discussion Questions

1. Why is it important to source the Great Commission in the Trinity's Kingdom mission?
2. How is your church involved in fulfilling the Great Commission?
3. Why is baptism so important in fulfilling the Great Commission?
4. How is your church teaching disciples "to observe everything Jesus commanded"? (Matthew 28:20 NASB)
5. Jesus commanded His followers to go and bear "fruit" in John 15:16. What does this "fruit" look like? How can you and your church bear such fruit?
6. How could your church adopt a cyclical going and gathering strategy?

CHAPTER THREE – Research Findings

Discoveries about Mission Agencies

It was an assumption of the project that Mission Agencies were a “necessary evil.” Though neither enemies of God or the Gospel, Mission Agencies were considered a necessity to doing mission, acting more like “ministry brokers” in the same way one needs a real estate, insurance or mortgage broker who takes the time to do research, gather information and then present the best information to the decision makers. After the decisions are made, a broker will often continue to manage accounts and deal with the on-going administration a client pays to offload. Hiring brokers often works for business and personal transactions, but using them in missions seems to cause a relational breakdown between missionary and church, with the church feeling like they are only a payer of services rendered. Some churches may still embrace that role as investor or source of income for missions, but there seems to be a trend in North America churches towards full and active partnership between church and missionary. Many Western Christians want to experience international missions first-hand and to see how their ministry dollars are being stewarded. Missionaries and mission agencies have recognized the trend and encouraged and accommodated the sending of more and more short-term mission teams from churches.

After conducting interviews with Missions Agencies, the author admits his assumptions were wrong and that mission agencies are recognizing the necessity of the

local church as a potential partner in ministry. The research questions were simple: 1) What is your mission agency's stated relationship with the local church? 2) How is your mission agency fostering this relationship? (Give some specific examples) and 3) How could the local church become a better partner to the work, which God has called your mission agency? (See Appendix A) Of these interviews, five were done via phone or in person and the other fifteen were conducted through e-mail dialogue.

The answers by most of the mission agencies to the first question were encouraging. They saw their relationship to the local church as "assisting the church in its mission."¹ In fact, Trans World Radio Canada, New Tribes Mission Canada, BCM (Bible-Centered Missions) International (Canada), BLF (Bibles and Literature in French) Canada, and Northern Canada Evangelical Mission all used this phrase to convey their stated relationship to the local church. In the case of some of these mission agencies, they did not delineate whether they saw their "assistance of the local church" being the local church in North America or the indigenous church internationally. New Tribes Mission saw their assistance of the local church mandate being filled by "missionaries who establish New Testament churches² among unreached people groups."³ Other agencies used similar terminology such as "to support the local church in fulfilling Christ's

¹ Ray Alary, interview by author via email, October 25, 2010.

² This term "New Testament church" is very ambiguous. In fact, many of the New Testament churches had a lot of serious problems and could not be commended as Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 11:17, "In the following directives I have no praise for you, for your meetings do more harm than good." Therefore, we must be careful in saying we want to re-establish a New Testament church that we do not romanticize the notion of the New Testament church as problem-free. A better approach would be to encourage each church to have the Bible as its authority, seeking God for its expression of mission to this present generation.

³ Frank Vandermuelen, interview by author via e-mail, Oshawa, September 30, 2010.

commission”⁴ (Pregnancy Help Centre of Durham) or “to connect local churches with strategic opportunities in frontier mission through strategic and credible indigenous ministry partners”⁵ (Partners International Canada). Evangelism Explosion saw their relationship to the local church as “helping churches train believers in outreach to increase the Kingdom of God.”⁶ They report that they often ask themselves, “How can we help the local church?” Such questions recognize the local church as being the mission agent of God’s Kingdom on earth.

It would seem that the agency with the most robust and clearly stated relationship with the local church is Wycliffe Translators who seek “cooperative behavior through partnerships with local and national churches, individual Christians, Bible translation organizations, mission agencies, seminaries and Bible schools, funding agencies, etc.”⁷ Compassion Canada does not blur the lines between their role as mission agency and the local church. “We fully recognize that the primary responsibility for reaching the needs of the poor rests upon the Church. Compassion recognizes that it is not the church but is, instead, an organization that ministers to children through the church.”⁸ Other mission organizations such as The Refuge, a ministry to street youth in Oshawa, have learned, “At one time the church was looked upon as a resource. Now we have evolved to see

⁴ Kathy Michel, interview by author via e-mail, October 28, 2010.

⁵ Brent Mitchell, interview by author via e-mail, October 5, 2010.

⁶ Bill Herron, interviewed by author via phone, October 26, 2010.

⁷ Paul Hooper, interviewed by author via e-mail, October 1, 2010.

⁸ Andy Bartha, interviewed by author via e-mail, October 1, 2010.

ourselves as an instrument in growing the church through the inspirational stories of God's work."⁹

These are some fantastic statements that convey a desire for partnership with the local church, but the question is whether these attitudes are reflected in action. This is why the second question tries to provide evidence of fostering such a relationship. Surprisingly, mission agencies are attempting to make the local church a welcomed participant in mission endeavours, both overseas and here in North America. In the case of New Tribes Mission, they have realigned themselves with local churches in countries such as Senegal so that nationals reach their fellow countrymen, an excellent strategy especially in countries that are closed to Western missionaries. As K. P. Yohannan purports, "Although half the countries in the world today forbid the Western missionary, now the native missionary can go to the nearest hidden people group. For example, an Indian can go to Nepal with the Gospel, North Americans cannot."¹⁰ Remember also, this was written before the events of 9/11 and now even more countries are closed to Western missionaries.

Unfortunately, sometimes fellow countrymen have such disdain for one another and a history of animosity so that it takes somebody from a more distant country and culture to bring the gospel to a people group. For example, in India, a former Brahmin might have a difficult time crossing caste lines to reach the Dalits (untouchables). Thus, it took God using Mother Teresa and other international missionaries to reach the outcasts.

⁹ Clarence Keesman, interview by author, Oshawa, Ontario, October 15, 2010.

¹⁰ K. P. Yohannan, *Revolution in World Missions* (Carrolton: GFA Books, 1998), 121.

Such radical cross-cultural ministry is an indictment on the church in such countries¹¹ and speaks to the need for preaching a gospel which breaks down all racial and cultural barriers. The church must once again proclaim and live out Galatians 3:26-28. “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” If churches took up this challenge, maybe there would be less need for mission agencies. As one executive representative from SIM (Serving In Mission) declared, “The mission agency should be working its way out of a job and handing it off to the church.”¹²

In the meantime, mission agencies are functioning as trainers of mission as this was a repeated focus of the mission agencies interviewed. For example, Evangelism Explosion conducts a relationship evangelism training seminar called Launch and offer “Share Your Faith” workshops to encourage people in their evangelism. The local church’s role is to host such seminars and workshops. BCM International and the Pregnancy Help Centre of Durham also hold seminars in churches. Trans World Radio offers internships in computers, administration, engineering, communication and public relationships. MAF (Missionary Aviation Fellowship) Canada also provides internships for future mechanics and pilots. Some mission agencies have also recognized that there are many people who are retiring early from their jobs who have a wealth of experience and skills to offer God’s Kingdom. Finishers Canada is one of those groups as is Trans World Radio that offers opportunities to serve overseas for a portion of each year. Still

¹¹ This comment is not aimed only at the Indian church but all “churches” where the church either turns a blind eye to societal outcasts or worse, oppresses the outcast. The true church will look after the “least of these” Jesus said (Matthew 25:40).

¹² Rick Bradford, interviewed by author via phone, November 8, 2010.

other mission agencies such as Partners International Canada facilitate international trips by church leaders to educate indigenous pastors and missionaries. Likewise, Compassion Canada facilitates trips to countries where they have child sponsorships. Such trips increase the mission heart of church leaders and members alike.

Some mission agencies see such a need for greater partnership between the local church and their mission agency that they hire “Church Relations Directors,” who often divide churches into categories such as sending churches, supporting churches and unconnected churches as does New Tribes Missions Canada. However, the task of partnering with literally hundreds of churches becomes daunting. In talking to an executive with New Tribes Mission Canada, he confided that the “Missionary and Church Relations Department” initiated in 2003 was later disbanded because two of its leaders decided to join the staff of local Canadian churches. The demands of travel and other expectations were too challenging on the church relations staff! Such mission agency efforts to collaborate with local churches should be applauded, but they prove once again that the mission agency is not to be a separate entity from the local church. Too much time and resources are wasted on efforts that are not necessary, such as on “middle men” to mediate the relationship between the mission agency and the local church.¹³ Some mission agencies have resigned themselves to the fact that the relationship with the local church is too difficult for full partnership, so they only request prayer and money from local churches. Prayer is always needed, but this seems more like

¹³ Another problem with having “middle men” acting as liaisons between the mission organization and local church is that it causes the middle men to become solicitors of funding from the churches. Therefore, fund-raising becomes a major focus of mission’s personnel. In contrast, the church’s role is not to fund raise for their mission though the church does receive gifts, tithes and offerings. People are to give money to “God’s storehouse” (Malachi 3:10) whether the church uses for its own ministry or gives it away to others. In other words, churches don’t exist for raising funds whereas one of the major purposes of mission agencies is to raise and manage funds for their missionary personnel.

a spiritually nice way of saying that they are not sure how they can partner with the local church or that they even should partner with the local church. One mission agency executive candidly admitted, “Perhaps we as a mission agency have become too independent?”¹⁴

Despite the author’s frustration with some mission agencies’ lack of evidence in pursuing true partnership with the local church, many mission agencies should be commended for their efforts. A question arises about whether this partnership is truly bi-directional, what about the local church effort to reciprocate such a relationship with the mission agency? In other words, if local church and mission agency are to become partners, what should the local church do to foster this relationship? When posed to mission agencies the question generated a large response full of frustration. The representative from BLF Canada stated:

The long and often frustrating bureaucracy of local church committees of various kinds is the biggest obstacle to planning an evangelistic outreach or literature distribution in a given community. And if the local churches are of different denominations, the frustrations are exponentially multiplied. Many times, a local church will support a missionary overseas that works for a different denomination, but they will absolutely refuse to work on an evangelistic outreach ministry in their community because another denomination is involved.¹⁵

This is not the rant of a person who is anti-church but a former pastor who hoped to see greater Kingdom wide efforts occur through Bible and Literature distribution in francophone communities throughout Canada.

Another missionary executive from Trans World Radio described his observations throughout his life as a missionary. “When I joined the mission twenty five years ago, the

¹⁴ Gary Winger, interview by author via e-mail, October 4, 2010.

¹⁵ Toe-Blake Roy, interview by author via e-mail, September 24, 2010.

relationship was that the local church had a burden for reaching the world and used our mission and many missions like ours to reach the world for Christ. Over the last twenty-five years, we have had less contact with the churches, have less opportunity to speak and share the ministry, there are less mission conferences (hosted by local churches) and seldom are there specific prayer meetings for missions.”¹⁶ BCM International (Canada) also recommended, “The church can become a better partner by making time for mission agencies to come into their services and functions to present opportunities for people to become involved in evangelism.”¹⁷ This oft-repeated comment underscores the desire of mission agencies to promote their work in churches in order to make the biggest impact. In a way, mission agencies look to the churches to enable their mission. The challenge is that some pastors often feel like they are barely being able to keep their congregations motivated for the ministry of their own church so that advertising a potentially competing ministry appears self-defeating. Besides many people come to church today to be inspired, not to hear a “commercial” for ministry.¹⁸ Furthermore, some of the missionaries who present their ministries are not graced with speaking gifts, which is not to make a comment on the effectiveness of missionaries in the place that God has called them to. But their lack of speaking gifts makes it difficult to cast vision and raise support for their ministry. Also, it is the thesis of this project that if the local church sends its own missionaries, who are known and loved by a congregation, many of the shortcomings of their public presentations will be overlooked.

¹⁶ Ray Alary, interview by author via e-mail, October 25, 2010.

¹⁷ Bill Ricketts, interview by author via e-mail, September 27, 2010.

¹⁸ This is not to imply that missionaries do not have inspiring stories to tell. In fact, many of them do. What is not inspiring is to hear only an appeal for money.

As well, the need for mission's education must be addressed. A Partners International representative stated, "In general the Canadian Church does not have the mechanisms in place for the education of their constituents around world mission."¹⁹ Another staff person at OMS (One Mission Society) Canada echoes, "The Church needs to be a place where people are taught missions education."²⁰ One of the factors contributing to these lessened opportunities for mission education by missionaries and mission agencies is that church has become one of many competing interests for people. People, especially in urban centers, are overcommitted as Dr. J. Grant Howard has observed. "Some people can't say no. They take on too many relationships and too many responsibilities. They enroll in too many courses, hold down too many jobs, volunteer for too many tasks, make too many appointments, serve on too many committees, and have too many friends. They are trying to be all things to all men all at once all by themselves."²¹ How much more true is this statement today than when first made 27 years ago? A symptom of such over commitment is that churches are offering fewer services on Sunday night, previously an optimal time for missionaries to highlight their ministry. It is, in part, for this reason that Calvary Baptist Church has not eliminated their Sunday Night service but regularly uses Mission Electives where people can choose to hear a variety of thirty-minute presentations by missionaries.

¹⁹ Brent Mitchell, interview by author via e-mail, October 5, 2010.

²⁰ Ken Yinger, interview by author via e-mail, October 27, 2010.

²¹ J. Grant Howard, *Balancing Life's Demands: A New Perspective on Priorities* (Portland: Multnomah, 1983), 144.

Discoveries about Commissioned Churches

So far, this project has attempted to build a case for the reclamation of the church as mission agent and agency. However, until now, there has been little written about other churches that have attempted to become mission agent and agency. This section will report on other churches who have wrestled with some of the same missiological issues and who have charted a path forward. These churches include Grace Bible Church in Escondido, California, a Reformed Baptist church of about two hundred and fifty attendees, Granger Community Church, a non-denominational multi-site megachurch, in Granger and Elkhart, Indiana, and the hundred and ten member Bridletowne Park Church in Agincourt, Ontario, Canada which has had three missionaries serve on their staff with a mandate to reach out to different ethnic groups in their community.

Grace Bible Church (GBC) began over twenty years ago when Dr. Jim Newheiser and other men who eventually became the elders, had a vision to plant a church. Jim had just graduated from Westminster Theological Seminary in Escondido, California, and was serving as an elder in a church led by, in Jim's own words:

A pastor who was sinfully domineering and had significant anger problems. The elders tried to confront him for the purpose of correction and restoration. He reacted with great fury. We tried to work out the situation (including getting outside counsel), but finally all of the elders (other than the pastor) left (rather than doing public battle), and all but one of us participated in starting GBC. The old church died not long after we left.²²

Since that time, the church has grown to two hundred and fifty people in attendance. It reproduced itself when it sent one of its elders to birth a church in nearby San Diego in 2006. This church plant was recently recognized as self-supporting (though GBC still wants to invest in their ministry by giving them a little less than fifteen percent of their

²² Interview of Jim Newheiser by author via e-mail, January 12, 2011.

income). GBC is unique in that it has a very strong nouthetic counseling²³ ministry entitled the “Institute for Biblical Counseling and Discipleship”²⁴ and believes strongly in the equality of elders. Many churches believe in a plurality of leadership but advocate the role of Senior Pastor or Head Elder because there needs to be “a first among equals.” Not finding this mandate in the New Testament, GBC functions with elders sharing the teaching, care and oversight of the ministry. This leadership structure is interesting to study because it is decentralized whereas most church leadership structures are centralized, but GBC is not unique in its structure as many Brethren churches also share this belief.

What is germane to this project is that GBC is attempting to be a mission agency by identifying, training and sending missionaries from within, including five international missionaries. Why could it be that the culture at GBC encourages a more fertile soil for missionaries? Missionaries tend to be catalysts “who develop an idea, share it with others, lead by example, and operate well in non-hierarchical environments.”²⁵ Most hierarchically structured churches have layers of process for decision-making, which often stifle missionary creativity. However, at GBC, their shared leadership structure welcomes missionary types and allows them a place to exercise leadership giftedness. In

²³ Nouthetic counseling refers to a counseling approach which solely uses the Bible and not other psychology techniques. “Nouthetic” comes from the “New Testament word primarily used by the apostle Paul, translated ‘admonish, correct or instruct.’ This term, which probably best describes Biblical counseling, occurs in such passages as Romans 15:14: ‘I myself am convinced about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and competent to counsel one another.’” (Source: <http://www.nouthetic.org/nouthetic-counseling.html>, accessed January 30, 2011.)

²⁴ Newheiser and the other elders experience in the church whose pastor had significant anger issues might have been one of the reasons why GBC has such a strong counseling ministry today. Our present ministry is often shaped by the trials of our past ministry.

²⁵ Ori Brafman and Rod A. Beckstrom, *The Starfish and The Spider* (New York: Portfolio, 2007), 100.

fact, such a structure encourages “a healthy organization which distributes power to a wider base of people through participation, empowerment and decentralized decision making.”²⁶

GBC also has determined to “send its best men to be missionaries”²⁷ and “will only support individuals who meet the Biblical qualifications for an elder or a deacon. GBC will consider women as missionary candidates to teach women and/or children. In these cases, women should evidence qualifications similar for an elder or deacon. In addition to the Biblical qualifications for elders and deacons, a mission’s candidate will have displayed an ability to successfully plan and accomplish ministry objectives within our local church, and, for deacon candidates will have shown sufficient technical ability in their proposed field of service.”²⁸ What is unique about this policy is that GBC categorizes missionaries as proven elder and deacon types²⁹ “as missionary candidates must participate in ministry as members of GBC for a minimum of two years before receiving support.”³⁰ Often missionaries are expected to display elder like gifting by having the “ability to teach” (1 Timothy 3:2). However, many missionaries do not have such speaking gifts and, in order to categorize them Biblically and make allowance for those who are not elder types, GBC classifies such missionaries as deacons. Biblical precedent for deacons being sent can be found in Philip, described as deacon type in Acts

²⁶ Wilmer, Schmidt and Smith, *The Prospering Parachurch*, 197.

²⁷ “Missions to the Glory of God” Handout, Grace Bible Church, May 24, 2009.

²⁸ Grace Bible Church Missions Policy, November 28, 2004.

²⁹ The term “elder and deacon types” is used because some might serve in such capacities without holding the official elder or deacon title and office.

³⁰ Ibid.

6:3-6, who was later sent by the Holy Spirit to personally explain the gospel to an Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26).

The reason why GBC requires missionaries to have elder and deacon qualifications is that they believe that “the work of missions involves establishment of new churches.”³¹ Their beliefs come from the Book of Acts where “Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust” (Acts 14:23). Therefore, GBC’s missionary development strategy is to develop elders through “home fellowship groups, Sunday School classes, and opportunities to preach on Sunday nights.”³² They also invite Westminster Seminary students to learn ministry through internships while living in apartments at the church. The internship program includes meeting weekly on Sunday afternoons with men in the church to critique the elders’ Sunday morning sermons as well as the interns’ own sermons preached the previous Sunday nights. The internship program also includes a three-year cycle of studying homiletics, counseling and ecclesiology in a highly interactive format. While some interns are seminary students, others are “homegrown” from their church. The goal is for these men to serve in the local church and, as the Spirit leads, be sent out to establish new churches. However, Dr. Newheiser admits that “giving birth is painful and costly”³³ because their church planting strategy involves “taking whoever the church planter wants”³⁴ from their church. With the goal of establishing independent churches, GBC provides on-going care of

³¹ “Missions to the Glory of God” Handout, Grace Bible Church, May 24, 2009.

³² Interview of Jim Newheiser by author via phone, October 22, 2010.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

missionaries and churches until maturity by “pastoring the missionaries through e-mail, Skype/phone conversations and visiting them on the field every two years on average.”³⁵ Such humble and strategic Kingdom-minded thinking has led this to be a unique church that reproduces itself commissionally.

Another church that has spent much time thinking about mission, both locally and globally is Granger Community Church in Granger, Indiana. Granger Community Church was started by Mark Beeson and his wife in their living room in November 1986 as missionary outpost with the goal of “being a church for people who don’t go to church.”³⁶ It experienced significant growth, including expanding to another meeting site in Elkhart, Indiana. The church grew numerically, using many strategies adapted from Bill Hybels and Willow Creek Community Church in Barrington, Illinois along with Rick Warren and his *Purpose Driven Church*³⁷ ideas, until four years ago when the church began to plateau at six thousand attendees, causing church some deep soul searching. The result was a goal of being both attractional and missional, which is why this church is included in this project. Much can be learned from a church that takes time to reflect and adjust how they are doing mission despite seeing so much past fruit. Since they were early adopters of the missional church movement, they have had enough time and experience to make adjustments and teach others, as was the case at the recent AND Conference on

³⁵ Interview of Jim Newheiser via e-mail, December 13, 2010.

³⁶ Granger Community Church website <http://gccwired.com/whoweare> (accessed December 22, 2010).

³⁷ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995). Granger Community Church was the 2000 Purpose Driven Church Health Award winner for attempting to function fully with a purpose.

their Granger, Indiana campus, which the author and his wife attended November 4-5, 2010.

The first observation that one makes upon visiting Granger Community Church (GCC) is that they do everything with excellence, which might be the result of being so intentional and purpose-driven. It was so evident that the church strives for excellence, especially with their media which was very creative and cutting edge. Somehow though, they did not lose being high-touch in their high-tech efforts. Both staff and members were very helpful and wanted to serve us in any way possible. What made this more impressive was that the Senior Pastor was away on Sabbatical so they did not have their leader pushing them to excellence - it was merely a part of their culture as listed as one of their values.³⁸ I say all this not to give a conference report but to highlight that a missional/attractional church needs to have the following characteristics: 1) A missional/attractional church must see people from Jesus' perspective. GCC's first listed value is "The people Jesus values,"³⁹ or put another way, GCC loves the lost. This focus on people has been in the DNA of the church from the beginning and it is encouraging to see that the value has not been lost through years of getting larger. (Maybe that is actually one of the reasons why GCC has grown to the size it has.) In fact, another GCC value that reinforces their focus on people is that they strive for "life-giving relationships."⁴⁰ 2) Missional/attractional churches must value people by striving to understand and engage others' cultures (which could be termed incarnational). GCC accomplishes this in a

³⁸ http://www.gccwired.com/attachments/gcc_vision_values_bookmark.pdf (accessed January 1, 2011).

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

myriad of ways and places as they seek to fulfill their mission of “helping people take their next steps toward Christ...TOGETHER!”⁴¹ In their “Jerusalem” of Granger, Indiana they know that being in a university town (The University of Notre Dame is in nearby South Bend) requires innovation and media to speak their cultural language. GCC’s worship music is particularly hip and multisensory. But in their “Judea,” they attempt to reach a low-income, mostly African-American neighborhood in nearby South Bend through the Monroe Circle Community Center. They provide after-school programs for children and have an African-American staff person overseeing the ministry. Unlike some suburban churches who attempt inner-city ministry by only sending resources, members from GCC have taken ownership of this Kingdom initiative and are personally spending time through serving in that community. The Monroe Circle Community Center is considered an important part of GCC’s ministry and reinforces their value of “community transformation.”⁴² In their “Samaria,” they have held children’s programs, entitled Son City Kids in Chicago, which is two hours away from Granger. Their mission to the “ends of the earth” is solely focused in an area of India where helped start over seven hundred church plants. GCC’s partnership with the local church in India includes on-going training of pastors and community development. How GCC accomplishes this partnership and how it can be adopted by other churches will be discussed in chapter five.

The third characteristic that demonstrates the church’s missional/attractational nature is a heart for the next generation, so obviously displayed in their staff and physical plant. The staff were very youthful with much enthusiasm but were extremely competent

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

so much so that they were the plenary speakers at the AND Conference alongside such speakers as Alan Hirsch, founding Director of Forge Mission Training Network, Matt Carter, Lead Pastor of Austin Stone Community in Austin, Texas and Dave Ferguson, Lead Pastor of Community Christian Church in Naperville, Illinois. The building had an amazing children's center where kids can literally slide into their classrooms downstairs from the main level while being watched by their parents through video cameras. Both their building and staff communicate a desire to reach the next generation. GCC understands "God is using young leaders to plant churches in these strategic culture-making urban centers, which often grow into megachurches as they learn to effectively reach the emerging culture."⁴³ From the beginning of the church, Beeson recruited the brightest young leaders from such places as Taylor University and gave them a lot of responsibility. Now GCC is seeing the fruit of this investment because the younger leaders have remained with the church over fifteen years and have become top level leaders, fully owning and carrying on the mission as the older generations transition to retirement or heaven.

The third church studied was Bridletowne Park Church in Agincourt, Ontario, a unique church because it acted as an agent to the community and opened doors for mission agencies to recent immigrants to Canada. In order to understand this unique relationship between local church and mission agency, interviews were conducted of both the pastor of the church, Trevor Seath,⁴⁴ and the missionary, Guy Freeman.⁴⁵ Guy and his wife Nicki were originally members in Calvary Baptist Church who then commissioned

⁴³ Driscoll, 12.

⁴⁴ Trevor Seath, interview by author via phone, November 30, 2010.

⁴⁵ Guy Freeman, interview by author via phone, November 26, 2010.

them for missionary service, so not only does the author have an insider's view of this relationship, but have been personally invested in its success. In fact, Guy's Master of Theological Studies' thesis at Tyndale Seminary in Toronto, on the relationship between church and parachurch, stimulated the author's thinking about CBC becoming a mission agency.

Bridletowne Park Church's relationship with a mission agency actually began in 2000 with Peter and Rhonda Koropatwa, long-time missionaries with SIM. At the time Pastor Trevor was the interim pastor and the church was struggling with many Caucasian members driving in from the suburbs to Bridletowne. Pastor Trevor saw the need to reach out to Bridletowne's community as was it was becoming increasingly ethnically diverse with new Canadian immigrants so he attended a conference at Morningstar Baptist Church (then Churchill Heights Baptist Church) about reaching new immigrants. Trevor learned, "Today, global missions are local."⁴⁶ Peter Koropatwa was one of the presenters at the conference, along with serving on Staff at Morningstar, but was sensing God leading him to a new assignment. Trevor approached Peter to be a catalyst in helping Bridletowne Park Church reach out to their changing community. Peter and Rhonda stayed for three years and assisted the church in gaining experience with new immigrants. (Notice two things: First, a large church was able to benefit a smaller church lacking the resources to afford a staff member to assist in their mission; and second, retired missionaries can make great catalysts for North American churches wanting to reach their ethnic neighbors. Another idea is to invite effective pastors and missionaries, who North

⁴⁶ Milfred Minatrea, *Shaped by God's Heart – The Passion and Practices of Missional Churches* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 94.

American churches are in partnership with, to come and train us how to reach that particular people group locally.)⁴⁷

After Peter and Rhonda left, there was still need for another missionary to further Bridletowne's effort to bring the Kingdom of God to their neighbors. It was then that Trevor was introduced to Guy Freeman when Trevor investigated potential missionaries at Tyndale Seminary. Guy was working in the Human Resources Department at a multinational technology company while finishing his graduate degree at Tyndale, contemplating God's next call to him and his family. In God's providence, Guy was introduced to Toronto City Mission, who had many years of ministering to the needs of Toronto. Trevor was also familiar with Toronto City Mission⁴⁸ so Guy was invited to become a missionary at Bridletowne with Toronto City Mission. Toronto City Mission provided Guy with much needed networking with other missionaries reaching the most cosmopolitan city in the world.⁴⁹ Guy and Nicki moved to Bridletowne Park community in 2003 to join the staff as the Director of Community Services. Though not initially intended, Guy was able to see the challenge new immigrants experienced of trying to find jobs so he used his experience and skills in Human Resources to assist these new immigrants in employment mentoring. Trust was built up within the community and other opportunities for ministry such as serving in the Parent/Teacher Association at the local school, benefited the church's efforts of starting after-school programs and summer

⁴⁷ CBC has attempted this strategy of inviting mission "experts" from around the world to train us how to reach our ethnic neighbors at our annual Missions Conference.

⁴⁸ Trevor Seath presently sits on the Board of Toronto City Mission.

⁴⁹ Toronto has been labelled "the most cosmopolitan city in the world" because it has the most foreign born residents represented by every nation on earth. (Source: http://namun.org/?page_id=221 accessed January 30, 2011.)

day camps. At the same time, Guy was not an independent operator from the church but was able to use the name of the church to demonstrate commitment to the local community as opposed to being a “commuter” minister. In Guy’s words, “Wearing the church hat and the mission hat opens two set of doors and created a natural relationship of discipleship.”⁵⁰ This is extremely important to note because one can conclude that in order to have an effective commissional ministry, that ministry has to be incarnational.

In talking to Guy and Trevor separately, I observed that these two ministers of the Gospel have enjoyed a close camaraderie. They worked hard from the outset to determine whether they were a good fit and could have a profitable working relationship. They clarified this relationship through a Memorandum of Understanding⁵¹ (MOU) which outlined what Guy would do and what the church would provide, such as an office, volunteers to assist the missionary, and access to administrative needs such as photocopying. More importantly, the MOU communicated that the local church provided the vision, a key insight into how the local church becomes a mission agency – the local church must drive the vision. All the while, for there to be a true partnership, the missionary and their mission agency must be aligned with the local church’s vision. What will not work is if the local church tries to outsource the ministry that they do not like or want to do. God calls the church to get their hands dirty by doing the hard work of ministering to those others in society overlook.

The story of Bridletowne’s journey towards being a commissional church would be interesting enough if it ended with Guy and Nicki serving alongside Trevor and

⁵⁰ Guy Freeman, interview by phone, November 26, 2010.

⁵¹ Trevor remarked that MOUs are hardly ever read after they are signed. Apparently, MOUs clarify the relationship of the partnership at the front end but since the relationship is dynamic, continual communication is the best defence against misunderstanding and vision division.

Bridletowne Park Church. However, that is not the conclusion of the story! Bridletowne realized a need to not only target adults and children but teenagers in the community as well. This time the church turned to Youth Unlimited (formerly known as Youth for Christ) for assistance. In concert with Youth Unlimited, they recruited Alain Virgin to become their Community Youth Pastor⁵² co-hire between Youth Unlimited and Bridletowne Park Church with Alain considered an employee of Youth Unlimited. Bridletowne has found it easier for the missionary to have one direct report, while still maintaining accountability through semi-annual reviews with the mission agency, which benefits all concerned. As Guy reflected on the past he explains the rationale for missionaries having one direct report, “It may seem that in a partnership between the local church and mission agency that the missionary would receive double the amount of accountability. However, this is not the case as both the local church and mission agency can assume the other is doing the accountability.”⁵³

Another factor to be considered is that the church-based missionary can benefit more than one local church as long as the local churches have a Kingdom mindset and are not competitive with one another. This may be a solution to the dilemma of how smaller like-minded churches can cooperate with one another to be a mission agency, if they cannot become one on their own. Nevertheless, both Trevor and Guy agreed that the

⁵² Trevor intimated to the author that one of the challenges Alain has faced is having two different groups of youth to serve – the unchurched and the churched. Since these two groups do not mix well, Alain has had to prioritize a target group, which in this case, as a missionary, has been the unchurched youth. There has been some resistance by parents and teens in the church to this focus, but this once again reveals that the commission by Jesus requires the church to serve others before itself. In fact, maturity of believers, even teenagers, will occur when they see their role as bringing the Kingdom to others at their own expense! Nevertheless, if the group’s vitality is threatened by unruly youth, then the church may have to adjust their programming.

⁵³ Ibid.

missionary should attend the local church they are formally in partnership with and intermittently be seconded to other churches for assistance.

Discoveries about Missionaries

Though the scope of this project did not include interviewing missionaries, two discoveries surfaced the first from Rick Bradford of SIM. He exposed the common thinking within churches that many missionaries are lazy. However, nothing is further from the truth for the vast majority of missionaries. As this author has observed both overseas and locally, missionaries are self-motivated and work hard in their Kingdom assignments. That is also the experience of physician Dr. Richard Swenson:

“Missionaries, for example, are sometimes the most exhausted people you would ever want to meet...When you combine missionary conscientiousness with imported Americanized schedules, and home-office expectations with Third-World need, climate, and disease, burnout is an ever-present risk.”⁵⁴ An outcome of this discovery is that for the church to be a responsible mission agency, we need to emphasize the weekly Sabbath principle⁵⁵ and the importance of rest to our missionaries. (Genesis 2:2-3)

The second discovery about missionaries came from some research conducted by one of CBCs ministry assistants, Carol Bukoski. The research was attempting to discover what percentage of our missionaries’ total support is funded by CBC. The impetus for this question is to understand how much obligation missionaries will have to their supporters. For example, if missionaries are only receiving a minimal amount of support

⁵⁴ Richard A. Swenson, *Margin – Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial, and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1992), 98.

⁵⁵ Unlike the Old Testament, the New Testament does not mandate the Sabbath as a set day or the seventh day of the week. However, since the Sabbath is grounded in the Creation pattern of six days of work and one day of rest, the principle must still be practiced weekly. For example, if a missionary ministers on Sunday, they should take a day of rest on another day of the week.

from a local church, they cannot be expected to consider that local church their agency. This is not to imply that churches can purchase missionaries with their support like a professional sports team does with “free agents,” but to acknowledge the reality that missionaries will feel compelled to spend time and energy with their supporters. Therefore, for a church to be a mission agency they must invest significant ministry dollars in their missionaries so they will not have to raise support elsewhere, which will probably require local churches supporting fewer missionaries at higher levels.

So what does an established church do with their currently supported missionary force? Many missionaries are supported at only minimal levels of their full needs. For example, CBC supports forty-two missionary individuals or couples. Of these, only four missionary couples are supported at thirty percent or more of their need, while the rest of our missionaries receive ten percent or less of their need from CBC. One factor determining support is that we distinguish between missionaries commissioned at CBC. Of the four missionary couples above the thirty percent level, two are supported slightly above thirty percent; one is supported at nearly fifty percent of their need and the other at seventy percent of their need. This means that even our commissioned missionaries have to raise support elsewhere and will need to be responsive to their other supporters. The one exception is Graydon and Sarah Baker who we recently commissioned as missionaries to our local university campus. Graydon and Sarah receive seventy percent of their support from CBC, which is the beginning of a paradigm shift in our mission’s philosophy to become a mission agency and support local missionaries. Nevertheless, CBC is not prepared to dismiss the relationships it already has with its missionaries.

Reflection and Discussion Questions

1. What assumptions did you have about mission agencies and missionaries before you read this chapter?
2. What did you discover about mission agencies and missionaries in reading this chapter?
3. What are the major obstacles that mission agencies and local churches need to overcome to accomplish the Great Commission together?
4. What characteristics or practices could your church adopt from some of the commissional churches described in this chapter?

CHAPTER FOUR – A Strategy for Creating a Disciple-Making Movement

Small Groups as a Catalyst for Making Disciples and Identifying Leaders

In Chapter Two there was a case built from Scripture that small groups were the strategy Jesus employed to make disciples. Therefore, there is no need to repeat the use of small groups as Jesus' discipleship strategy here in this section. We can move on to answer the question of how small groups can be the catalyst for making disciples and identifying leaders. Veteran Christians who were raised in the church might be skeptical of such a statement because they have either been discipled using other methods such as Sunday School or have attended small groups and found them to be a source of fellowship and support but not a catalyst for making disciples. Both Sunday School and "fellowship" groups are beneficial to spiritual growth but usually emphasize education and edification of the saints not the evangelism of society. As stated earlier, the North American church is in decline and so it is time to evaluate the methods being employed in discipleship or the lack of it. The thesis of this project emphasizes that a lack of missionality is the cause of this decline. Mission produces maturity as demonstrated by Jesus' juxtaposition of asking the Father to mature His disciples as He sends them out for mission, "Sanctify them by the truth ... As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world" (John 17:17-18). A more holistic approach is for churches to consider commissional small groups, which form as believers attempt to incarnate themselves into their community, school, workplace, and neighbourhood by living out the Kingdom of God. Commissional groups meet as a base camp for Kingdom advancement. Unlike

many small groups found in churches¹, such small groups are not composed exclusively of Christians but also include pre-Christians.

The foundation for missional groups is located in Matthew 10:1-16 when Jesus called His twelve disciples and sent them out, then again in Luke 10:1-20 where Jesus sent seventy-two of His followers² in pairs to prepare a way in the place “he was about to go” (Luke 10:1). The first action of these seventy-two was to pray to the Lord of the Harvest to send out more workers into the fields. Prayer is understandable because it evidences our shortcomings and our need for God’s intervention. However, the nature of Jesus’ command is peculiar. Why would Jesus send disciples out and then command them to literally “beg” (δεήθητε, deithete) Him to send forth workers? You would think the original Sender does not need to be begged to send more workers; as if the Lord of the Harvest was stingy with His harvest workers. However, what if the prayer for more workers is answered, not from the already existing workers, who are declared to be few (Luke 10:2), but from those created out of the harvest? Neil Cole believes this and has seen many workers found in the harvest by “making it a daily practice of begging God for souls and for workers for the harvest, from the harvest.”³ If this is the case, then the church which is a minority group has a force of new harvest workers in the harvest field already; they just need to morph from the harvest field into harvest workers.

¹ Scott Boren insightfully remarks, “Normal small groups seem to focus on supporting the individuals and helping individuals live in ways that we assume God will bless instead of blessing the world around them.” (*Missional Small Groups*, 22)

² If Jesus sent out only the apostles to proclaim peace and that the Kingdom of God was near (Matthew 10:7, 12-13), then this might be considered idiosyncratic and not to be applied today. However, since Jesus repeated this tactic with seventy-two other disciples (Luke 10:1), it elevates strategy to the level of being mandated for all disciples of Christ.

³ Cole, *Organic Church*, 174. When Cole started this daily practice of praying for workers in December 2003 there were forty-two church planters in his association and in just under a year the association increased to more than eighty.

How is this accomplished? Jesus' method of sending out His initial followers is instructive. Disciple-making duos were to go to a house and "first say, 'Peace to this house'" (Luke 10:5). This would be an unusual greeting to say to our neighbors in the North American context, but is becoming less so due to the many immigrants who would gladly receive such a greeting in their home countries, especially Muslims. Case in point is the request by some immigrants to come to their new house to bless it.⁴ Nevertheless, the words "peace to this house" may be more about the principle of offering peace to a home than the actual words. Disciple makers should, therefore, endeavour to bring peace to the home they visit. They should go in pairs, which could include husband and wife teams in their own neighbourhood, or Christian individuals partnering together to go to a certain community. However, the home or locale should not be randomly chosen.

Disciple makers should seek the "man of peace" in the community, "the non-Christian in the community who will be able to point you to the people who most need to hear the message of hope."⁵ In other words, these "persons of peace" either embrace the message of peace or would grant access to the messenger of peace to the community using their influence and credibility. Jesus modeled this approach in going to Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), the Samaritan woman (John 4), and the Gerasene Demoniac (Mark 5:1-20), who all had bad reputations, which made their salvation all the more attractive. Such people did not seem "persons of peace" but became so because they knew Jesus had something they did not and they wanted it. The Apostles followed Jesus' model and command as they went to the Gentiles and saw God's salvation work in Lydia and her

⁴ In his nearly fifteen years of pastoral ministry, the author has been invited to pray a blessing on somebody's home on numerous occasions, all of them from recent immigrants. Muslims also embrace the greeting, "Peace to this house."

⁵ Ibid, 187.

household (Acts 16:11-15), along with Cornelius and his household (Acts 11:11-18). The Holy Spirit's targeted mission of saving the Ethiopian Eunuch through Philip could also be an example of seeking the "man of peace" since the Eunuch was a person of influence as demonstrated by Luke's description as "an important official in charge of all the treasury of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians" (Acts 8:27).

Such an approach differs from many present day evangelism strategies because it is much more targeted toward people of influence. This would be akin to fishing with a depth finder for "leader fish"⁶ then casting your nets overboard to catch a whole school of fish, a metaphor used by Jesus in His promise to make His disciples fishers of men (Matthew 4:19-20). However, we should be cautious not to equate people of influence as only targeting the rich and powerful. Persons of peace could have economic means but more importantly, have relational means or connections.⁷

The "seeking of the person of peace" approach also differs from other evangelism strategies because it is not initially evangelism. Thus, it should prove more effective because many in our culture are not prepared to hear the Gospel. They are hardened and need to be softened by the Kingdom of God affecting their lives. Therefore, the goal is simply to offer peace and if received, the disciple-making duo should stay in that setting (Luke 10:6-7). When the discipleship duo starts to gather non-Christians together, this

⁶ There is such a phenomenon as "leader fish" as discovered by MIT scientists studying spawning Atlantic Herring on the Georges Bank in 2009. "The schools start migrating, extending up to 40 kilometers (25 mi) across the ocean, to shallow parts of the bank. There they spawn during the night. In the morning, the fish school back to deeper water again and then disband. Small groups of leaders were also discovered that significantly influenced much larger groups." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shoaling_and_schooling#cite_note-PhysOrg-45 (accessed January 14, 2011.)

⁷ Secular literature has recognized "persons of peace" without acknowledging Jesus as the first to identify such people. Gladwell describes them as in one of three categories, "connectors, mavens and salesman." (*The Tipping Point*, 30.) Brafman and Beckstrom identify these people as "catalysts." (*The Starfish and the Spider*, 107.)

forms a missional small group! The missional small group is to demonstrate compassion for the physical needs of the community and illustrates, “The Kingdom of God is near you” (Luke 10:8). Missional small groups will often express availability to their neighbors “*before* any need arises.”⁸ After the Kingdom of God is lived out and tangibly demonstrated, God will send harvesters (evangelists⁹) to offer the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to that community. (It is at this point that a word of caution is needed. Power over Satan and sickness is not something we are to rejoice in (Luke 10:20), but merely evidence of the Kingdom of God.)

To summarize, the simple¹⁰ strategy is for every Christian family or small group to seek out persons of peace and live out together the Kingdom of God in visible ways in their homes and neighbourhood,¹¹ workplaces, schools and proximity places. Specifically, this involves practicing hospitality, being in each other’s homes and sharing meals together (Romans 12:13). Understandably, each “person of peace” will have a limited and different level of influence but enough for God to use him or her as a bridge to His Kingdom. Like Paul and Barnabas, God will use the leadership and spiritual gifts within the “missional group” to do His work in visible ways. These “visible ways” will be living out all that Jesus commanded and will tangibly bless the community based on its specific needs. It mostly likely would not require moving locations but will require

⁸ Boren, 135.

⁹ Often the one sent to a new community to proclaim peace is also the one who further proclaims the gospel and functions as both “apostle” (missionary) and “evangelist.”

¹⁰ Sometimes the most effective strategy is the simplest as Thom Rainer and Eric Geiger demonstrate in *Simple Church* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006).

¹¹ Scott Boren argues that discipleship must occur in all areas of one’s life and therefore to disciple people outside of the family context is to not disciple the person in the environment in which they truly reside. Consequently, discipleship should occur in the home and neighborhood because “the whole person begins to come out, and connections begin to occur that otherwise cannot be explained.” (Boren, 123.)

a love for one's neighbor(s) through sacrificially serving them while waiting for the Holy Spirit to rescue those He chooses from the dominion of darkness. Imagine the privilege of seeing one's neighbor baptized and become mature by following the commands of the King (Matthew 28:19-20). This may seem like a simplistic plan but it appears Jesus does not want making disciples to be a difficult, complex process.

Encouraging His disciples to seek the "man of peace" evidences the brilliance of Jesus as He redeems God-given leaders outside of His Kingdom to exercise leadership in His Kingdom. We do not find in Scripture that leaders are to be made,¹² only disciples. Leaders are God-given influencers whether they use that ability for the Kingdom of God or not. As the Psalmist reminds us, "No one from the east or the west or from the desert can exalt a man" (Psalm 75:6). In God's economy and redemptive plan, He selects leaders, saves them and then reorients them to Kingdom thinking and living for His glory. The church will then affirm their gifts and calling to do mission after they are time-tested and faithful in their service and doctrine (Acts 13:1-3). This Kingdom leadership development strategy differs from the world in that there are no volunteers, only selections in Kingdom leadership. Being a Kingdom leader requires total submission of one's life to the reign of King Jesus. In other words, a Kingdom leader must lead well at home, church and in the community. The qualifications of an overseer, as found in First Timothy 3:2-5, would be an example:

Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of

¹² There is great debate as to whether leaders are born or made, but rather than enter that debate, I suggest we agree that leaders are God-given. Two verses that declare leaders are God-given are Daniel 2:21, "he sets up kings and deposes them" and Romans 13:1, "for there is no authority except that which God has established."

money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)

Following these qualifications, along with those found later on in 1 Timothy 3 of a deacon, is the grid for identifying leaders.¹³ If a person finds that as they follow Christ others are following him, than that person is a leader, as Paul declared, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). Pray that the Lord of the Harvest sends people, watch for them and then affirm their leadership!

Training Leaders through Mentoring and Internships

If God is the only one who creates leaders, then the church's role is to identify and affirm their gifts and specific calling, along with assisting the leader develop their giftedness. Development of leaders will not happen unless it is done intentionally, though it is possible for emerging leaders to learn from more experienced leaders through observation. In other words, more can be "caught than taught" but this does not diminish the need for intentional training. Scripture teaches that those with leadership gifts must literally "mend the nets"¹⁴ (fill in the gaps) for God's people (Ephesians 4:12). How this specifically occurs is through an experienced leader inviting an identified leader into their life and ministry. The protégé will make himself available for prayer, answer any and all questions, invite the protégé into his home to observe how he lives in the family context,¹⁵ have the protégé shadow him while ministering¹⁶ and also give the protégé

¹³ A more detailed evaluation of potential leaders can be found in Appendix D: "What is Spiritual Leadership?" (pages 143-144).

¹⁴ καταρτισμὸν used in Ephesians 4:12 is the noun form of verb καταρτίζοντας used in Matthew 4:21 describing James and John "preparing" (NIV) or "mending" (KJV) their nets.

¹⁵ One of the best examples of a mentor inviting a protégé into his life is C.J. Mahaney who had Joshua Harris live in his home. Harris eventually took over the role of lead pastor from Mahaney at the four

responsibilities that can be overseen by the mentor. The old adage, “Watch me, then let’s do it together and then you do it yourself” is still a good approach to mentoring and a concept more fully developed on pages 158-159 in Appendix D: “How to Train an Apprentice.”¹⁷

Two of the greatest challenges to mentoring are time and the leadership’s unwillingness to return to entry-level ministry basics. The author was taught as a teenager that you make time for what you really want to do. Therefore, a leader must ask whether they really want to devote the time to mentor others in fulfillment of Ephesians 4:11-12. Hopefully, this thesis project has convinced them of the need to make disciples and train leaders. The second challenge to mentoring is a leader’s unwillingness to return to entry-level basics. As leaders age, they get consumed with ministry demands and some find circling back to ministry “potholes” long since passed as speed-bumps. Sadly, some seasoned leaders’ standards are so high that they forget that their role is to invest in and equip younger leaders for ministry. Jim Newheiser identifies this sentiment by observing:

As the elders of a church mature the standard of eldership rises as the years go by. Supposing the original elders’ average age was 33 when a new work started. Ten or fifteen years later they all are older and have much more experience. When men come along in the church that would have been qualified when the church began, they seem young and immature compared to the original batch of elders who have been maturing since then.¹⁸

thousand member Covenant Life Church in Gaithersburg, Maryland. (Joshua Harris, *Dug Down Deep*, Sisters: Multnomah Books, 2010, 28.)

¹⁶ The best example I have witnessed firsthand of “shadowing” is Dr. Gerry Kroll having a desk for Nathan Smith in his office at Heritage Baptist Church in Lynchburg, VA, as Smith is being groomed to be Kroll’s successor.

¹⁷ Though the focus of apprenticeship in Appendix D is for small group leaders the principles can be adapted for other ministry apprenticeship.

¹⁸ Interview of Jim Newheiser by author via e-mail, January 14, 2011.

Somehow seasoned leaders need to remember the days of their youth and see entry level leaders as worthy of being developed as they once were.

It would be good to remember that mentoring and internships are not intended for the benefit of a specific church but the emerging leader. As Colin Marshall reminds:

If you pour your time into people, and mentor and train them, the consequence will often be that some of your best people – in whom you have invested countless hours – will leave you...A commitment to the growth of the gospel will mean that we train people towards maturity not for the benefit of our own church churches or fellowships but for the benefit of Christ's kingdom.¹⁹

Remember, as well, that you are not recruiting or hiring a younger leader to do the work that you do not want to do. Nevertheless, the church and the mentor will benefit immensely, as discovered in the next section the story of how the leadership of Calvary Baptist Church embraced the Scriptural mandate to mentor (Ephesians 4:11ff; Titus 2:1ff).

The Story of Calvary Baptist Church's Launch towards Mission Agency

The story of Calvary Baptist Church's launch towards mission agency is unique in the sense that our church had a vision to reach the local university campus so we grew and sent a missionary to the campus to make that vision a reality. Calvary's commissioning impulse for college students had been growing for many years as a desire to reach those attending Durham College. This desire increased greatly when residents of the Durham region (just east of Toronto) recognized:

¹⁹ Marshall and Payne, 83.

Durham was the only high-population area in the province without its own university, so prominent figures in the community worked to realize their vision for a student-focused institution dedicated to great teaching, groundbreaking research, and the use of leading-edge learning technology. The University of Ontario Institute for Technology welcomed its first class of nine hundred and forty students in September 2003. Full-time enrolment reached fifteen thousand in 2010.²⁰

Around the same time the university was breaking ground, Rick Baker became Senior Pastor of CBC. He and the church leadership saw an opportunity to reach the students but no one could have guessed at the tremendous growth and international flavor.

In 2005, CBC's then Student Ministries Pastor, Jon Grant, felt led by God to plant a church two hours away in Grimsby, Ontario, which meant that the college ministry needed oversight, so it was decided to move this ministry to Adult Ministries and the author's care. It soon became apparent that assistance was needed in this ministry. It was then, that Graydon Baker came back to Oshawa from a year of serving with Campus for Christ in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. Before that, Graydon had been a student leader at the University of Guelph in Guelph, Ontario, and was a proven leader among university students. The author had known Graydon since he was five years old, when his father served as Associate Pastor at Emmanuel Baptist Church in Chatham, Ontario, so ministry chemistry was not an issue.

Graydon was working in the landscaping business to pay off university debts and served as young adults leader at our church. The author sensed that Graydon was not fully stewarding his spiritual and leadership gifts and knew there was a great need to extend the Kingdom of God to the university. The author decided to make a proposal that Graydon become a paid intern at Calvary Baptist Church with the focus on missions. The proposal (see Appendix C) was first presented to the pastoral team, then the Missions

²⁰ <http://www.uoit.ca/EN/main2/about/232138/history.html> (accessed January 7, 2011).

Committee, followed quickly by our Personnel Committee. After approval, the proposal was made to our Deacons who approved Graydon as an intern. The author was given responsibility for supervising and mentoring Graydon for the first year of his internship using the template found in Appendix E.

One of the first actions when Graydon came on staff was to offer his services to Campus Church,²¹ a Christian student club on the Durham College/UOIT campus. The author had built up a relationship with the leaders of Campus Church by being invited with other representatives of local churches to become shareholders in their ministry. CBC even had the joy of some of the students in this student club begin attending worship services and a Young Adults class. What is important to note is that God had already been working through Campus Church, a club which exists to see their campus “experiencing the fullness, purpose and truth of Jesus Christ in their lives.”²² The club had been running for four years when the author approached the Campus Church about seconding Graydon to them. Campus Church was the groundbreaker for the Kingdom of God on the UOIT campus.

Campus Church accepted the offer by inviting Graydon to train their Bible study leaders. This began Graydon’s official involvement with Campus Church and CBC’s first attempt to be a church that served a parachurch ministry. (Many in CBC had been involved as individuals in such local ministries as The Refuge, Gate 3:16 – a ministry to the homeless, the Durham Crisis Pregnancy Centre and St. Vincent’s Kitchen – a ministry to feed the poor, but CBC had never served the parachurch through official

²¹ Though the name Campus Church may lead one to believe it is a church, they do not function or see themselves as church but encourage students to attend local Bible-believing churches.

²² http://home.campuschurch.ca/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=46&Itemid=28 (accessed January 7, 2011).

church leaders. It was the service of these individuals who served as a grassroots springboard to prepare Calvary for future corporate commissional ministry.) As in any ministry, it took time for trust to be built up between Campus Church and Graydon. A huge step forward was an initiative called the “Does God Exist Debate?” in January 2009. This debate was between apologist/pastor Joe Boot and Christopher diCarlo, a professor of Science and Ethics at UOIT. Due to Graydon’s experience on other campuses with organizing big events, and the willingness for Campus Church to follow his guidance, this debate had twenty-five hundred people in attendance, creating a huge stir on the campus. Follow-up was coordinated by Campus Church.

In the fall of 2009, Graydon collaborated with Campus Church to start “Church on Tap,” a monthly church service for students not used to church. Held in a bar on campus that was closed on Sundays the service centered around hot topics such as pornography, self-harm,²³ the end of religion, and why God allows suffering? There were consistently over one hundred students attending and, more importantly, non-Christians who were investigating some of the truth claims of Christ as believers engaged in conversations with them. Exciting - but by the spring 2010, Calvary’s ministry to UOIT campus was at a crossroads. Graydon’s two year internship was drawing to a close and he was seeking God’s next steps for him, in concert with the pastoral team who did not want to see the gains made for the Kingdom by Calvary’s ministry to the campus lost. One of those next steps was Graydon’s marriage to Sarah Hoogsteen, who also had been the student leader of Campus for Christ at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario for the

²³ For those unfamiliar with the term, it usually means “cutting” or self-mutilation, though youth specialist Brett Ullman broadly defines self-harm as anything self-destructive such as alcohol-abuse, drug-abuse, eating disorders, addiction to pornography and sexual immorality. <http://www.brettullman.com/talks/your-story-the-wounding-embrace.html> (accessed January 8, 2011.)

past few years. As CBC's leaders sought the Lord, it became apparent that Graydon and now Sarah were being called to the UOIT campus as missionaries. However, the ministry to the campus could only occur if CBC continued to have a good relationship with Campus Church since they provided the entry point for ministry at UOIT. The concern though was that Campus Church wanted to maintain their autonomy and understandably did not want to align with a single local church. Campus Church had rebuffed attempts by other churches and university ministries such as Campus for Christ and InterVarsity to come on the campus. So, despite the huge investment CBC had made both in financial and personnel resources to Campus Church, CBC had to enter negotiations about Graydon being a missionary on campus and what relationship he would have with Campus Church. The process went well because it caused the leadership at CBC to evaluate our motivations for our vision to the UOIT campus. The choice was to either maintain control of the vision or become a servant to Campus Church. What was even more challenging was that the students were young and did not have a lot of outside counsel so CBC had to help them understand what ministry partnerships might look like. This is an important issue because the choice between control and servanthood is a major determining factor if a local church is to become a mission agent and agency in the pattern of Jesus who was submissive and became a servant to God's mission. It will also require leading others toward partnership without being the dominant party. This is true servant leadership which must be demonstrated by the church as "the pillar and foundation of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15), all the while serving others.

After much negotiation with Campus Church, a partnership was agreed upon where Graydon would become a missionary to the campus and work alongside Campus

Church, but not for them. Graydon would not be considered their “Campus Director” but instead assist them when invited. At the same time, Graydon would fashion his own ministry to international students as part of CBC’s vision. So far the partnership has progressed extremely well because of the defined relationship between CBC and Campus Church. More importantly, the cooperative spirit of Campus Church to see the Kingdom of God extended at UOIT, and knowing they needed help to fulfill this mission, enabled such smooth collaboration.

However, the other perspective is CBC’s attempt to become a mission agency. In order for Graydon to be a missionary sent to minister on campus, on behalf of CBC’s vision, CBC needed to become Graydon’s mission agency. But this was a completely new paradigm for CBC. The challenge was that Graydon is the Senior Pastor’s son so a question of whether the pastoral team could hold Graydon accountable due to that conflict of interest was a major obstacle to overcome. Options were researched and the pastoral team soon became aware of a program entitled “Cultural Connections,” provided by SIM, where a missionary would serve to reach the nations living here in Canada. SIM would function as the agency for the missionary but churches could provide management of the missionary. Having SIM as Graydon and Sarah’s mission agency helped alleviate people’s fears so that, on October 31, 2010, Calvary Baptist Church commissioned Graydon and Sarah Baker as missionaries to the UOIT campus.²⁴ In a sense, having SIM as Graydon and Sarah’s mission agency is a hybrid between the church being the Mission Agency and a mission organization providing benefits to the church and missionary. A

²⁴ On January 16, 2011 Graydon soft-launched Marketplace Church in the UOIT cafeteria. Sadly, the next week the UOIT administration decided against having a church on their campus so Graydon found the “man of peace” in some non-Christian Turkish students who live in a house just off-campus and have allowed Marketplace Church to meet there.

pure model of church as mission agency is yet to be fully developed but this is a step in the right direction. The next section will describe what a pure model of the church being a mission agency might look like.

An Emerging Paradigm with the Local Church as Mission Agency

It is tempting to think that this project is creating a “new paradigm” with the local church as mission agency, but Solomon’s words still ring true, “There is nothing new under the sun.” (Ecclesiastes 1:9) In reality, this project hopes to imitate the “model of Mother Theresa, who created Missionaries of Charity, a decentralized organization that has spread out to one hundred and thirty-three countries, while still working within the confines of an ancient, hierarchical organization.”²⁵ Before we can reach the whole world, we need to beg God for harvest workers, train them, and then send them out using the cyclical harvest strategy described in Chapter Two. This is summarized well in the fall 2010 global vision of Harvest Bible Fellowship, “Pray! Plant! Reap! Repeat!”²⁶

Before a church can become a mission agency, they need to become convinced from Scripture that this is an important mandate of a church. Therefore, the process of becoming a local church based mission agency requires that the church study the Scriptures to discover the practices and principles of Jesus and the Apostles. It is recommended that the church leadership study the Gospels and the Book of Acts and ask the question: what practices and methods did Jesus and the Apostles employ in doing mission? Then, after the church leadership has determined that God wants them to be a local-church based ministry, they need to ask what that might look like in their

²⁵ Brafman and Beckstrom, *The Starfish and The Spider*, 213.

²⁶ Taken from an e-mail received from Harvest Bible Fellowship, August 25, 2010.

community and across the globe. They would have to start teaching their people what they have learned so that the congregation embraces this new set of values. If the church is already supporting missionaries, they will have to decide whether they want to invite supporting missionaries to make that church their exclusive mission agency. The missionary would then face the difficult challenge of stopping support from other churches and receiving full support from their sending church (or the majority of support from their sending church and possibly other churches in the same geographic location as the sending church.) Churches would also have to spend time in conversation with mission agencies about how they can partner with that local church and missionary. It goes without saying that some mission organizations will see this move as a hostile takeover of their organization, or at least see the church as a “head hunter” taking their best people. The only way to circumvent this potential conflict is to place the decision on the missionary and make the transition a gradual process so mission organizations and other churches could adjust to this new paradigm or create a partnership such as CBC has done with SIM and Graydon.

Another consideration for the local church as mission agency if they already support missionaries would be the dedication of time and money for a staff person to oversee the care of the missionaries. Most likely, this would mean creating a staff role for a retired or experienced missionary, gifted in administration, who can empathize with missionaries and know best how to serve them. This mission staff person would require ministry dollars allocated for visiting missionaries abroad while simultaneously being a connection to the local church for the missionary and vice versa. The danger of such an approach is that the congregation will once again perceive missions as the responsibility

of a professional staff person and not embrace missions as something we all are called to do. The remedy for overcoming such thinking is for the staff person to be a pastor who sees his role to “prepare God’s people to do the work of ministry/missions” (Ephesians 4:12). Such Missions Pastors should be a catalyst for more commissioning endeavours and teams sent. Of course, only larger churches would be able to afford or need such a staff person since most likely smaller churches could manage and care for one or two missionary couples. However, perhaps a partnership between smaller local churches to share a “pastor to our missionaries” could be created.

If a local church or new church plant does not have any supported missionaries, then the process becomes much easier. The church’s leadership will still need to go through process of studying the Scriptures and become convinced of the need to become a local church mission agency. Then what follows is the all-important work of reorienting the church to embrace their role as mission agency and take ownership of the mission. Subsequently, the church will have to determine what locales God is calling them to target commissionally. They will need to pray for God to send forth workers who have apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, pastoral and teaching leadership gifts. A suggestion would be to first of all determine community needs by seeking “persons of peace” as outlined earlier in this chapter. Then they would send mentored teams with those spiritual and leadership gifts that best fulfill the needs of that community. After God saves people in that targeted community to a point of critical mass, a church would be birthed, and this new church would repeat the same process. Oversight of these “missionaries” and church planters would eventually have to be managed, so it would be best to begin with a single missionary and one strategically focused mission vision.

Specific Action Steps for Churches to Become Commissioned

1. **PRAY!** Pray what Jesus commanded His followers to pray, “Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Matthew 9:38; Luke 10:2). Beg the Lord to send forth workers into the mission field both locally and globally. Make this a priority prayer item at leadership gatherings, worship services, small groups, and prayer meetings.
2. **FAST!** Understanding the gravity of the reality that many people in this world are heading toward a Christ-less eternity in Hell, there should be regular days of fasting for the lost and for God to set apart people for strategic missional assignments, both locally and globally (Acts 13:1-3). It is the recommendation of this author that one day a month be set aside for the whole church to engage in “missional fasting.” Those who cannot fast from food due to health issues may choose to fast from something else that day in order to devote more time to prayer.
3. **IDENTIFY PEOPLE WITH THE LEADERSHIP GIFTS OF APOSTLE, PROPHET, EVANGELIST, PASTORS, AND TEACHERS!** All of these leadership gifts are needed to build up the Body of Christ so that it becomes mature and can reproduce (Ephesians 4:11-12). Potential pastors and teachers might be easier to identify since the Church has had a relatively solid record of finding such people.²⁷ However, apostles, prophets, and evangelists may be more difficult to identify. Look for “mavericks” (not rebels) who “think outside of the box,” who are visionaries, have a deep desire to reach the lost, bear spiritual fruit, live holy and sacrificial lives and are submissive to the leadership of a local church. The local church should be able to identify these people but could find confirmation of leader’s giftedness using an on-line assessment at <http://www.theforgottenways.org/apest/> developed by Alan Hirsch. Once identified, train those with these gifts using the internship model described in this project.
4. **IDENTIFY A PEOPLE GROUP WITHOUT A GOSPEL WITNESS!** Following the same attitude of the Apostle Paul, seek God for a place where the Gospel has not been preached (Romans 15:20).²⁸ Such places can be presently found through The Joshua Project (www.joshuaproject.net) and Etnopedia (www.etnopedia.org). Adopt this people group through prayer, then start investigating what local indigenous churches might be in that region who your church may be able to partner with in a common mission. Contacting The Mission Exchange (<http://www.themissionexchange.org/>) or other missions leaders could be an initial step in this process. After an indigenous church is identified, establish a relationship with them, resource them strategically with the gifts and abilities that your church can provide including theological training

²⁷ The term “people” is used as opposed to exclusively men since some women may demonstrate pastoral gifts without having the office of pastor and elder, which is reserved only for men. (For a more detailed explanation of the role of women in the Church, see Appendix F: The New Order.)

²⁸ Though most unreached people groups will be found internationally, there are an ever-increasing number of people groups in the West who have not been exposed to the Gospel and these groups need to be considered as missional opportunities.

through your church's pastor(s) and business leaders with certain skills to address needs (e.g. microfinance, fair trade business, etc.). If there is no indigenous church in that region or country, then ask God who, of those that your church has identified with the leadership gifts, should be sent to that people group. These "missionaries" should be sent at least in pairs and possibly larger teams of up to four families (Luke 10:1). Partner, if need be, with mission agencies who want the local church to take the lead in mission and see themselves as assisting the local church as they place a missionary in the country of the identified unreached people group. Stay in close contact with the missionary through weekly e-mail updates about the progress of the work. Provide input as needed.

5. **BRING THE KINGDOM OF GOD TO THE PEOPLE GROUP!** The goal of the local indigenous church and or missionary is to bring the kingdom of God to the people group by first seeking the man of peace. Look for people of influence and speak peace to them. Stay and live among the people as long as the missionary is welcome (Luke 10:5-7). Seek out a need in the community and ask God to use the indigenous church or missionary to meet that need. Proclaim the gospel as the Holy Spirit directs.
6. **DISCIPLE THOSE GOD SAVES!** After God saves some individuals, disciple them using the Gospel of Mark because it succinctly describes the life of Jesus. Send them out to share with their neighbors what they have learned and experienced about Christ. Form them into small groups for more intense discipleship (Acts 2:42).
7. **GATHER GROUPS AS A LOCAL CHURCH!** Gather new disciples into large groups when there is critical mass for worship of God. Identify and train elders and entrust the ministry to their care (Acts 14:21-23; Titus 1:5). Continue to provide theological training and ministry consultation in the same way the Apostle Paul visited and inspected the churches he planted (Acts 20:17ff).
8. **REPEAT STEPS ONE THROUGH SEVEN!** It is now time for the new church to adopt the same commissional strategy. Do not wait for the young church to become so large it becomes comfortable and complacent or too focused on management of ministry. Instead, plant a new church as soon as the young church has gone through steps one through four to create a commissional movement! Churches should no longer delay in having "children" as the Bridegroom wants to grow His family!

NOTE: If your church already financially supports missionaries but at a minimal need level, a step toward becoming a "local church mission agency" would be to select one missionary couple, increase their support to the one hundred percent level and invite them to become "church staff serving abroad" as "test pilots" for five years. After five years evaluate the "local church mission agency" as a strategy from the perspectives of the missionary, the fruitfulness of the mission work, and your local church's experience.²⁹

²⁹ This idea originates from Larry Smith, retired ABWE (Association of Baptists for World Evangelism) missionary and Regional Director to Latin America, in a phone interview with the author, April 19, 2011.

Reflection and Discussion Questions

1. What missional small groups have you started or are planning to start? Who are you going to send or partner with and where?
2. Who is a “man (person) of peace” in your neighborhood and community?
3. Who are you apprenticing as a leader and how?
4. Who in your local church expresses apostolic, prophetic, evangelistic, pastoral and teaching gifts?
5. What are some of the hurdles to overcome in producing more mentoring in your church? How are you going to overcome these hurdles?
6. What lesson(s) did you learn from Calvary Baptist Church’s launch towards a mission agency? What would you adopt and what would you do differently?
7. What action step is your church presently taking in its journey towards being missional and how?
8. Where do you sense God is leading your church to begin or continue to develop a Kingdom initiative?

CHAPTER FIVE – True Partnerships: A Way Forward Between the Local Church and Mission Agencies

“We want a true partnership – partnership being when both parties benefit and fulfill a common goal.” These words of Ray Alary, an executive with Trans World Radio Canada in an e-mail exchange on September 24, 2010, reflect the heart of many missionaries and mission agencies. Missionaries and mission agencies repeatedly told the author in interviews that they want a partnership with the local church, but as described in chapter three, found it difficult to think of specific ways to forge a true partnership. It is the belief of this author that the church, as a part of being commissional must make the first step to partnering with already established mission agencies. While this might seem to contradict the idea that the local church should re-establish their role as a mission agency, churches must begin by living commissionally and making disciples. After disciples mature some will be called to start local commissional initiatives and churches. Mission agencies can assist in such endeavours then the local church should seek out the mission agencies as a commissional partner. However, where mission agencies can best partner with local churches is doing missions internationally. The local church should still be the Mission Agency but utilize the experience and expertise of the mission agency when attempting to be commissional internationally. This chapter will outline a strategy for creating such a partnership.

In order to forge such a partnership between the local church and parachurch ministry, the local church must fully embrace and take the lead in the attitude of

servanthood.¹ As mentioned earlier, the local church has a mission because Jesus is King and the Church is sent with His authority to serve others. Unlike the authority of power and control the world pursues, the authority the Church has been given is spiritual authority to serve those being oppressed (Matthew 10:1). Such spiritual authority, as demonstrated by Christ Himself, and summarized when He commanded:

You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:25-28).²

That attitude must be the driving force of all our actions if a true partnership is going to take place with the parachurch. The church must not see the parachurch as serving it; the church must serve the parachurch by leading it in mission. Instead of the parachurch “coming alongside” the church, the church must come alongside the parachurch until the two become one again. Such a shift in orientation would change the relationship immensely. The church must start asking mission agencies how it can serve them in practical ways while at the same time not become subservient to them. Lesslie Newbigin provides the proper balance:

In a necessary reaction against the idea of a Church which acts as God’s viceroy on earth, a triumphalist Church, we have in recent years emphasized the servant role of the Church. We are here rightly seeking to follow the example of Jesus, who defined His role as that of servant (for example, Mark 10:45). But this servant role can be misunderstood. Jesus did not allow Himself to be simply at the disposal of others.³

¹ Though I believe all believers, including those in the parachurch, must be servants like Christ, servanthood must begin in the local church.

² For a deeper understanding of the Kingdom ethic of serving and leadership, see Appendix F: The New Order written by the author’s father Dr. Philip D. Stairs.

³ Newbigin, 225.

Somehow the church must serve those outside of it without losing its mandate and vision to be God's mission agent and agency.

Now it would be easier for the local church to form a partnership with mission agencies if there were not so many from which to choose. As Michael Griffiths admits, "we missionary societies have confused the picture for the churches and for ourselves because there are too many of us."⁴ Amalgamation of like-minded and similarly focused mission agencies has been a long-time goal of the Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association⁵, but more has to occur. Maybe mission agencies will show the church how to recapture the Biblical mandate of unity in mission (Ephesians 4:3-4). As Hugh Halter and Matt Smay propose: "The sodalic arm of the church may well be the external, unbalanced force that God will use to initiate the necessary change."⁶ Furthermore, when mission agencies who are serving the same demographic in a geographic location come together, it is a great witness to the community of how Christians can work in unity.

Working together is the overriding principle for true partnerships. So what might that collaboration look like? As already mentioned, the old paradigm was that missionaries would "sense" a call to go somewhere to serve and they would apply to mission agencies that would assist them in their quest. Churches could be a part of this process, depending on whether the "missionary" belonged to a church. If the missionary belonged to a church he or she would be commissioned to do mission, handed over to the

⁴ Griffiths, 37.

⁵ Another organization called The Mission Exchange (formerly The Evangelical Fellowship of Mission Agencies) has also tried to amalgamate like-minded mission organizations.

⁶ Hugh Halter and Matt Smay, *AND – The Gathered and Scattered Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 154.

mission agency's care and the church would continue involvement through prayer and financial support. Missionaries had to solicit financial support from other churches and individuals in order to have enough funds to go abroad. It is this author's belief that the aforementioned transactional approach to doing mission will, eventually, not be embraced by the coming generations; since they want to actively participate with their missionaries in doing mission. Furthermore, though there will still be a need to send missionaries abroad, they will most likely be for shorter terms, a trend we are already seeing as Tom Telford observes in his research of missions trends: "We are going from long-term to short-term."⁷ Cross-cultural missions will no longer always be considered as reaching people overseas but will mean going next door to one's neighbor who has emigrated from another country.

The emerging paradigm for mission seems to be one like Granger Community Church has adopted,⁸ and will include partnerships not only between local churches, mission agencies and missionaries but also people of influence who recognize and address a need in their community. Such people of influence include representatives from business⁹, medicine, education, social agencies, other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and even government (e.g. police, city councillors, mayors, etc.). They might also include people who do not have official titles but are people of influence, those Jesus described as "worthy people" (Matthew 10:11) or "the man of peace" (Luke 10:6). Neil Cole characterizes persons of peace as "being receptive to the message and peace of

⁷ Telford, 126.

⁸ Jack Magruder, lecture, AND Conference, Granger, IN, November 4, 2010.

⁹ These representatives from business may or may not be Christians. If they are Christians, they may be "tentmakers," especially in closed access countries. However, the strategy of sending "tentmakers" most likely won't work in corrupt societies where Western business deems too risky.

Christ, having many relational connections and having an important part of the community whether for better or for worse and having a reputation whether bad or good.”¹⁰ The common perspective all persons of peace, whether of position or persuasion, are that they care about the welfare of their community. Here is where the Kingdom of God can have great affect, as God is concerned about poverty and injustice, and His Kingdom is the only vehicle for bringing about lasting change.

As already established, the church is the ambassador for the Kingdom of God because they are God’s physical representatives on earth (2 Corinthians 5:20). By engaging the community’s problems and partnering with those already seeking to alleviate such problems, the church helps fulfill its mandate as God’s mission agent to the world. First, the church enters into relationships with the stakeholders in the problem then seeks to understand the issue they are trying to remedy. As the church rubs shoulders with others, those people witness God’s transforming power which could lead to conversations about following Christ. Second, the church truly acts as God’s mission agent because it brings eternal change not only to those it serves but also to those it serves with. The church accomplishes this by displaying such characteristics as long-term commitment¹¹ and humility, by their willingness to do the lowliest tasks. This is incarnational ministry! However, the church is not only to be with people and enter into their pain, but lead people to Christ, the great Healer. As Dave Peppiatt from The Refuge often declares, “We do not just give a hand-out but a hand up!” Only the church can provide a true hand up as only it can address the needs of the whole person! Non-

¹⁰ Neil Cole, *Organic Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 187.

¹¹ A case in point of the church’s long-term commitment to a community is their efforts to clean up and rebuild sections of the American Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina, continuing long after many other groups have left.

Christian organizations are not able to offer reconciliation to God and His ability to change people from the inside out - the church can be the difference maker.

There are numerous examples of others abandoning a community while the church stayed and brought about revitalization through living out the Kingdom of God. One example is Main Street Baptist Church in Saint John, New Brunswick, which is located in a section of town where “half of its households are managed by a single mother and the average household income is \$28,000. Forty-one percent of the population do not have a high school diploma and the crime rate is high in this neighborhood.”¹² Instead of abandoning the neighborhood, Main Street has become missional at the program and personal level. “At the program level, Main Street has developed Hope Mission where North End residents can drop in, have a coffee, enjoy a free hot lunch twice a week, choose items from a clothing bank and hear a spiritual talk.”¹³ Main Street also has a program on Sunday afternoons which they call “Sunday School for the neighbourhood and involves classes for adults and children on a variety of subjects and skills and then they all have supper together.”¹⁴ On the personal level, the church has joined “The ONE (Old North End) Change group whose goal is to bring about community transformation to their neighborhood. The pastor along with the chair of ONE was able to go door to door and find out what the real needs of the community were. One such need that became apparent was health care, so ONE offered a free health clinic to the residents of the

¹² Stiller and Metzger, *Going Missional*, 119.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid, 120.

neighborhood which is located at the church.”¹⁵ This is a prime example of a church being missional and attractional simultaneously!

Some might think that this is advocacy for the social gospel where churches are more concerned about “good works than good news,”¹⁶ a worry that only addressing social or physical well-being, and not spiritual well-being, means the Church ceases to be the ambassador of Christ’s message. Donald McGavran summarizes well, “Social service pleases God, but it must never be substituted for finding the lost.”¹⁷ However, the tension over caring for a person’s physical and spiritual well-being need not exist, for Jesus is our model and He addressed both needs. Jesus would heal people then encourage them to stop sinning as He did with the invalid at the pool of Bethesda, “See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you” (John 5:14). Jesus would also feed five thousand as a testimony that He was the Bread of Life (John 6:35). Therefore, the Church must follow in this same good news/good works pattern and give “a cup of cold water in Jesus’ name” (Mark 9:41). Which comes first? It first depends on the most obvious need but make sure both are addressed.

What if the need does not fit within the values of the Kingdom of God? If the Church cannot agree with the mission vision then they need to excuse themselves from that portion of the vision. Paul makes it clear in Second Corinthians 6:14 that believers cannot be “yoked together with unbelievers” when unbelievers are pursuing a Kingdom of Darkness initiative. An example would be if a pastor representing a church sat on a municipal advisory committee which recommended abortion as a solution to unwed

¹⁵ Ibid, 122.

¹⁶ Ronald J. Sider, *Good News Good Works* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1993).

¹⁷ McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*, 22.

pregnancies, or decided to bring in a casino to increase city tax revenues. At this point the church must speak the truth and not vacate their role as pillar and foundation of the truth. As Karen Stiller encourages missional churches, “entering into partnerships with secular organizations or even Christians of different persuasions means sometimes agreeing to disagree without being offensive.”¹⁸ They should embrace their role as God’s mission agent for His Kingdom and be thankful they have a voice for God in the community.

This model of partnership can be enacted internationally as well as locally. For example, Granger Community Church is partnering in their local community through the Monroe Community Center while at the same time doing mission with partners overseas in India. For example, in India, GCC plays the role of theological trainer of church planters and provider of water purification systems since GCC has expertise in both areas. Apparently, such a strategy is producing fruit for GCC, as they have seen over seven hundred churches started in India through this initiative.

In summary, in order for true partnerships to exist between the local church and parachurch a number of requirements must be met. The first and most obvious is that the parachurch recognizes the church’s role in the world as God’s mission agent. If the parachurch does not recognize the church as God’s instrument for extending His Kingdom, then logically how can there be a partnership? Second, the church must acknowledge the parachurch’s role as experts in mission. Mission organizations must continue to exist because they bring so much experience and expertise to the partnership table. Mission organizations also are particularly required in Canada for any global work,

¹⁸ Stiller and Metzger, 125.

because Canadian law¹⁹ prohibits a Canadian church from transferring funds to a church internationally. This is unfortunate because it undermines the interdependence of churches so evident in the New Testament era when churches such as those in Macedonia gave out of their poverty to help others (2 Corinthians 8:1-5) or when there was a famine and those in Antioch helped others in Judea (Acts 11:27-30). It needs to be reiterated that the parachurch will be needed for the foreseeable future. Hopefully, in time, some mission agencies and their leaders with apostolic, prophetic, and evangelistic gifting should once again feel free to exercise their gifts based out of the church.

Third, missionaries must be church-based, whether locally or internationally. Practically, this means that missionaries are active participants in a local church, and should work in cooperation with the local church. One method to help missionaries in their training would be to have pastors teach them about an insider's view of a local church and how to best work with churches from a pastor's perspective. CBC's Senior Pastor, Rick Baker, used to sit on the Board of Pioneers and it was his role to do just that. However, being church-based does not mean that missionaries must always work out of an established church. Some missionaries, based on their leadership giftedness, should start missionary outposts and plant new churches. Planting new churches is integral to being commissionary. Professor Dave Earley asserts: "The ultimate fulfillment of the Great Commission was, is and will always be church planting. This is how I can say that

¹⁹ "The Canadian Income Tax Act restricts charities to only spending money on their own charitable activities or to make gifts to other 'Qualified Donees.' A 'qualified donee' is another Canadian charity; that is a registered charitable organization with a Canadian charity number. This does not guarantee that terrorist organizations will not receive money as they could set up legitimate charitable organizations in Canada but it is an attempt by the Canada Revenue Agency to stop the flow money to international terrorists." Interview of accountant Brian Halse by author via e-mail, February 15, 2011. More information can be found at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/chrts/ntrtnl-eng.html> (accessed February 15, 2011).

your church is not fulfilling the Great Commission until it is actively involved in starting new churches.”²⁰

Lastly, local churches must ask where precisely God is calling them to align their vision with a global need. This will take time in prayer, fasting and research! (Acts 13:1-3) There needs to be a recognition that if churches are going to be incarnational, they must focus on select locations. Furthermore, churches must establish close relationships with their selected missionaries and mission partners in order to see reproduction. Essentially, a church asks where it can best partner with others in bringing the Kingdom of God. This will require the church to know its strengths and the giftedness of its members in order to best determine where they could serve globally. Two books that can help churches go through that process of discovering their strengths are Christian Schwarz’s *Natural Church Development*²¹ and Will Mancini’s *Church Unique*.

²⁰ Dave Earley, *Innovate Church*, ed. Jonathan Falwell (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2008), 158.

²¹ Christian A. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development* (Carol Stream: ChurchSmart Resources, 1996). This book was a catalyst in what Ed Stetzer and David Putnam labelled the “Church Health Movement,” (*Breaking the Missional Code: Your Church Can Become a Missionary in your Community* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2006), 49, which occurred from 1990-2000 according to Will Mancini (*Church Unique*, 29). The goal of the “Church Health Movement” was to “scientifically” evaluate your local church’s effectiveness in the areas of leadership, ministry (service), spirituality, structures, worship service, small groups, evangelism and relationships and then use “the church’s strengths to work on the church ‘minimum factors’ (areas of weakness).” (Schwarz, 117) Though this movement was a course corrective to the church growth movement that overemphasized numerical growth, it is important to remember that churches are a living organism and to dissect a church “scientifically” often means forgetting that it is the Spirit of God who causes the Church to be alive.

Reflection and Discussion Questions

1. How can your church assume servant leadership in its relationship with mission agencies?
2. Who can you partner with in a Kingdom initiative? (Remember that “partnership” can include non-Christians who you might subsequently reach with the Gospel of Christ!)
3. How is your church going to “proclaim good news and do good works” without being at the expense of the other?
4. If you are supporting missionaries through an outside mission agency, does this mission agency want your church to take the lead in mission? If not, how can you encourage them to shift towards a church-based mission strategy?

CHAPTER SIX – Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned about Small Groups

Over the last twenty years, thanks to churches like Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois, small groups has become a generally accepted practice in North American churches, but there are some who consider sitting around in a small group sharing the intimate details of their spiritual life somewhat intimidating or awkward. Vulnerability and transparency are not embraced values when in the past you have experienced people being careless with the private aspects of your life. Others reject small groups because they are associated with Willow Creek and the Seeker Sensitive Movement, which they consider to produce immature disciples. CBC was wary of the Seeker Sensitive movement, though not entirely against it either because CBC has always had a heart for evangelism, so it appreciates seeing people won to Christ. As an eighty year old church known for its strong Christian Education program for all ages, CBC has emphasized mid-sized Sunday School classes of fifteen to sixty people where the priority has been loving God with your mind. To reorient the church to a small group discipleship model has been a challenging and slow process. Small groups have been a welcome option for those new to CBC who desire to connect in a more intimate setting than large or mid-size gatherings.

The author has made many mistakes in attempting to transition CBC to accept small groups as a valid discipleship model. One book, which saved the author making more mistakes, was Ted Haggard's *Dog Training, Fly-Fishing, and Sharing Christ in*

the 21st Century.¹ Haggard outlines the modern history of small groups and makes the insight that the largest churches in the world are built not by the methodology of small groups, as much as their locations in countries where people are used to a benevolent dictator type of leader. For example, the two largest churches in the world are located in Seoul, South Korea, and Bogota, Columbia respectively. “Both churches are filled with people who had experienced extreme suffering and their small-group systems reflected it...they needed a strong chain-of-command system to produce stability and security.”² Haggard, however, goes on to propose that “free-market”³ small groups built on affinity relationships are a better method of making disciples here in North America. Haggard is correct in his proposal as churches like Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia have seen tremendous growth through starting affinity based community groups. People are attracted to these groups to learn a new skill or hobby.

Though CBC has seen tremendous growth in its small groups ministry, from two groups in 2002 to nearly thirty groups at present, it has been difficult for CBC to embrace small groups as a cultural value. The reason being that successful small groups need to be more organic and “free market.” In fact, the addition of groups has been mainly from groups multiplying rather than intentional efforts that the author employed. In fact, centralized efforts have been met with resistance from the top down. My editor Brad Lockner, who does not attend CBC, commented upon reading our Small Group Training Manual (see Appendix D), “This is very much a command and control model for small

¹ Ted Haggard, *Dog Training, Fly-Fishing and Sharing in the 21st Century* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002).

² Ibid, 46.

³ Ibid, 48. By “free market,” Haggard means that there is little intervention or regulation from church leadership.

groups which micro-manages them. My question – is this appropriate to the CBC culture? Is it the best way to empower ordinary members? Also, the burden in terms of time, expectations, and study for group leaders is heavy and probably not workable in CBC, given other commitments and time constraints.”⁴ Brad assessed the training manual in this project correctly. Though CBC small group leaders have received the material positively, they have not enacted it, probably because they did not feel like contributors to the project. Canadians especially have a need to be collaborative in the development of a ministry.

It has been particularly challenging to encourage a decentralized ministry intended to be measured by Christ-like character and transformed lives in an environment that is very centralized and largely measures attendance.⁵ In order to attain credibility the author fell into the trap of believing greater numbers of people attending a small group should be the goal. Frankly, the author has failed, for which he thanks God! He is thankful because God has not allowed him to succeed with small groups as a program, which if accomplished would never have led me to a belief that small groups must become commissional. The author now realizes that Biblical (commissional) small groups cannot be legislated or manufactured. Other small group advocates are coming to similar conclusions such as small group expert Scott Boren who states, “Leaders cannot make people do missional small groups.”⁶ Having a missional mindset comes from a study of Jesus and His mission resulting in brokenness for the lost. Leaders must

⁴ Conversation with Brad Lockner, December 13, 2010.

⁵ The Bible doesn’t condemn counting people and even has a Book of Numbers, but numerical attendance cannot be the only measurement of discipleship as it only speaks the quantity of disciples not the quality of disciples.

⁶ Boren, *Missional Small Groups*, 55.

prayerfully encourage a fresh encounter with Jesus and His mission. Using affinity-based groups that provide a benefit to one's neighbour and ultimately a conversation about the gospel seems like the new path for engaging a church-disinterested culture.

Lessons Learned in Attempting to Be a Mission Agency

Relinquishing control is one of the determining success factors of the church becoming a mission agency. As CBC worked out its relationship, both with its partner mission agency SIM and with its missionary Graydon, CBC had to empower them in their respective roles without releasing the vision. Ralph Winter describes this as “regulating (missionaries) but not administering them.”⁷ Will Mancini uses a different term and calls such a strategy “directed release,”⁸ which follows the New Testament pattern found in Acts 13:3 where “Paul and Barnabas were ‘sent off’ not ‘sent out’ by the Antioch congregation. They may have reported back to it but did not take orders from it.”⁹ In the case of Graydon, this was accomplished by assigning one of our pastors, Kelvin Kauffeldt, Pastor of Family and Outreach and former “missionary kid,” as “Field Director” to Graydon. Kelvin’s role is to support Graydon in his efforts but not control them. Graydon should feel released to do mission.

Kelvin’s role as “Field Director” has also revealed another lesson for us as a church, which is the need for a designated staff position to devote exclusive time and

⁷ Ralph D. Winter, “The Two Structures of God’s Redemptive Mission,” 248. What is the practical distinction between regulation and administration? Regulation involves the vision and strategy of the mission while administration is the tactics of the vision and strategy. For example, the vision and strategy for reaching UOIT needs to be determined by CBC and Graydon together, while the specific tactics of how to carry out that vision is up to Graydon and should not be micro-managed.

⁸ Mancini, 173.

⁹ Winter, 248.

energy if we are to assume a larger capacity as a mission agency. Here some might question the wisdom of eliminating the outsourcing of missionary supervision from mission agencies for it creates an undue burden on the local church. Many pastors reviewing this project would agree with the thesis in theory but would not implement it because of the amount of effort devoted to such an initiative. This is a legitimate concern and can only be responded to by asking whether we can afford not to make disciples and send missionaries to our North America society and abroad. This project has hopefully built a convincing case for the priority of this need. In addition, having more focused but fewer supported missionaries might free up other local church leaders who previously spent much time administering the missions program. Small churches could be the mission agency for one or two missionaries through oversight of their elders. The challenge is probably most acute for medium to large sized churches that have pressing staff needs taking priority over a Missions Pastor.

Another lesson the author learned is that language is of utmost importance. Two examples come to mind – the first decision was what to label Graydon. CBC learned from Rick Bradford of SIM, who has worked with other churches attempting to send local church-based missionaries that CBC needed to call Graydon a missionary and not think of him as a staff person. This is contrary to what Park Street Church in Boston recently did with their mission program by inviting their supported missionaries to become staff members serving at a distance.¹⁰ Calling Graydon a missionary helped

¹⁰ Telford, *Today's All-Star Mission Churches*, 76. Park Street Church in Boston has historically been a strong mission's church, sending over three hundred full-time missionaries including missionary pioneers Adoniram Judson and Samuel J. Mills. The church also gave over thirty million dollars to missions from 1941-2001. Despite these efforts in 1997, they took missionary support to another level and invited their supported missionaries to become members of their ministerial staff. Furthermore, the missionaries would receive full financial support from Park Street Church if they agreed to become staff members at a distance and "involved Park Street Church in any and all major decisions that affect their

people in our church not to see Graydon and his wife Sarah as serving the needs of the church but those outside.¹¹ At the same time, CBC kicked Graydon “out of the nest”¹² and he no longer has an office at the church,¹³ which helped Graydon understand that his role was to go to the lost and not stay with the found.

The second example is the terminology CBC used for the work Graydon would be doing. Here CBC was less clear! Though CBC believes that the end goal of missions is to plant churches, CBC’s Senior Pastor, Rick Baker, prudently decided to use language that conveys the staging of the process towards planting a church when describing the initiative to its members. Therefore, instead of stating that Graydon was planting a church, CBC publicly declared that Graydon is establishing a missionary outpost on the campus of UOIT. However, in Graydon’s writing to supporters outside the church, he has

ministries.” When on furlough, Park Street Church missionaries would be able to come home and rest without having to visit other supporting churches. It would also be a time of refreshment and study along with the opportunity to serve in Park Street Church. “Eight of the thirty five supported missionaries accepted Park Street Church’s offer, which increased to fourteen by 2000 with seventeen active missionaries and thirty four missionaries receiving partial support.” (Ibid. 78.) In a follow-up interview with Park Street Church Missions Minister, John Chung, fourteen missionaries have continued to be on the church staff after twelve years.

¹¹ CBC’s leaders considered giving Graydon the title of missionaries in residence but thought this term would still convey Graydon as a staff person.

¹² Kicking one “out of the nest” does not mean that ministry apprentices become independent and operate outside the regulation of the local church. Such a statement would undermine this thesis! Instead, ministry apprentices who have demonstrated apostolic, prophetic and evangelistic gifts, who have been equipped by the church and who have been called by Christ with affirmation by the church should be released for commission assignments. If they are not released for ministry somewhere else, they become stunted in their leadership growth, the mission is hindered and often they become a threat to the present leadership in the local church.

¹³ Graydon confided to the author that this has been challenging because he needs to find a place to separate his work from his family life, which is hard when one does not have a designated office. This is a common complaint among missional leaders as Hugh Halter admits, “Personally, I’m getting to the point where I’m tired of my office always being a Starbucks! I want a quiet building all my own, with my own coffee maker, a cool place to have leaders pray and study together, and that Matt and I can call our home. But every time we consider this, we think of the money it would cost, and we realize that we can always spend that money on real needs and real people.” (Hugh Halter and Matt Smay, *The Tangible Kingdom*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008, 153.)

declared that he is planting a church on the campus of UOIT. Graydon is correct in using such terminology because it clarifies the end goal. Planting a church is also an easier term for Graydon's supporters to understand as opposed to establishing a "missionary outpost" or "preaching center." The problem is that there should not be a dichotomy of terms between the sending church and missionary. It also reveals that there is a philosophical divide in leadership as to Graydon's gifting and role. Some see Graydon as a catalyst for mission but not yet with the pastoral gifting to plant a church.

A third lesson is that people are concerned with the management and accountability of missionaries. This was particularly true with Graydon and was exacerbated by the fact that he is the Senior Pastor's son. Interestingly, accountability of other missionaries has not been a high priority. The first reason is that CBC, like so many others, assumes that the mission agency is holding the missionary accountable. The second and more telling reason is that when missionaries are being supported at lower amounts, churches usually do not ask as many questions. In other words, the greater financial support by one church means the greater the call for accountability. These were some of the insights gleaned in an interview with John Chung, Minister of Missions at Park Street Church in Boston which has transitioned to missionaries being on staff.¹⁴ They have found over the last twelve years of being a church mission agency that when missionaries receive small amounts of support they have the opportunity to be less accountable and hide any lack of productivity. Instead, providing one hundred percent funding of missionaries raises standards when considering missionaries. Their church evaluates missionaries based on the question: "Would you want this potential missionary

¹⁴ John Chung, interview by author via phone, January 5, 2011.

as your pastor?”¹⁵ By elevating the bar for missionary qualifications, it has also created focus on where missionaries should be sent. Since Park Street Church wants to see churches planted particularly in unreached people groups around the world, they “hire” missionaries with specific gifting, experience and qualifications for that task.

It would be good to remember that accountability is largely about the character of the leader, not the organization to which they belong. As Tom Nebel and Gary Rohrmayer confess, “The truth is that church planters are usually about as accountable as they want to be.”¹⁶ This statement is also true of other ministry leaders. Accountability works when there is voluntarily submission to others; a testament to the strength of character that was already present. Inviting what Leonard Sweet calls “editors”¹⁷ into our lives, to observe and correct when necessary, helps us not keep “two sets of books; one book for your accountability team and another secret book for yourself.”¹⁸ Consequently, Graydon needs “editors,” as every Christian does, to hold him accountable for agreed-upon goals made with CBC. Ultimately, though, his leadership effectiveness will be determined by a willingness to place himself under the protection and support of authority. Frankly, this has been difficult for Graydon, as it would be for any missionary with apostolic gifting and an entrepreneurial spirit. I’m afraid some of Graydon’s past experience with the mission agency under which he served in Africa, and the author’s

¹⁵ If the philosophy of this project is followed, this question would be largely eliminated because the local church would have already confirmed a missionary as a pastor or deacon type to be sent out to do mission.

¹⁶ Nebel and Rohrmayer, 18.

¹⁷ Leonard Sweet, *11 Indispensable Relationships You Can't Be Without* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2008), 33.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

own prior bias against mission agencies has made Graydon wary of embracing all that SIM has to offer. Nevertheless, Graydon has recently seen the need to establish relationships with other SIM missionaries and learn all he can from SIM.

Another lesson is determining how to evaluate the effectiveness of a missionary. It appears that this can only occur by having shared values which ensure that what is being reproduced is actually desirable. This shared value can be accomplished even overseas by passing on the sending church's (mission agency) DNA and guarding it from potential threats. Church Planting Professor Dave Earley describes this church-planting approach as the "passing of the DNA of the mother church on to the offspring of the church."¹⁹ At Granger Community Church, they have articulated their DNA through "Seven Mission Metaphors,"²⁰ which is how they can regulate their mission without controlling it. They also expect there will be times when others will attempt take their partners in a different direction with a new vision or worse, with false teaching. To guard against this, GCC constantly returns to the agreed upon values which provide boundaries, but much freedom. This seems similar to what Paul told Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:20, "Guard what has been entrusted to your care," while Paul withheld describing the full details of that care. Therefore, it is critical that a church attempting to be a mission agency must outline what DNA they want to reproduce in others.

¹⁹ Dave Earley, *Innovate Church*, ed. Jonathan Falwell (Nashville: B & H Publishing Group, 2008), 181.

²⁰ Jack Magruder, "Getting People Out of Their Seats and Into the Story." (lecture, AND Conference, Granger, IN, November 4, 2010). These metaphors included becoming a: 1) Knight by bringing in the reign of the King; 2) Jedi by using the focus of the laser, not the flashlight; 3) Tight-rope Walker by balancing mobilization with impact; 4) Highway Planner by building on-ramps rather than dead ends for activating service; 5) Cowboy by finding strategic "pardners" for the long haul; 6) Gardener through cultivating grass roots movements; and 7) Geek by using technology as a force multiplier. These metaphors would be applicable in the United States but would need to be adapted or changed for an international audience.

Outlining one's DNA will also provide a clear definition of success when making disciples. If seeing more people attend large gatherings is the goal then strategies will be put in place to meet that goal. In the case of Graydon, he employed an attractional strategy of creating a "church within a church" that would then relocate to the university campus. Such an attractional strategy was what he was taught by Campus for Christ when he was the student leader at the University of Guelph and has been reinforced by CBC which leans towards attractional. It also matches his personality and giftedness of preaching, which work best in large gatherings. The author advocates more of a discipleship and leadership development model with smaller groups, but both approaches are valid and necessary. What is more important to comprehend is that the new measurement for being missional is "stories of transformed lives."²¹ It might be more difficult to gauge tangible results but stories are often harder to dismiss than statistics, because stories inspire and create an emotional bridge to people's lives. One could argue that stories of changed lives were the assessment tool found in the Gospels. Think of the Samaritan woman described in John 4, who after having a discussion with Jesus, went back to her hometown and, "said to the people, 'Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?'" (John 4:28-29) Another instance was the woman who anointed Jesus with expensive perfume. Jesus emphasized the importance of the use of story when He proclaimed, "I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her" (Matthew 26:13).

²¹ Jason Miller, "The Hazards of Either/Or Thinking," (lecture, AND Conference, Granger, IN, November 5, 2010).

Jesus came to change lives as they embraced the Gospel and became subjects of His Kingdom but not all of them were transformed when they encountered Him. The Rich Young Ruler mentioned in Matthew 19:16-22 is prime example as one who met Jesus, was offered salvation but refused it and the opportunity to follow Jesus. Therefore, measuring ministry effectiveness cannot be just converts. The Apostle Paul understood this fact and considered his role in bringing the Kingdom of God complete in “the vast region from Jerusalem to the Adriatic and has ‘no longer any room for work in these regions’ (Romans 15:23).”²² Leslie Newbigin expounds on this verse, “What exactly has Paul done? Certainly not converted all the populations of these regions. Certainly not solved all their social and economic problems. He has, in his own words, ‘fully preached the gospel’ and left behind communities of men and women who believe the gospel and live by it.”²³ Taking cues from Jesus and Paul, measuring the effectiveness of commissional work is determined by the fruit of Christ-like character in the lives of those God has chosen to save and their embracement of bringing the Kingdom to others.

Lessons Learned about Being a Mission Agent

There seems to be tensions between evangelism and discipleship, evangelism and worship and evangelism and missions in many believers’ minds. Such tensions do not need to exist since they are different stages of the same process. One cannot be discipled unless one is first evangelized, and worship cannot occur unless one is a disciple (John 4:24). Furthermore, evangelism and worship need not be at odds since proclaiming Christ and making disciples brings glory to God. As well, evangelism and missions are not at

²² Newbigin, 121.

²³ Ibid.

odds because we need to encourage evangelism, whether attractional or missional, local or international. Some argue that there needs to be a distinction between evangelism and missions. “Churches often elevate local evangelism to the level of missions. They think they are doing this for the sake of the lost, but they are doing it for themselves.”²⁴ This might be a concern but any church attempting to be commissional understands that seeing the lost saved, wherever that occurs, is not a competition with other ministries.

Commissional people must have a heart for people groups abroad and locally, and though the goal is not for the church to benefit, it actually does benefit the church because more people are added. Evidence is the fact that evangelists are also gifts to the church for its maturity (Ephesians 4:11-13). At first, this may seem strange because an evangelist is focused on those outside the church. Most organizations seek their own advancement and eliminate endeavours that do not increase their profits or constituency. However, if it has already been established that God intends the church to serve rather than be served, the evangelist’s role of going out into the world makes more sense because it aligns with the church’s mission and does ultimately benefit the church.

One of the often overlooked areas of leadership development is that of women, particularly those with the leadership gifts mentioned in Ephesians 4:11-12. Some might argue that women do not have these gifts but Acts 21:8-9 notes “Philip the evangelist had four unmarried daughters who prophesied.” Therefore, in the Scriptures we do find women exercising leadership and spiritual gifts, but this does not mean they held a church leadership office. (For a fuller treatment of this subject see Appendix F: The New Order.) The challenge is how to train and develop women with such gifts. Some

²⁴ Telford, 125.

organizations outside of the church such as Proverbs 31 Ministries²⁵ have taken up the challenge to fill in the gap churches have created by evaluating and training women in the gifts of speaking and writing. Then, if ladies are identified as outstanding in these gifts they will be asked to join their “Speaker Team” which does itinerant speaking at women’s conferences and in churches. The motivation of Proverbs 31 Ministries is well-intentioned but it is the belief of this author that the local church must be the agent of making disciples and identifying, training and sending women leaders to be commissionary. CBC has made some strides in developing women leaders and Bible teachers, but more needs to be accomplished. CBC just hired our first woman as a Children’s Ministry intern and are about to bring another on staff to learn about communications. Others have been sent to CBC’s denominational Women’s Ministry Institute,²⁶ which should be used as supplemental and specialized training for those already identified by their church as women leaders. However, the first need is for older women to take up the challenge of training those younger as outlined in Titus 2:3-5.

The last and most important lesson is that being commissionary does not solve all problems in the church. Going and doing mission will not prevent us from missing God’s greatest desire for us which is to love Him. The Pharisees did mission based on the Scriptures but were condemned by Jesus as hypocrites (Matthew 23:15). The early followers of Jesus were sent out to prepare people for the Gospel but came back full of pride, being more enthralled about their powers over Satan and sickness than what God did in them (Luke 10:1-20). Jesus labelled great miracle workers as evildoers (Matthew

²⁵ More information about Proverbs 31 Ministries can be found at <http://www.proverbs31.org/>.

²⁶ More information about the Women’s Ministry Institute can be found at <http://womensministriesinstitute.com/>. Other organizations have also identified the need to develop women leaders such as Liberty University who has a B.S. in Religion: Women’s Ministry Specialization degree.

7:20-23). Even Peter who went to the Gentiles was inconsistent, forcing Paul to confront him (Acts 10:1-11:18; Galatians 2:11-14). In order to identify, train and send disciples church leaders first must be disciples themselves, constantly learning, and loving their Master Jesus Christ! Only then can churches truly do mission which Lesslie Newbigin reminds is not an obligation as much as it “begins with an explosion of joy.”²⁷

Reflection and Discussion Questions

1. How can your church empower others to make disciples?
2. What metaphors are you going to use in leading your church to become missional? How will you describe your church’s DNA?
3. What “editors” do you have your life?
4. How are you going to hold your missionaries accountable for the work to which they are called?
5. If the new measurement of effectiveness is the stories of changed lives, what stories does your church have to tell? When are you going to share one of those stories?
6. How can your church develop a plan that includes both local and global missional strategies without the two competing with one another?
7. How is your church developing both men and women who express the leadership gifts described in Ephesians 4:11-12?
8. What ways is your church striving to not lose sight of their love for Jesus in the effort to carry out His mission? In other words, how does your church not “forsake their first love” while being commended for their “hard work”? (Revelation 2:2-4)

²⁷ Newbigin, 116.

CONCLUSION

Often life changes are made when discontent with the status quo is coupled with sufficient time to reflect on a preferred future. This is exactly what happened in this project. Early on in the author's ministry, he decided that he did not want to be a "custodial-type" leader only cleaning up messes and maintaining the ministry. Instead he wanted to exercise pro-active leadership. As a younger leader, the author cannot accept that God wants to work minimally in North America while spending most of His time in other parts of the world that the author only reads about or sees first hand when travelling abroad. Might the North American church have the audacity to believe that God wants to work in its midst as what is read about in the Book of Acts or what is happening elsewhere in the world.

This past summer CBC gave the author the amazing gift of a three-month Sabbatical as a reward for seven years of service. It was during this *Selah* time that the author was able to spend a lot of time in meditation on God's Word and prayer, along with being "right-sized" by the magnitude of God's Creation as his family visited twelve National Parks. The author realized that God can do anything, including turning around a declining church in North America. As the author reread the Gospels and the Book of Acts during his Sabbatical, he gained an understanding of Jesus, His Church and His Mission for the Church as priority. One singular phrase summarizes the impact: "GO MAKE DISCIPLES!" To make disciples, some will be sent close-by and others far away.

These “sent ones” need to be cared for by those who sent them otherwise the sending agent (the church) could be accused of abandoning their own. May this never be! Jesus cares for those He sent and so should His Bride! The local church should function as both mission agent and agency of God’s Kingdom!

Appendix B: Research Survey for Commissioned Churches

1. What is your church's impetus for existence?
2. Describe your model for making disciples.
3. Describe your model for planting churches.
4. What have you learned that would be helpful for other churches considering planting churches?

Appendix C: Original Presentation to Calvary Baptist Church's Global Ministries Committee Regarding a Vision for Identifying, Training, and Sending Missionaries

The Local Church-Based Missionary: A Proposal

October 24, 2008

Abstract: Though Catholic Monastic Orders such as the Franciscans encouraged missionaries to be one step removed from the local church, they still fell under the authority of the Church. However, it was the Protestants who took this mindset further and misapplied the doctrine of the priesthood of the believer to remove the decision making of sending out missionaries from the local church and left it all up to the individual to determine God's will for their life. What took over were the missionary societies, which morphed into the present day missions' agencies. And so since the time of William Carey, who started the modern missionary movement, we have some missionaries who look to the church only for prayer and financial support and then try to distance themselves from the church (e.g. university campus ministries, relief ministries, etc.). Though I see some of the benefits of the missions' agency such as expertise in entry to nations, outsourced administrative work, and quick decision-making that is often needed in the missionary context, I would like to propose an ancient-future missions philosophy. Specifically, I want to propose that missionaries become more church-based. This is ancient because it is found in what I think is the model for identifying and sending missionaries in Acts 13:1-3. It is future because only the Church will last beyond the end of this world, not other organizations (Ephesians 3:10; 5:26-27). Therefore, I believe we need to consider creating once again the local church-based missionary movement! Some churches are in need of para-church organizations such as missions agencies to outsource global missionary efforts. However, other churches can and should take back the ownership of missionary identification and sending initiatives. Parachurch organizations can still provide expertise as consultants, but I would like to cut out the "middle-man" whenever possible and have missionaries become identified, sent, and work out of the local church throughout the world. This would mean that becoming a disciple of Christ is also becoming a member of the local church!

Proposal: For me, a local church-based missionary movement is not just a philosophy, but a person. I would like to propose that Graydon Baker become Calvary Baptist Church's first local church-based missionary. Graydon would specifically minister out of Calvary Baptist Church to UOIT/Durham College to reach young adults for Christ. He would be a fully supported missionary by Calvary while at the same time being a staff member of Calvary so that he falls under the auspices of our ministry.

Wise Financial Stewardship: Missions agencies charge an administrative fee for their missionaries, which in some cases is 14%. I would propose that since Calvary is not just the sender but also acts as the agent for a local-church based missionary, that the coverage of benefits would still be less than most missions' agencies charge. Furthermore, shared resources between the church and the missionaries efforts would also be a cost reduction for missionaries usually raising out-going costs for new equipment. This is wise stewardship!

Questions

Aren't we all supposed to be missionaries in our life's context so why distinguish between a church-based missionary and every other believer in the church? Yes, we are all called to be missionaries in the sense that we are sent out to be Christ's witnesses (Acts 1:8). However, there is a distinction in Scripture for those whose sole vocation is ministry (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:27-30) To make this distinction, I define a church-based missionary as one who is uniquely assigned by God to minister to a cultural group and commissioned by the local church as the Apostle Paul and his companions were in their day (Acts 13:1-13).

Why Graydon? Graydon has been identified and sent as a missionary to do campus ministry in Tanzania. Before going to Tanzania, he showed his faithfulness and fruit-bearing at the University of Guelph. He has also served at Calvary Baptist Church as a pastoral/missions intern since March 1, 2008 and done a great job creating enthusiasm amongst our Young Adults. Graydon has the evangelistic zeal and gifting to reach UOIT/Durham College for Christ and he also has the relationship with the present ministry on campus there called Campus Church as the coordinator of small groups. I believe that the open doors that Graydon has experienced at UOIT through Campus Church are the Lord's doing and now I want to explore whether this relationship with Campus Church could be taken to the next level of partnership.

Why not just send Graydon to plant a separate church for young adults?

1) Graydon's gifting is evangelism and a church plant calls for a pastor. Church plants often don't gain traction because they don't have a pastor who can transition the newly formed church through the different stages of growth. I believe Graydon could provide an excellent entrepreneurial effort of starting a church and seeing young adults come to Christ. However, a sustainable long term ministry would require a pastor with a "building" ministry or an administrative person to work alongside Graydon to help mature the church. Ephesians 4:11 seems to imply that both the evangelist and the pastor/teacher is needed to build up the body of Christ. Furthermore, Graydon has not been tested in long-term ministry and is self-ascribed as being a visionary at starting something and handing it off to others. This is an excellent trait for a missionary but not for a pastor of a sustainable church.

2) Calvary's vision of being a multi-generational church would be undermined if we encouraged an entire demographic to move up north on campus. This would also present possible future limitations on raising up leaders from the next generation for the work at Calvary or at the church plant. For example, as students aged, they would want programming for their family that Calvary provides and so they will be attracted back to

Calvary away from the daughter. This happened in the past with the church plant in south Oshawa at Emmanuel Baptist Church. A better plan would be to become multi-site like The Met in Ottawa has done with doing campus ministry at the university. This provides the ability to uniquely reach the culture of the university without the traditions of the mother church while still maintaining all the benefits of infrastructure, shared resources and mentoring that a new church and its younger leaders would need.

3) I think Graydon and the ministry at UOIT would be served well if he received on-going mentorship from a local church as he needs more training before launching out on his own. Reality is that Graydon would lean on the staff of Calvary if the campus church was a separate reality so why not formalize the mentoring relationship?

To whom would Graydon directly report?

The Senior Pastor along with the Global Ministries Committee! Graydon would still be involved at Calvary Staff meetings and would have an office at Calvary. However, his ministry time would mostly be spent on the university campus. NOTE: If Calvary were to get an Executive Pastor, I think other Campus Pastors should still directly report to the Senior Pastor. Campus Pastors are in a sense Lead Pastors of their campuses with the Senior Pastor being the Bishop of all the campuses. When the movement becomes too big for the Senior Pastor/Bishop to manage, a hierarchy of oversight can be created. Harvest Bible Chapel's model might help us with these issues.

When would this occur?

2009 because this seems to be the time to act with the favour we have with Campus Church and the conclusion of Graydon's internship! However, Graydon and other leaders would need to visit other churches who have built significant churches on university campuses. I propose that Graydon visits The Met in Ottawa and Campus Church in Waterloo to learn more about the possibilities of this initiative. I am also praying that God would move the hearts of the UOIT Campus Church Leadership Team to invite Graydon to such a position proposed above as it is always better to be invited than put forward one's self for a new role. If the Pastoral Team agrees with me, should we propose a stakeholder in the 2009 Budget to launch this initiative?

Appendix D: Small Group Training Manual

trans4m
your group

Small Group Training Manual

September 29, 2010

Written and Compiled By: Jonathan E. Stairs

TABLE OF CONTENTS

What is the Purpose of Small Groups?.....	2
What is the Biblical Rational for Small Groups?.....	3
What Types of Small Groups are going to be Developed?.....	4
What are the Different Types/Families of Groups to be Developed?.....	5
What is Spiritual Leadership?.....	6
What does a Small Group Leader Do?.....	7
How to Lead a Group Using the Right Habits.....	8
How to Lead a Discussion.....	9
How to Train an Apprentice.....	11
How to Grow Your Group.....	11
How to Multiply Your Group.....	12
How to Handle the Children.....	13
How to Handle Difficult People.....	15
How to Start a New Group.....	16
How to Select a Good Host Home.....	17
Suggested Resources on Small Groups.....	18

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SMALL GROUPS?

Why Small Groups? For a sense of community? For accountability? For further Biblical understanding? For prayer? For worshipping together? For service?

All of these elements can and should occur but our goal in small groups is to....

TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS (Matthew 28:19)

We are not *growing* as we should because we are not *going* as we should!

Jesus' last command before He left earth was to "Make Disciples!"

- As we are going we are supposed to be baptizing and teaching new disciples to observe everything Jesus commanded!

HOW?

→ You have to get close enough to something or somebody to observe them!

Small groups allow people to observe and witness Jesus' commands lived out before them! In fact, reproduction requires closeness!

Multiplication is always the result of intimacy!
Rod Dempsey

Jesus understood this fact and applied it to His ministry!

"Jesus tried to avoid all publicity in order to spend more time with His disciples and teach them." (Mark 9:30 NLT) **Jesus got more intimate with His disciples to teach them!**

BUT Jesus never created a group that would stick together! His disciples were equipped for a mission...to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth! (Acts 1:8)

In fact, Jesus would often send his new disciples out to preach the Gospel with very little "training." Jesus' disciples were to go and tell what they saw and heard! This is why they were called witnesses! (Mark 5:19-20) Maybe some believers never become disciple-makers because they are too busy trying to become better disciples through intense discipleship programs and curriculum! Instead, people learn best when they *need* to know something! Sharing the Gospel forces someone to know what and why they believe!

Therefore our groups need to ACT and become fully missional! Groups need to observe the commands of Christ and then multiply! Cells within the Body of Christ are meant to multiply!

CONSIDER YOUR GROUP AS A WEEKLY LAUNCHING PAD FOR MISSION!

WHAT IS THE BIBLICAL RATIONAL FOR SMALL GROUPS?

Since we are followers of Jesus Christ, it is our goal to emulate His character and actions, a goal which immediately leads us to investigate how Jesus apprenticed His followers. Jesus could have employed many different strategies to develop His disciples. He could have used a one-on-one method, formed them into triads, and gathered them into large groups. Though Jesus did interact and teach His followers individually (Mark 2:14), in groups of three (Matt. 17:1) and even in large groups (Mark 6:34), He most often disciplined them as a group of twelve. (Mark 3:14) It was this group that He charged with making disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:18-20) and that God used to herald the life-changing message of the gospel to the world! Therefore, as followers of Jesus we should use His model of discipleship – multiplying small groups.

Not surprisingly, the Early Church understood this model as evidenced by how they organized themselves after Jesus ascended into heaven. The Book of Acts reveals that the initial followers of Christ met in “homes” (2:46; 8:3), which means that their groups could not be very large gatherings. In fact, the early church was a house church network who met in their homes “to devote themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (2:42) and then met together in larger gatherings at the Temple (2:46; 5:12) presumably to worship together and hear the apostles teach Christ’s commands. Meeting in their homes enabled believers to “observe everything Jesus commanded” (Matt. 28:20 NASB) and as they lived out these commands “they enjoyed the favour of all the people and the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:47) We can conclude evangelism is the fruit of believers who “love one another” (John 13:34-35) and small groups provide the best environment for loving one another. Why? Simply, because when people engage in a small group they can tangibly live out the other “one anothers” found in the New Testament.

One of these “one anothers” that stands out as almost exclusive to small groups is having “fellowship with one another.” (1 John 1:7) By its very nature, fellowship always occurs in the context of small groups of people and not just one on one. Even within the Godhead, we see fellowship occurring between God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, in which we are invited to participate. (2 Cor. 13:14; 1 John 1:3) If fellowship is grounded in the nature of God, this in part explains why fellowship was particularly noticeably evident in the Early Church who “devoted themselves to... fellowship.” (Acts 2:42) Biblical fellowship is not friendship or social activity but living out the commonality we have in Christ as we continue to follow Him.

Such perseverance is needed in light of the ever-present threat of persecution. Small groups are able to overcome such persecution because they meet in homes and thus are difficult to find by enemies of the gospel. This was evident during the Diaspora of the Early Church who were scattered due to persecution by such religious zealots as the individual who later became the Apostle Paul. (Acts 8:3) Forming into small groups enables the church to be indestructible, because even if some believers are captured or killed, the church continues. A small group based church is no longer dependent upon one leader except its rightful Head, Jesus! (Eph. 5:23)

In summary, a small group best illustrates Jesus’ model of discipleship because groups enable the church to witness the gospel through fellowship and love for one

another. Thus, small groups are an attempt to mimic the divine community of the Trinity. Lastly, Christ uses small groups as the means of overcoming persecution against His church. Therefore, small groups are essential to following, growing and persevering in Christ!

WHAT TYPES OF SMALL GROUPS ARE GOING TO BE DEVELOPED?

The following is the definition and explanation of what constitutes a small group, along with the types of groups we aim to develop at Calvary Baptist Church (CBC) in Oshawa, Ontario, Canada. We believe groups should be...

Seeking the Lost – To be Christ followers means to adopt the mission Jesus had while He was on earth. (Luke 19:10) Therefore, groups need to be more than “seeker sensitive” but are “sensitively seeking”¹ the lost by regularly inviting them to their group, in cooperation with the Holy Spirit.

Multiplying Groups and Leaders - Jesus requires fruitfulness – it is a sign we are connected to Him. (John 15:1-8) Therefore, leaders will multiply themselves and groups through apprentices.

Applying God’s Word – Our groups intentionally follow the mandate to make Bible application the priority. (James 1:17) Therefore, we will use sermon-based curriculum in our small groups.

Limited to 15 People – There is a relational dynamic that happens when groups are certain sizes. In order to encourage a greater knowledge of one another, groups will be limited to 15 people and then need to multiply. The ideal size of a small group is between 8-12 people. (Mark 3:14)

Leader Trained and Receiving On-going Training – Leaders will be trained prior to serving and will continue to develop their leadership skills through in-service training. (2 Tim. 2:15)

Guided by a Leader – A group must have a designated leader who is a member in good standing of CBC and whose role is to shepherd the group and develop an apprentice leader. (Acts 20:28)

Regularly Meeting – Groups should preferably meet weekly in order to know one another, stay connected and encourage one another. (Heb. 10:24-25)

Opening God’s Word – Since God speaks to us through His Word, there should be time set aside in each group to read, discuss and devote themselves to following His teaching. (Acts 4:42)

United in Serving – The Scriptures teach that the church operates as the Body of Christ and each member of the Body should use their spiritual gift(s) to serve God and others.

¹ This term was proposed by Rick Baker, Senior Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Oshawa, Ontario, Canada. It flips the idea of being “seeker sensitive” on its head. Baker teaches that unbelievers do not seek God according to Romans 3:11 but that believers are the ones who should seek the lost as Jesus did. (Luke 19:10)

Consequently, group members will discover their spiritual gifts and then use them in cooperation with one another. (1 Cor. 12:12-27)

Praying for one another – Prayer is crucial for relating to God and each other. Very few actions show more love for God and others than prayer. Therefore, we expect prayer to occur inside and outside the group. (Acts 2:42; 1 Thess. 5:17)

Supported by a Coach – Leaders need to feel that they are being encouraged and supported. Therefore, we will have coaches oversee 4-6 small groups and will meet monthly with their small group leaders to encourage and build into them. At that time, leaders will report on the group and any extra care needed by the pastors. (Exodus 18:21-23)

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES/FAMILIES OF GROUPS TO BE DEVELOPED?

After describing what we believe groups should be on the previous page, below is the list of different types of groups we aim to develop:

1. ACT Groups – The purpose of these groups is to Apply Christ’s Truths, using questions based on the Sunday morning sermon. ACTs groups will intentionally invite the lost, disciple the found, connect the loosely connected and care for the hurting. The components of an ACT include reading, discussing, and devoting themselves to following God’s Word, prayer, fellowship and service. The groups are intentionally mixed and multigenerational which not only provides different perspectives but also hopefully cross-pollinates people spiritually based on their spiritual maturity. Of course, maturity always results in reproduction so ACTs will seek to multiply in due time.
2. Discovery Groups – Often people will investigate the Christian Faith or have recently found Christ in our church. For these people who are not already connected to an ACT, the Discovery Group provides a safe environment to learn about Christ and how to follow Him. The goal of Discovery Groups is not only to disciple new believers but also to transition into ACT groups that multiply themselves. Discovery Groups will be open to newcomers and will teach about baptism, prayer, Bible study, service and spiritual gifts.
3. Deeper Groups – The focus of these gender specific groups is to provide supplemental Bible Study to an ACT. For example, women meet around tables on Tuesday mornings to discuss Biblical topics. The curriculum includes DVDs with noted Bible teachers. (Luke 6:48)
4. Prayer Groups – Though we expect our ACT and Discovery groups to be praying for one another both in and outside of groups, there are times people gather for the singular purpose of prayer. (Matt. 26:36-37) Such groups will have a designated leader who will be a catalyst for seeking God and interceding for others. Currently, we have three Men’s Prayer Groups that meet either weekly or monthly.
5. Support Groups – There are times that people need extra assistance in carrying life’s burdens, including times of loss, grief, divorce and struggles with addiction. Groups such as Griefshare, Divorce Care, and Mothering are offered occasionally for short time periods while Celebrate Recovery Groups meet weekly on Monday nights for those needing recovery and accountability from “habits, hurts and hang-ups.”
6. Connection Groups – In order to connect with people in our community, we use hobbies, needs, skills and interests to build relationships and have spiritual conversations about Christ. The hope is then to transition these short-term groups

into a Discovery or ACT group. Neighbours and co-workers who share a common affinity with you might be the ideal people to invite to a Connection Group.

WHAT IS SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP?

Spiritual leadership is Spirit followership that influences others to do the same! It is evidenced in spiritual leaders' lives through the following intentional and required actions:

- 1) Trusting in Christ - One cannot be a spiritual leader unless they have the Holy Spirit who convicts them of their sin and then leads them to trust in Jesus Christ. Trusting in Christ is first demonstrated by being baptized and publicly identifying with Christ as Lord. (John 3:5; 16:8-10; Rom. 8:9-11; Eph. 1:13; Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38)
- 2) Following Christ Daily - Since the Holy Spirit's goal is to bring glory to Christ, Spirit-led leadership focuses on what Jesus commanded His followers to do. Therefore, the first priority of the Christian leader is to follow Christ moment by moment through prayer and obedience to God's Word. The other spiritual disciplines of fasting, living simply, celebration, solitude and resting should also be regular habits of a spiritual leader. (John 16:14; Eph. 6:18; 1 Tim. 4:7)
- 3) Serving Christ Humbly and Missionally – Spirit-led leaders are to be radically different than those leaders they encounter in the world who “lord and exercise authority over” their constituents. Instead, spiritual leaders unselfishly and humbly serve those entrusted to them. Furthermore, Spirit-led leaders know what their purpose is and align their followers to Jesus' mission of making reproducing disciples. Nothing distracts them from this clear, God-sized global vision! (Matt. 20:25-28; 28:18-20; 1 Peter 5:1-4)
- 4) Displaying Godly Character – Spiritual leaders unwaveringly hold to orthodox doctrine, are above reproach, have a good reputation with everyone and are respected, are full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, self-controlled in speech, in emotion and in action, disciplined, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money, not addicted to anything harmful, and are tested first before being given responsibility. (Acts 6:3; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:6-9)
- 5) Exercising Spiritual Giftedness – In order to lead, a person must be gifted by the Holy Spirit. Such gifts are affirmed by the Church and need to be continually developed. The goal of the leader's giftedness is to multiply himself or herself and thus bring glory to God. (Rom. 12:8; Acts 13:1-3; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 2:2)
- 6) Fighting the Evil One – Spiritual leaders understand that they are in a spiritual battle against the evil forces in this world and the heavenly realms. They engage the Evil One through the memorization and proclamation of God's Word, through prayer and fasting, faith and submission to God, righteous living and believing in the power of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit. (James 4:7; Eph. 6:10-20; Mark 9:29; Matt. 4:1-11; 1 John 2:14; 4:4)

- 7) Growing in Competencies² – Effective leaders love people and show that love using their skills of understanding and presenting a clear vision, interpersonal communication, envisioning and executing a plan, setting goals, recruiting, training, and empowering their colleagues to develop others. Spiritual leaders can also build and unify a team to reach their objectives, are able to resolve conflict and constantly evaluate their work. (Ps. 78:72)

² Dempsey, Rod. 2010. 3-D Leadership Assessment. Lecture, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, May 21.

WHAT DOES A SMALL GROUP LEADER DO?

The Goal of a Small Group Leader is...

...to be Spirit-led and influence a group of 15 or less people to do the same through modeling Christ-likeness and “shepherding” them so that they produce more Christ-followers and groups.

The Requirements of a Small Group Leader

Be a member in good standing at CBC and regularly attend worship services.

The Responsibilities of a Small Group Leader

1. **Prays** daily for his or her small group members. (1 Thess. 1:2-3)
2. **Evangelizes** the lost by regularly inviting non-believers to the group and having group members do likewise. (Luke 19:10)
3. **Makes Disciples** - The leader must facilitate the group so that CBC’s 5 *Essentials* of WORD, WORSHIP, PRAYER, GROWTH and WITNESS are being regularly demonstrated. (Matt. 28:18-20)
4. **Multiplies** through...
 - a. Finding and mentoring an apprentice who will eventually either take over the group or start a new one. (2 Tim. 2:2)
 - b. Birthing another small group within 12-24 months. (John 15:5)
5. **Prepares** the lesson and facilitates the discussion. (2 Tim. 2:15)
6. **Embraces Accountability** through meeting with their small group coach monthly to report on group issues and vitality. (Eph. 5:21) Issues that are beyond the leader’s ability or skill-set will be referred to a pastor. (Ex. 18:22)
7. **Grows Personally** by maximizing one’s God-given potential including reading about small group leadership and learning new leadership skills. It also means attending training opportunities when provided. (2 Peter 3:18)
8. **Sets Goals**³ by having the faith to set some God-sized goals as the Spirit leads them. The leader will then pray and work hard to accomplish the goals. (Neh. 4:9)
9. **Develops others** by helping the group to discover and use their giftedness to serve others inside and outside of the group. (Eph. 4:12-13)
10. **Creates a Culture of Care** within the group so the group becomes the first responder to the needs of one another. (Gal. 6:2) Such a sense of community

³ David Yonggi Cho, *Successful Home Cell Groups* (Alachua: Bridge-Logos, 1981), 158.

can be fostered by planning regular fellowship activities outside the group.
(Acts 2:46)

HOW TO LEAD A GROUP USING THE RIGHT HABITS

An effective small group leader will incorporate the following habits into his or her life and into the life of the group⁴:

1. Dream – A leader should seek God through spending time with Him in prayer and reading of His Word, for God promises us spiritual fruit if we will stay connected to Jesus. In fact, a leader can audaciously envision a healthy, growing and multiplying group and ask God for it. (John 15:5, 7) Such dreaming will also channel the energy and effort of a leader to what are the priorities in his life and ministry.
2. Pray – Leaders should pray for the members of their groups daily and the group members should pray for one another, both inside and outside of the group. (1 Thess. 1:2-3)
3. Invite – Invite new people to visit celebrations of your group weekly. (1 Cor. 14:24-25)
4. Contact – Contact group members regularly; if a group member goes wayward, go find them and bring them back. (Luke 15:3-7; Ez. 34:1-16)
5. Prepare – Group members will see a marked difference when the leader is well-prepared and organized, especially the study and discussion of God’s Word. (2 Tim. 2:15)
6. Mentor – Leaders must mentor an apprentice leader if they are to fulfill God’s mandate of multiplication. (2 Tim. 2:2)
7. Fellowship – People grow and groups stay fresh when they experience life together. Fellowship can occur through such outside activities as parties or service projects. (Acts 2:46-47)
8. Correct – One of the reasons why we are in a group together is to sharpen one another. (Prov. 27:17) This requires that we speak the “truth in love” to one another, which will ultimately lead to maturity if we embrace correction. (Eph. 4:15; Prov. 9:9) If the leader is going to create such a culture of truth-speaking, he or she must also be willing to receive correction.
9. Grow – We never mature fully until Heaven so we must be growing. (Phil. 3:12; 2 Peter 3:18) Groups stay fresh when leaders have kept replenish themselves through solitude, learning and new experiences. (Mark 1:35; 1 Sam. 30:6)

⁴ Adapted from Dave Earley, *The 8 Habits of Effective Small Group Leaders* (Houston: Cell Group Resources), 2001.

The BIG FOUR we want to emphasize are: PRAYER, INVITING, CONTACTING and MENTORING! Even if we solely focus on these habits, God will bless our groups because this is what He expects us to do from His Word!

HOW TO LEAD A DISCUSSION

Since the curriculum for our groups is already determined either using the sermon-based ACT questions or a pre-approved curriculum by the Adult Ministries Pastor, much of the guesswork of what to discuss is taken out of the equation. Nevertheless, a leader still needs to prepare for leading the discussion in the following ways:

1. Pray – The group leader should pray for the group members to have hearts open to what God wants them to say. (Eph. 1:18-19)
2. Fast – The group leader should consider fasting for a meal or even a day to recognize their need to be sustained “by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Matt. 4:4)
3. Study – The leader should familiarize themselves with the Scriptures and the sermon so that they are well prepared for any questions. This may include contacting the preacher if there are issues about the sermon or small group questions that the leader did not fully understand. Leaders using the sermon-based curriculum would be wise to take notes during the sermon and write down any questions they might have of the text or sermon. (2 Tim. 2:15) When leading, if you do not know the answer, say so and promise to get back to the person.
4. Transparency – Often the best questions in a small group are ones more personal in nature. In order to create a group with greater openness, the leader should be first and describe one of their failures or mishaps. (James 5:16) Of course, this must be done with authenticity and not manipulation. One can only expect the group to go where the leader has already gone.

Once the discussion has begun, here are some other tips to leading a good discussion:

- Start and end on time. Make sure the room does not have any distractions, including temperature. Arrange the seating in a circle so everybody can see each other.
- Always have the designated Scripture passage read at the beginning and keep referring the discussion back to it. Explain any difficult Biblical or theological terms.
- Set ground rules like “no interrupting or having separate conversations, full participation, confidentiality, disclosing issues of dissatisfaction and leaving the group well.”⁵
- Start with an ice-breaker then move to easier questions followed by more intense ones. Ask open-ended questions starting with “Why” or “How” as opposed to “What”. “What” questions usually only convey information whereas “why” questions cause group members to think and “how” questions cause people to apply what they are learning.
- Use “active listening” skills that echo or retell what someone has said. This not only alleviates misunderstandings but also affirms the person’s perspective.
- Be attentive and try to draw out discussion using phrases like “Tell me more about that...” or questions such as “what did that feel like?”⁶ Be responsive to those who are hurting.

⁵ Henry Cloud, Bill Donahue and John Townsend, *ReGroup* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007),

- Be encouraging and create an environment where people can appropriately open up. For example, “I appreciate that you let the group know how you are really doing, even when it’s painful. Keep it up.”⁷ Be comfortable with silence and wait for answers.
- Finish the discussion time by having the group members describe what their take away from the discussion was and how they are going to apply one thing they learned. Challenge them to take the risk to trust and follow what the Spirit is telling them to do.

⁶ Ibid, 66.

⁷ Ibid, 71.

HOW TO TRAIN AN APPRENTICE

In order for leaders to reproduce other leaders, they have to surrender to Christ their personal ambition for greatness. John the Baptist is the best example of this attitude when he declared about Christ, “He must become greater; I must become less.” (John 3:30) Having this attitude will then allow us to shift the focus from our own leadership to the leadership of others so that we can “present everyone perfect in Christ.” (Col. 1:28) Here are some of the steps to training an apprentice⁸:

1. Pray - Pray that God would send you an apprentice and then watch for God to reveal that person to you. Look for people in your “current group, past groups, someone in the church, your friends, new converts, your family or even those others overlook.”⁹
(Matt. 9:10) Watch for people who are eager to learn!
2. Hang Out Together - Spend time with the person outside of the group to get to know them. Mentoring best occurs when there is a relationship built on time and trust. Take them with you if there is a crisis with one of the members of the group.
3. Recruit - Make sure they fit the qualifications of a leader as described in this manual on page 6. Never compromise by choosing someone who does not have the character, calling, chemistry and competency to be a leader. Some of the indications that a person is a potential leader is that they show “influence with others, strong relational skills, drive, and intelligence.”¹⁰ However, the most important indicator is that they passionately love God and others. They should also be gentle, faithful, available, self-motivated, teachable and trustworthy. People who are “complainers, rebellious, dishonest or arrogant”¹¹ should be not considered as potential leaders. (2 Tim. 3:2-9; James 4:6) Use a written job description to communicate what the expectations are of an apprentice leader.
4. Meet - Meet with your apprentice before and after the group to discuss and debrief. Ask them questions like “What did you notice most about the group tonight?” and “What would have you done differently?”
5. Delegate – Identify them to the group as your assistant, which will give credibility. Assign some responsibilities each week and let them know in advance such as leading the ice-breaker, introduction to the lesson, prayer time, outreach project or outside fellowship activity.
6. Observe - Allow them to lead one lesson or discussion per month in your presence.
7. Educate - Have them read books and attend training sessions with you. Discuss what they are learning.

⁸ Adapted from Rod Dempsey, “A Strategy to Transition a Traditional Church Educational System to a Small Group System.” (D. Min. thesis. Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004), 120.

⁹ Dave Earley, *Turning Members into Leaders* (Houston: Cell Group Resources, 2004), 37.

¹⁰ Bill Hybels, *Courageous Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 130.

¹¹ Earley, *Turning Members into Leaders*, 43.

8. Motivate - Evaluate their progress, emphasizing the positive. Allow them the freedom to fail while gently giving corrective criticism in areas that need improving.
9. Inspire – Remind them how God is using them and how He wants to use them to reproduce. Formally, hand off the group to them when they are ready and challenge them to find another apprentice to mentor.

HOW TO GROW YOUR GROUP

Growth means change and many of us do not like change. Therefore, we need to evaluate whether we are willing to pay the price for growth, through the sacrifice of our time and effort in order to reap the benefits. Before any ground can be planted, it first must be cultivated to break up the hardness of the soil. God will need to break up some of the hardness in your heart before He can plant the seeds of growth. Here are the steps to growing your group.

1. Reflect – Spend time reading Luke 15 and put yourself in the stories of the lost sheep, coin and sons. Recall God’s grace in your life and remember the Cross of Jesus Christ who suffered and died for you. (2 Cor. 5:14-15) Letting the love of God fill your heart will break you for the things that break His! What breaks God’s heart the most is the lost and this is why Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost! (Luke 19:10)
2. Pray - Pray every day for God to grow the group because ultimately He is the only one who can cause growth. (1 Cor. 3:7) Pray that God would bring new people and new apprentices.
3. Prioritize Evangelism – Without emphasizing the lost, they soon can be forgotten. Maybe you need to get creative. Here are some ideas:
 - Make pictures of lost people you are praying for and tape them to your milk carton with a little bit of information on the “missing” person, and then bring in the milk carton to show your group. Maybe they will want to do the same.
 - Use a marker board to write the name of the people you are praying for to invite to church or to your group.¹² Pray for these people weekly.
 - Make the prayer time at group solely focused on the lost once a month.
4. Seek New People – When God brings somebody new into your neighbourhood, school, workplace or church, start praying about how you can win them to Christ. “Pay attention to newcomers to church and invite them to your group. When a new sermon series begins, invite people at the start of every new series.”¹³ Be sensitive to times when people might be more open to accepting an invitation to your group such as “the death of a loved one, a move to a new neighbourhood, city, job or school, divorce, marriage, family crisis, major illness, or birth of a child.”¹⁴ (1 Cor. 9:19-23) If the group gets too large, multiply. (see page 101)
5. Persevere – Too often, we do not put enough time and effort into winning the lost and we stop inviting after the initial rejection. Keep asking until the Spirit says stop! (Gal. 6:10)

¹² Dempsey, D. Min. thesis, 121.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Earley, *8 Habits of Effective Small Group Leaders*, 41.

6. Serve Together in a Community Cause – Invite new people to serve alongside your group in short-term service projects for the community. This will introduce them to the group and let them see Jesus' love in action. (Matt. 5:16)

HOW TO MULTIPLY YOUR GROUP

Multiplying groups is bitter sweet and could be likened to children leaving home to go to college, start a career or get married. All along the goal was to raise the child so that they would someday be mature enough for God to use them to make a difference in this world, yet when this is actually accomplished there is sadness about the child no longer being under your watchful care. Reproducing small group leaders will feel the same way. It is important to remember that this is part of the “supernatural” process of God building His Kingdom. Below are some strategic actions¹⁵ to multiply your group:

1. Prayer - Pray that God would multiply your group! (John 15:5)
2. Mentor – Select and train an apprentice. See page 9 in this manual for more details. (2 Tim. 2:2) Check frequently on the group’s progress after birth.
3. Preach – Even if the group leader is not a preacher, he must act like one when it comes to proclaiming God’s plan for multiplication. This involves reminding of their purpose – to make more disciples of Jesus Christ! (Matt. 28:18-20)
4. Set Goals – In cooperation with the Holy Spirit, have the group set some individual and group growth goals, which include evangelizing the lost. Talk about these goals at least monthly! One of these goals should be an expected “due date” for the birth of a new small group. Use positive language to describe the birth of the new group such as “multiply” instead of the word “divide” and never use the word “split.”
5. Report – Report on your progress to your small groups coach, which will hold you accountable for growth and multiplication.
6. Celebrate – Whenever new people come to faith or start attending the group, make a big deal about it because God does! (Luke 15:10) This also reminds people of our mission to multiply disciples.
7. Determine the Type of Birth – There are different ways to multiply groups. Groups can grow to a certain size and then have the apprentice lead the discussion for one half of the group in a separate room at the same location. (e.g. The entire group meets for fellowship and then breaks out for the discussion time with one group meeting downstairs and the other meeting upstairs in a home.) Other suggestions are:¹⁶
 - a) Two groups of equal size multiply from a parent group.
 - b) A core group from a parent group launches a new group.
 - c) One person from a parent group plants a new group while others remain as part of the parent group. There is the choice of the apprentice leading the new

¹⁵ Adapted from Dempsey, D. Min. thesis, 123.

¹⁶ Earley, *8 Habits of Effective Small Group Leaders*, 70

group or better yet, the mentor leader starts the new group. This could be likened to how the Apostle Paul planted churches and then left them in the capable hands of elders. (Acts 14:23)

HOW TO HANDLE THE CHILDREN

Child-care might seem like an obstacle to overcome but we would do well to remember the words of our Lord Jesus who rebuked His disciples when the children seemed to be interfering with His ministry, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” (Matt. 19: 14) The Bible teaches that children are a blessing from the Lord (Psalm 127:3-5) and should be treated as such. In fact, Deuteronomy 6:6-9 instructs us to impress God’s commands as we “sit at home,” which could be applied to when we have guests in our home for small groups. There are massive long-term benefits if children learn from those older in a casual setting such as a home. This was the case in the Early Church where believers met in homes and entire households came to faith. (Acts 10:44; 16:15, 34) Obviously, children heard and embraced the Gospel in their homes during “small group” meetings and because they did, the message was carried on from generation to generation. Our faith is a direct result of the early believer’s children hearing the Gospel and observing Christ’s commands in their homes.

Nevertheless, the question still needs to be addressed of how to deal with the practical realities of children during small group time. Here are some of the options¹⁷:

- Parents pay for babysitting in their homes. (Perhaps several parents who live nearby pool together.) Some churches have actually budgeted money to reimburse people at a predetermined rate for their childcare expenses. “This can be costly but it’s less than paying debt service on a larger building that would sit empty for most of the week.”¹⁸
- Group members arrange for a babysitter at another home. Using teens from the church might be a possibility. Another potential resource for babysitting could be older folks in the church who look at this as a ministry.
- Members rotate child-care responsibilities on a weekly basis. To avoid one member feeling left out, have two members of the same-sex provide child-care each week.
- Groups meet in homes close to the campus during child-care programs at church. (Note: This does not work for parents of nursery age children since they might need to be called to attend to their children. Children’s workers may also feel left out so another night needs to be provided for workers to have small group and their children cared for.)
- Children are part of the group. This works especially well where there are older children. All the children could participate in the fellowship and prayer time and then the older children take care of the younger ones in the basement during the discussion time. We encourage teenagers to be a part of adult small groups, since children who participate in a group can learn a lot from God’s Word and how a Christians relate to one another in healthy ways. (Ps. 145: 4) They become more mature and develop relationships with older people, who train them both by what is taught and caught. (Ps. 144:12) Kids also form stronger relationships with their

¹⁷ Adapted from Rod Dempsey, D. Min. thesis, 124.

¹⁸ Andy Stanley and Bill Willits, *Creating Community* (Sisters: Multnomah Publishers, 2004), 168.

peers as they see one another each week. An overlooked benefit is the potential for finding a future spouse within the group.

Any child-care provider other than the child's own parents should be screened and fall under the authority of the church's child-safety policy. Lastly, materials should be provided for children to use during group time so the burden of preparation is minimized for the child-care giver.

HOW TO HANDLE DIFFICULT PEOPLE

It should come as no surprise that followers of Jesus Christ will experience trials from those they are trying to serve. Jesus actually promises, “If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.” (John 15:20) And like Jesus, we must still love and serve them. In fact, Paul reminded Timothy, “the Lord’s servant must not quarrel, he must be kind to everyone ... Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance.” (2 Tim. 2:24-25) The take away from these verses for small group leaders is to gently instruct difficult people. Gentleness is required, especially since correcting people is fraught with danger. (Prov. 9:7) It helps to be aware of the different types of difficult people, who Neal McBride describes (with possible solutions in *italics*):¹⁹

- Social Sidney – Sidney only attends group for the parties. *Have her organize the socials.*
- Academic Ann – Ann is consumed with Bible Study and loves to show her Biblical and theological knowledge. *Remind Ann that the goal is to apply God’s Word. (James 1:17)*
- Application Alice – Alice always wants to know how relevant the lesson is to her. *Ask Alice, “What are you going to do with what you learned this week?”*
- Counselor Carol – Carol loves to counsel people. *If the group is not a support group remind the group that counselling is best left for another setting. If the group is a support group, remind Carol that the goal is not to fix but support people. (Prov.14:10)*
- Counselee Clara – Clara wants the group to serve as a therapy session. *Clara needs to consider other people’s feelings. The next time another person’s problem is disclosed ask Clara to give a possible solution.*
- Preacher Patrick – Every group session is Patrick’s pulpit. *Remind Patrick that the group agreed to discuss the pastor’s sermon or DVD teacher’s lesson.*
- Talkative Tom – Tom loves to dominate the group. *Meet privately with Tom and ask him to help you draw out other people’s answers. Tom might be your next apprentice!*
- Forced Frank – Frank attends against his will because his wife has demanded he come. *Attempt to befriend Frank; meeting with him privately. Tell him you love him because love breaks the hardest of hearts.*
- Silent Sam – Sam is deathly afraid of talking. *After the group has been meeting for some time, direct a question to Sam by saying, “Sam, we believe you could add some very valuable insight and we would be incomplete without hearing from you.” Then be silent yourself and wait for Sam to answer. Affirm Sam’s contribution.*

Other Scenarios

1. Difficult questions - If a difficult question arises that you do not know the answer to, just admit, “I don’t know, but I will do my best to find an answer for you next week.” Remember, being humble actually gives you more credibility in people’s eyes!

¹⁹ Neal F. McBride, *How to Lead Small Groups* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1990), 108.

2. Wrong answers – Correcting adults is challenging because you never want to embarrass them after they took the risk of answering a question. “When somebody gives a wrong answer, solicit a viewpoint from someone else: ‘Okay, what do others think?’ or ‘Does anyone know other Scripture passages that may help us here?’”²⁰
3. Tangential Discussion – Acknowledge that the discussion has left its original intent by saying, “This is very interesting. However, we’ve left our topic. Perhaps we could discuss this further during the fellowship time.”

²⁰ Dempsey, D. Min. thesis, 126.

HOW TO START A NEW GROUP

Starting a small group might seem intimidating, but remember that you are not trying attempting this endeavour by yourself- Christ is with you. In fact, making disciples through small groups is acting on behalf of the ultimate Small Group Leader, Jesus Christ! He promises to be with you in this venture! (Matt. 28:20) Before starting a group, you need to talk to the Adult Ministries Pastor to receive approval and training. Then you need to determine...

1. What type of group do you want to be? The different types of groups are often classified:²¹
 - a) Process-oriented – These groups focus on spiritual and/or social relationships and are often described as “growth groups.”
 - b) Content-oriented – This classification includes a variety of Bible Study and discussion groups.
 - c) Task-oriented – These are “doing” groups and emphasize service. Task-forces, service groups or even affinity groups can be classified as task-oriented.
 - d) Need-oriented – The primary reason underlying this type of group is a common need among the members. Sometimes called support groups or recovery groups, the members meet together for common empathy and encouragement.

A listing of the specific types of small groups at CBC can be found on page 4, will determine who you invite to your group.

2. When will you meet?
3. Where will you meet? (This includes seeking out a host home. See page 15 for ideas.)
4. How long will you meet, both in frequency and duration? (e.g. Will the group meet weekly all year long?)
5. What will you do when you meet? (What will be the components of group time?)
6. How will you invite people to the group? (See page 10 for ideas.)
7. How will children be cared for? (See page 12 for options.)
8. Who will be your apprentice? (See page 9 for tips on selecting and training apprentices.)
9. When will you multiply? (REMEMBER to continually cast vision for multiplying once the group begins!)

Once you have determined these questions you need to do the following:²²

- Pray about who you are going to invite to the group.
- Start building a prospect list. Begin with new people, as they are likely not already connected to a group. Next invite neighbours, co-workers, schoolmates, family and friends. Promote your small group through mailings, lawn signs, phone calls, e-mails, Facebook, conversations, invitation cards and church bulletin announcements. Do not get discouraged if not everyone

²¹ McBride, 65.

²² Dempsey, D. Min. Thesis, 127.

accepts your invitation to join a group as some will decline. Pray for those who have accepted your invitation!

- Make the first night fun. Bring food then delegate this task! Set ground rules like “no interrupting, everybody needs to participate, confidentiality is valued, issues of dissatisfaction should be brought up right away and the group should be left well.”²³

²³ Henry Cloud, Bill Donahue and John Townsend, *ReGroup* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), 33.

HOW TO SELECT A GOOD HOST HOME

One of the characteristics of the early believers was their hospitality towards one another (3 John 8) and strangers (Heb. 13:2). God sees hospitality as so important that He requires His leaders to be hospitable, (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8) all Christ's followers without complaint (1 Peter 4:9; Rom. 12:13). The reason why God emphasizes hospitality is that being welcomed into one's home is the same image of Christ being welcomed in our hearts. (John 14:23; Rev. 3:20) Christ Himself leads by example by inviting us through His door to experience eternal life. (John 10:9) Though it is the requirement of all believers to be hospitable, there are some who are more practiced and experienced at it than others. It is these people who you want to invite to serve as hosts of your small group. In fact, hosts may not even be non-believers at the time but allow you access to a community! (Acts 10:17-24; 16:15; Luke 10:5-7) This allows the leader to multiply groups quicker since the group doesn't have to find another location to meet when the leader leaves to start a new group.²⁴

The goal of the host is to make people feel welcomed and loved. Hosts are likely to be the first people with whom newcomers come in contact, so they have a vital role in making people feel comfortable and accepted in the small group. A bad first impression can destroy the many hours of prayer and effort it took to invite people to the group. Here are some guidelines for creating a warm, inviting environment for a small group:²⁵

- Be prepared. An excellent host will be ready well in advance of the starting time to greet people as they arrive. *Pray as you prepare!* The house should be tidy and pleasant with the bathroom clean and supplied. Have extra pens, papers or Bibles handy if needed. Make sure you have enough chairs for unexpected newcomers. Have cups and plates ready for refreshments. Providing snacks should be shared by the entire group so that the host is not burdened with this extra responsibility and expense every week. Have newcomers bring snacks so they feel like they belong. Create a snack sign-up list and encourage the group to bring healthy, easy to prepare and inexpensive snacks.
- Be welcoming. In winter, have the driveway shovelled of any snow that might impede people, along with de-icing the walkway. (It would be disastrous to have someone slip and fall before they even attend the group!) In case of rain, those without an umbrella should be escorted in. Let people know where they can park so that they are not ticketed. The host should warmly greet people when they arrive, especially looking for newcomers who are often the first to arrive. Offer to take their coats when they come in. Your goal is to make your house a place of respite after a long hard day of work. Set the tone for the group by looking for ways to encourage your guest(s). Providing a refreshment can make a person much more comfortable and willing to converse.
- Eliminate any distractions. Have the room smelling pleasant. (We can get so accustomed to the smells in our home that we do not notice them anymore.) Make sure the temperature is comfortable in the house (20°C or 67°F is recommended). Set the lighting so that it creates a warm atmosphere, and have the TV/DVD operating well in case the group uses a video. Keep your dog or cat in a separate room. Play soft music as people arrive but turn it off once the group time starts. Let the answering machine pick up your calls (turn off the ringer), and make sure children are looked after. (See page 12 for options.)

Being a host might seem like a thankless job but those who serve and use their resources well might someday be in turn welcomed into eternal dwellings for their faithfulness. (Luke 16:9)

²⁴ Neil Cole, *Organic Church* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005), 186.

²⁵ Adapted from Rod Dempsey, D. Min. Thesis, 128.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND READING ON SMALL GROUPS

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- Peace, Richard. *Small Group Evangelism*. London: Scripture Union, 1985.
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WEBSITESwww.smallgroups.com;www.touchusa.org;www.smallgrouptrader.com;www.joelcomiskeygroup.com

Appendix E: Internship Manual
**Calvary Baptist Church
Ministry Intern Program**

March 31, 2008

1. The Impetus for an Internship Program

Though we have had many internships throughout the rich history of Calvary Baptist Church (CBC), a formal Ministry Internship Program (MIP) has never been established. In order to become more intentional in our efforts to fulfill the mandate of “*preparing God’s people for works of service so that the Body of Christ may be built up*” (Ephesians 4:12), we would like to establish a formal Ministry Internship Program. Interns would work along-side fulltime ministry staff in adult, worship, youth, missions and child ministry programs gaining valuable mentoring and ministry experience.

2. The Ministry Intern Program (MIP)

a) Program Goal

The goal for the Ministry Intern Program is: “**to provide a Godly learning environment for men and women who feel led by Lord to train for vocational Ministry.**” This is a process by which a person can ascertain their gifts and discover their calling to vocational ministry as affirmed by the Church. Through this process one may determine the reality of his or her call, develop a valid personal concept of ministry and mature emotionally and spiritually.

b) Program Objectives

The objectives of the program being commensurate with the goal will: **1) provide an environment where Interns can participate in hands-on ministry in one of the program areas namely: a General Pastoral Ministry internship, a Youth Ministry internship, a Worship and Music Arts Ministry internship, a Missions internship and a Children’s Ministry internship; 2) provide opportunity to develop vocational ministry skills; provide a learning environment that will engender spiritual growth and maturity; and, 3) provide an environment that will allow participants to engage in advanced theological studies.**

c) Intended Outcomes

The four intended outcomes of the MIP at CBC are:

1. *Personal maturation* – One focus of the MIP is upon the intern’s personality. A number of significant questions need to be raised. For instance, does the intern have an image of himself or herself that is either inflated or too low? To what degree does the intern understand his or her gifts for ministry? How does

his or her particular personality relate to authority figures? These, and a host of other questions, need to be explored in the context of serving Christ.

2. *Theological Integration* – An internship allows theoretical and theological concepts to develop into transferable ministry practices. This is important because a weak theology is easily detected within the context of ministry. For instance, a weak understanding of conversion may lead a person in ministry either to refrain from leading others into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, or, it may lead the witness to adapt manipulative techniques which fail to take into account the work of the Holy Spirit in such a decision. A person's understanding of theology can be integrated into one's own ministry best by the doing of ministry. Supervision can help to focus on this profound matter.
3. *Spiritual formation* (as well as character formation) – Christ says in John 15:5 that “*apart from Him we can do nothing*”. Therefore, spiritual formation is vital to spiritual fruit. An internship experience without a radical personal relationship with God, very easily becomes an exercise in futility and meaninglessness. The intern will be taught and encouraged to practice the spiritual disciplines of studying God's Word, Prayer, Worship, Fellowship, Simplicity, Solitude & Silence, Fasting and Celebration that will be used by God to sustain his or her ministry.
4. *Ministry Skill Competence* – Every intern participating in the MIP ought to be able to say with some measure of confidence that he or she has developed skills in one or more of the basic functions of ministry. This cannot occur simply by studying. Just as it is impossible to learn to drive an automobile by only reading the Driver's Safety Manual, so also it is impossible to learn to minister by only sitting in the classroom. CBC's milieu is designed to integrate all of the intern's theological understandings with the practice of ministry, providing opportunity where such skills can be developed. We have identified the following skilled competencies:
 - 1) Preaching
 - 2) Teaching
 - 3) Visiting
 - 4) Administration/management/leadership
 - 5) Interpersonal
 - 6) Evangelism
 - 7) Counseling/pastoral care
 - 8) Worship Arts

d) Intended Personal Qualities

Underlying these intended outcomes are the intended personal qualities that we hope the intern will pursue, namely:

1. Christ-like character
2. Service without regard for personal acclaim
3. Responsible functioning

4. A positive approach to ministry
5. Acknowledgement of one's own personal limitations

3. The Definition and Difference between Internships

As stated above in our goal, we are targeting those who feel called to train for vocational ministry. In order to intentionally strategize for these internships we can develop a track towards full internships. The different levels of development are as follows:

1. *Co-ops* – We will encourage and provide co-ops for students who are intrigued to learn more about ministry in conjunction with local secondary schools. Those interested in a co-op at CBC should contact the pastor with whom they are interested in working with. Co-ops are unpaid ministry experiences.
2. *Short-term Internships* – We will encourage and provide short-term internships to those who are interested in exploring the potential of vocational ministry. These short-term internships will usually be paid positions through government funding and budget allowance but not exclusively so during the summer months. (May-August) Their duration is usually 2-4 months.
3. *Long-term Internships* – These internships are what is described in this document as being a full participant in the MIP. They are usually for a specified time and will be financially compensated according to budget allowance.

4. Description of Long-Term Internships

Different Internships are envisioned for the Program. These internships should function as a benefit to the advancement of the Kingdom of God and ministry of the Church along with the development of the intern. Therefore, it is vital that the activities in which the intern is engaged are a valid part of ministry and not just “busy work.” The roles and responsibilities for each internship are outlined below.

a) General Pastoral Ministry Internship

The General Pastoral Ministry Intern will: 1) assist the supervising Pastor in organizing and leading outreach, special events and retreats; 2) preach twice per year on a Sunday evening; 3) disciple a small group each year; 4) participate in a ministry degree track or equivalent; 5) be directly involved in hospital, seniors/shut-ins and newcomers visitation and other visitation as required; 6) participate in weekly teaching opportunities; and, 7) meet weekly with supervising Pastor to evaluate progress.

b) Youth Ministry Internship

The Youth Ministry Intern will: 1) assist the Youth Pastor in organizing and leading youth outreaches, special events and retreats; 2) disciple a group of young people each year; 3) participate in a ministry degree track or equivalent; 4) participate in visitation related to youth ministry; 5) engage in weekly teaching activities as assigned; 6) pursue the required educational requirements to complete a degree; and, 7) meet weekly with supervising Pastor to evaluate progress.

c) Missions Internship

The Missions Intern will: 1) help organize and participate on short term missions teams organized by CBC; 2) research the various missions agencies and missionaries connected to CBC; 3) serve on the CBC Global Ministries committee and take one area of oversight; 4) help with organization of the annual missions conference; 5) disciple a small group each year; 6) participate in teaching as scheduled (i.e., taking a bible series, prayer meetings, etc.); 7) attend a “Missions” conference each year; 8) participate in a ministry degree track or equivalent; 9) participate in visitation as required; 10) participate in direct outreach initiatives; and, 11) meet weekly with the designated pastor to evaluate progress.

d) Children’s Ministry Internship

The Children’s Ministry Intern will: 1) assist in the communications and promotion of Children’s and Family ministries and events to the congregation; 2) assist in the scheduling and administration of Children’s and Family ministries (i.e. SS programming, Club programs, Vacation Bible School, outreach and family events, Day Camps, etc); 3) assist in the supervision and encouragement of volunteer children’s and family ministry workers; 4) assist in planning for ministries throughout the year, to gain insight into the scope of full time ministry to children and their families; 5) assist the supervising Pastor with other tasks as required; 6) pursue required educational requirements to complete a ministry degree; and 7) meet weekly with the Family Ministries Pastor to evaluate progress.

e) Worship and Music Arts Ministry Internship

The Worship and Music Arts Ministry Intern will: 1) assist in the planning, preparation, rehearsing and leading of rehearsals and/or services; 2) assist in the planning, preparation, and execution of special concert events and/or productions 3) assist in technical support ministries of sound, lighting, projection and video 4) assist the supervising Pastor with other tasks as required; 5) pursue required educational requirements to complete a ministry and or music degree, and 6) meet weekly with the Worship and Music Arts Pastor to evaluate progress.

5. Program Requirements

Admission to the General and Missions Internship Programs generally requires a minimum of an undergraduate degree. Admission to the Youth and Children’s MIP requires a minimum of 50% completion of an undergraduate or Bible College degree. Those who have graduated from a recognized College (i.e. Durham, etc.) would also be considered for admission to the MIP. Mature men and women who sense God’s call upon their lives to enter ministry will be considered on a case by case basis.

6. Program Duration

The Pastoral Team will recommend the length of each internship to the Personnel Committee. However, most internships will be based on a contract for one year with a possible extension.

7. Program Delivery

The MIP will be supervised and managed by a designated CBC Staff Pastor. Interns participating in the program will be responsible directly to the supervising Pastor of the program in which they are involved. Overall responsibility for the program rests with the Senior Pastor and Deacons, specifically the Personnel Committee.

8. CBC Commitment

CBC will provide pastoral leadership and administrative support to the Intern throughout the duration of his/her internship. CBC will cover the basic salary requirements or may from time to time require partnership support from other church/individual partners. (NOTE: The MIP will be recognized by CBC as a receiptable project of the church.) CBC will partner in tuition costs to a maximum of 50% costs for a maximum of 4 degree track courses per year related to the ministry program. Provision for teaching ministry and six month ministry involvement evaluations will be provided by the Pastoral staff.

9. Intern Commitment

Interns entering the program recognize their commitments to the Church and the Lord. Interns will be expected to: 1) strive to live “above reproach”; 2) support the individual ministries in which they are involved and the overall ministry of CBC; 3) submit to the supervising pastor and the Deacons; 4) work a minimum of 40hrs /week or as otherwise agreed; 5) provide a ministry and reporting (weekly time usage & “Experience in Ministry” report – see Appendix 3) schedule to the supervising pastor.

10. Termination

Interns and CBC may terminate the intern agreement any time giving 60 days written notice for reason without penalty.

11. Internship Application and Other Program Related Documents

Documentation related to program application, evaluation, and reporting is attached.

Appendix 1: Internship Application Form

Appendix 2: Intern Agreement

Appendix 3: Weekly Reporting Form and Experience of Ministry Report

Appendix 4: Semi-annual Internship Supervisor’s Evaluation Report

Appendix 5: Semi-annual Intern’s Self-Evaluation

Appendix 6: Writing “A Philosophy of Ministry” Guidelines

Appendix 1
CBC Ministry Internship Program Application

Name: _____ **E-mail Address:** _____

Address: _____ **City:** _____

Province: _____ **Postal Code:** _____ **Phone:** _____

Post-Secondary School: _____ **Major:** _____

Other Christian training: _____

Why are you interested in the CBC ministry internship? _____

Ministry Goals: _____

Have you ever been used to lead someone to Jesus Christ? _____

Describe any involvements in discipling others. _____

FOR CBC MEMBERS:

Date of Membership: _____ **Ministry involvement and leadership positions held:** _____

FOR NON-CBC MEMBERS:

Home Church: _____ **Denomination:** _____

Address: _____ **City:** _____ **Province:** _____

Postal Code: _____ **Phone No.:** _____

Have you contacted your home church and senior pastor? Yes: _____ No: _____

Are you willing to become a member of the CBC? Yes: _____ No: _____

The following information will be kept strictly confidential.

Has an accusation of immorality ever been raised against you? _____

Do you have any history of credit or financial problems? (This refers to filing for bankruptcy, or inability to pay bills that resulted in a formal collection procedure.) _____

Do you have a criminal record? _____

What is your current debt load? _____

References: (Please include one pastor.)

- 1) _____
 name e-mail address phone number
- 2) _____
 name e-mail address phone number
- 3) _____
 name e-mail address phone number

Please read and sign below.

I have read CBC's Doctrinal Statement and I am in full agreement.

I have read and signed the Children's Ministry Safety Policy.

I submit myself to the leadership and policies of the CBC.

I agree to abide by all of the above.

I understand that my employment in this program is subject to semi-annual review.*

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Start Date: _____

*** This program is highly selective and limited to a few.**

PLEASE ATTACH THE FOLLOWING TO YOUR APPLICATION:

Your resume, including all ministry experience.

A separate page describing your conversion and baptism.

A recent photo.

The signed Agreements.

A page stating your call to ministry and why you desire to enroll in this program.

Appendix 2 INTERN AGREEMENT

Name: _____

Today's Date _____

Start Date: _____

Church Commitments:

- Provide a supervising Pastor
- Provide weekly ministry opportunities
- Provide limited administrative support, including use of a computer (care of the computer is the responsibility of intern)
- Cover basic salary and 50% tuition for up to 4 degree-track classes related to ministry
- Provide evaluation of teaching ministry and other ministry involvements
- To encourage, support and teach

Intern Commitments:

- To strive to live "Above Reproach."
- Support the overall ministry of Calvary Baptist Church
- To willingly submit to the direction of the Board and Pastoral Staff of the church
- To work a minimum of 40 hours/week (of which 36 are paid)
- To turn in weekly intern ministry schedule/report to supervising pastor
- To fill out a CPIC and comply with Children's Ministry Safety Policy
- Write a philosophy of ministry paper (1000-1500 words) due at the end of the Internship.

* Full time benefits will be paid for by the church

* Either party may terminate the intern agreement on 60 days notice for any reason without penalty.

Intern Leave Policy:

Unless specified otherwise, or by exceptional agreement of the Deacons based on special

circumstances, upon commencement of duties, all staff will be entitled to:

- 2 weeks of vacation leave annually
- Sick leave is unpaid but may be made up.
- A day is defined as an 8-hour regular work day unless otherwise defined
- Paid statutory holidays, or a compensatory day off if the holiday is worked
- For Interns, a week of vacation equals seven consecutive days including one Sunday
- 4 weeks per year (Monday to Friday) unpaid leave to take theological and or ministry training classes or if by distance, unpaid leave as agreed for other ministry development related opportunities.
- Short-term ministry assignments or other ministry development assignments are considered work time.

Signed: Intern: _____

Board Chairman: _____ **Senior Pastor:**

Personnel Committee Chair: _____

Appendix 3
Weekly Reporting Form & Experience in Ministry Report

Weekly Reporting Form

Describe your ministry experiences each day in a paragraph (what did you do; who did minister to; any problems or questions; what did God teach you through the experience; etc. NOTE: If you were off that day, just write Day Off or Taking Classes!):

Monday - _____

Tuesday - _____

Wednesday - _____

Thursday - _____

Friday - _____

Saturday - _____

Sunday - _____

How to Write an Experience in Ministry Report

During the MIP experience, the intern is asked to write weekly “Experience-In-Ministry” reports, following the suggestions below. They are first shared with the supervising and based and then summarized to the Leadership Team at the monthly meetings. A suggestion is that these reports could serve as a basis for discussion during the supervisory sessions with the student.

The report should be typed for the supervisor prior to the discussion item and should not be more than two pages in length, double-spaced. Write the report with the usual attention to confidentiality (initials rather than names, etc.). The following items indicate some of the questions you may want to consider in your report:

1. *Context of the relationship* – A short description of how this experience took place. E.g. Why this (these) person(s)? Who initiated the meeting? When? Where? What were your expectations and feelings before the experience?
2. *Analysis of an experience* – A description of what happened and of specific aspects of the experience (not necessarily a major problem); the goals you had in mind and the reaction of the person(s) to your efforts; a “verbatim report” or “process notes” of significant verbal and or non-verbal expressions, if appropriate.
3. *Evaluation of the experience* – Your evaluation of why the experience took place as it did. What were the critical points in the relationship? Were there any obstacles that impeded the attainment of your goals? Any special insights? Looking at your experience in retrospect, are there alternate ways you could have responded in the relationship?
4. *Interpretation* – You may not need to interpret the experience through each of the categories below; however, seek to see the relevance of the experience through the four interrelated goals outlined earlier:
 - a) **Personal Maturation** – To what extent did your own personality, psychological make-up and or feelings affect your behaviour and approach in this situation?
 - b) **Theological Interpretation** – Do you see any significant theological issues, questions or implication arising from your experience as described above? If so, describe and clarify.
 - c) **Spiritual Formation** – To what extent did your personal “belief system” or lack of “belief” shape your responses to this situation? How did the experience stretch you at your point of spiritual development?
 - d) **Skill Competence** – Classify your experience as to the aspect of ministry involved; e.g. administration, preaching, teaching, visitation, evangelism, counseling, interpersonal or other unique class of ministry. What skill in that function did you utilize? What skill was lacking?

Appendix 4
CBC INTERNSHIP SUPERVISOR'S EVALUATION REPORT

INTERN'S NAME: _____
Date of Evaluation: _____ **Supervisor:** _____

Please evaluate your intern in the following areas by circling the appropriate number.

(1= poor, 5+ excellent)

TO BE COMPLETED AFTER EACH 6 MONTH PERIOD

A. Qualities as set forth in 1 TIMOTHY 3 and TITUS 1 for an ELDER/BISHOP.

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| - One – woman man | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Good manager of his family (if applicable) | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Not self – willed | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Not quick – tempered | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Abstainer: regarding tobacco, strong drink, drug abuse | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Not violent | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Not fond of dishonest gain | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Hospitable | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Lover of God | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Sound – minded | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Righteous | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Seeks to please God | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Self – controlled | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Holds fast to the Word of God | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Temperate | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Disciplined | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Able to teach Scripture | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Reasonable | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Peaceable | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Not a lover of money | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Mature Christian | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Good testimony in the church | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Good testimony outside the church | 1 2 3 4 5 |

B. Ministerial:

- | | |
|--------------|-----------|
| - Preaching | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Teaching | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| - Visitation | 1 2 3 4 5 |

- Counseling 1 2 3 4 5
- Organizational ability 1 2 3 4 5
- Leadership ability 1 2 3 4 5
- Relationship with others 1 2 3 4 5
- Handling of criticism 1 2 3 4 5
- Treatment of wife and children (if applicable) 1 2 3 4 5
- Social behavior 1 2 3 4 5

C. Personal:

- Vital relationship with the Lord 1 2 3 4 5
- Demonstrates spiritual maturity 1 2 3 4 5
- Fulfills his role in family relations 1 2 3 4 5
- Good relationship with and shows love to other Christians 1 2 3 4 5
- Completes assignments promptly 1 2 3 4 5
- Responds well to supervision and correction 1 2 3 4 5
- Meets strangers well 1 2 3 4 5
- Makes people comfortable in his presence 1 2 3 4 5
- Is accepted by people 1 2 3 4 5
- Is sensitive to people's needs 1 2 3 4 5
- Is dependable and reliable 1 2 3 4 5
- Works hard, uses his time wisely 1 2 3 4 5
- Is a diligent student of God's Word 1 2 3 4 5
- Is well prepared when ministering God's Word 1 2 3 4 5
- Interprets God's Word accurately 1 2 3 4 5
- Communicates well to all age groups 1 2 3 4 5
- Seeks opportunity to minister to people 1 2 3 4 5
- Maintains personal stability under stress 1 2 3 4 5

1. State both the strengths and the areas in which improvement is needed:

A. In personal ministry:

(Where has he/she functioned most and least capably? Where has he/she demonstrated initiative, dependability, follow-through, or lack of it? How has he/she functioned under pressure or the unexpected? Is he/she able to function independently? Was their heart in what he/she has done?)

Strengths in Personal Ministry

Areas Needing Improvement

B. In Relationships with others:

(How did the intern conduct himself/herself with others? How did others respond to the intern? Was he/she responsive to the needs of others? Were respect, discretion, consideration and concern for people demonstrated? Were positive relationships built with co-workers and the local peoples?)

Strengths in Personal Ministry

Areas Needing Improvement

C. In Working With Others:

(Was the intern a leader or follower? Does he/she work well with others or prefer to work alone? Does the intern serve others effectively?)

Strengths in Personal Ministry

Areas Needing Improvement

D. In Responding to Authority

(Is he/she open or closed to advice, counsel, and criticism? How does he/she respond to directives or suggestions?)

Strengths in Personal Ministry

Areas Needing Improvement

II. State your observations of the intern in the following areas:**A. In the way that the intern regards himself/herself:**

(Is there pride? Self-depreciation/disparagement? Wholesome attitudes?)

B. In his/her relationship to the Lord:

(Is there evidence of: a sense of reverence? Of reliance on the Lord in daily matters? Consistent devotional life? Worry? Anxiety? Doubt?)

C. In the area of physical fitness:

(How is his/her stamina level? Does he/she use common sense in caring for health needs? Are there any: specific health concerns?)

D. In areas of personal behaviour and management:

(Is he/she organized or disorganized? Prompt? Properly groomed? Disciplined? Able to handle his/her time and daily schedule to the best effect?)

III. Summary Statements:

A. Where have you seen the most growth?

B. What contribution do you feel the intern has made in 'your' ministry?

C. Do you have special concerns regarding the intern's future ministry?

D. Additional comments or concerns: (Please write on a separate sheet of paper)

Please give your personal numerical evaluation of this intern by circling the number which best reflects the performance standard for each of the following ministry skills: (5 = excellence)

1. Faithfulness and dependability

1 2 3 4 5

- | | | | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 2. | Personal initiative | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | Self-discipline | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | Open to advice & direction | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | Sensitivity & tactfulness | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | Interpersonal relationships | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | Awareness of ministry dynamics | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | Study & preparation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | Communication (Verbal skills) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. | Listening skills | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix 5
INTERN'S SELF- EVALUATION

The basic purpose of experiential learning is to provide an opportunity for you to integrate the theory learned in the classroom with field practice. In order to accomplish this integration of theology and ministry, one needs to reflect on and evaluate their present ministry direction and practices. This formal evaluation will occur every six months and you will need to arrange a suitable time to sit down with your supervisor to discuss your assessment. **Intern's Name:** _____

1. State your areas of strengths and the areas in which personal improvement is needed:

A. In your Personal Ministry:

Where did you function most and least capably? When did you demonstrate initiative, dependability, follow through, or lack of it? How did you function under pressure and deal with the unexpected? Were you able to function independently? Was your heart in what you were doing?

Strengths in my Personal Ministry

Areas I Need to Improve

B. In Relationships With Others:

How did you conduct yourself with others? How did others respond to you? Were you responsive to the needs of others? Did you show respect, discretion, consideration, and love for people? Were you able to build positive relationships with people, both church members and local peoples? What did you learn about your own personality?

Strengths in my Relationships

Areas I Need to Improve

C. In Working with Others:

Did you prefer to be a leader or follower? Did you work well with others as a contributing member of the team? Would you rather work alone? When did you give in to others?

Strengths in My Ministry

Areas I Need to Improve

D. In Responding to Authority:

Were you open or closed to advice, counsel, and criticism? How did you respond to directives and suggestions?

Strengths in My Ministry

Areas I Need to Improve

II. State your observations/perceptions in the following areas:**A. In the Way You regard Yourself:**

A sense of pride, self-depreciation/disparagement, wholesome attitudes?

B. In Your Relationship to the Lord:

A sense of reverence? Of reliance on the Lord in daily matters? Good devotional life? Worry, anxiety, doubt, etc.?

C. In the Area of Physical Fitness:

How was your stamina level? Did you use common-sense in caring for personal health needs? Did you discover any specific health concerns?

D. In Areas of Personal Behavior and Management:

Were you organized/disorganized? Prompt and punctual (according to the cultural norms)? Properly groomed? Disciplined? Able to manage your time and daily schedule?

III. Summary Statements:

A. In what areas of your life have you seen the most growth?

E. What contribution do you feel you have made in this ministry?

F. Do you have special concerns regarding your future ministry?

G. What did you learn about communicating the gospel and biblical truth within the context of a local church and/or a paraministry?

H. Were your goals and objectives clearly stated and communicated to the supervisor/trainer?

I. Did your supervisor/trainer demonstrate/model ministry skills for you?

J. Are there things the church/mission could and/or should change in order to make their program(s) more effective?

K. Additional comments:

Intern's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 6

Writing a Philosophy of Ministry

The difference between a theology of ministry and a philosophy of ministry is that the former provides the “why”, while the latter states the “how”.

EVERY CHRISTIAN LEADER IS UNIQUE!

Because of giftedness, call and opportunity, every Christian leader has something special to offer; namely a “style” of ministry for a selected people and a particular situation.

Once such a leader has discovered this style, you could say that he, or she, has learned to specialize. That is, this leader has developed good self-awareness, the ability to accept critique, a solid theology of ministry (arising out of the nature of God), and in addition, knows how to cause all of these blessings to become transferable concepts in the practice of ministry.

Such a person becomes effective when, in terms of capacity and opportunity, he, or she recognizes that everyone’s needs cannot be met by one individual, nor can one person minister well to all people; that is, one can only minister in terms of one’s giftedness. Understanding what one’s abilities are and how they become effective in the practice of ministry constitutes one’s philosophy of ministry.

In other words, an acceptable philosophy of ministry will be the expression of how one understands personal style, and how, one explains, how his, or her, style equips others for ministry. In addition, it is a statement that indicates how one has set priorities for the practice of ministry.

The process of setting personal priorities for the practice of ministry is the main component in establishing one’s philosophy of ministry.

In saying this, it should be noted that the priorities one sets recognize the giftedness and styles of others; and, the priorities one sets are compatible with the particular ministry one serves.

THE PROCESS

The process of setting significant priorities for ministry and, therefore, of being able to write a philosophy of ministry, may be achieved by considering the following 7 guidelines.

1. Your philosophy of ministry should...
 - a) Take into account your gifts and abilities.
 - b) Meet the needs of your ministry situation.
 - c) Not betray your theology of ministry.
2. Before developing your philosophy of ministry, you should be able to write down in 25 words or less your theology of ministry. This is the first step in writing a philosophy of ministry.

3. Normally, you do not include your theology of ministry in your statement of philosophy. But, in writing your theology of ministry, you are clarifying for yourself (and others) the biblical assumption upon which your practice of ministry rests. Remember, your philosophy of ministry should not betray your theology of ministry.
4. The next step is, in terms of theology of ministry, to write down a definitive statement of the purpose of the church, or particular ministry you have engaged (and possibly that of the Kingdom of God, although not essential.)
5. Then, in light of your biblical and theological understandings of the purpose of the church or ministry, write down your personal sense of purpose within the ministry of the church. That is, what is your vision? Use Scripture. This should also be a definitive statement, in which you define how you see your place in the work of the Kingdom of God.
6. With your purpose/vision clarified, in focus, then develop your philosophy of ministry; that is, outline what your strategy is to fulfill your own ministry as you understand it. Please note that this statement should be...
 - a) Explicit. It must be written down, not just taken for granted. Writing disciplines thinking, and as you go through several drafts, God will reveal to you new and creative things.
 - b) A conviction. If you do not believe your philosophy of ministry is the best and most biblical, you need to work on it some more. Why should others be expected to follow your philosophy of ministry if you fully don't?
 - c) Stable. If you change your philosophy of ministry frequently, you may short-change your potential.
 - d) Open to modification. This characteristic balances the one above. Nothing should be set entirely in concrete. If flaws become evident, they should be subject to change. Therefore, keep your philosophy open to change, but do not change it easily or without much prayer, counsel and deliberation.

The final step is build into your philosophy of ministry a statement of how you see your role, or style, of ministry; and also, how it will work in the carrying forward of your ministry. It should be uniquely you!

Appendix F: The New Order

Rulers and Great Ones dominated the world of the disciples. The Greeks called them “Archontes” and “Megaloi”. Both words have made their way into our English language. “Arch” refers to rule as in monarch (one-rule) or democracy (rule by the people). “Mega” is used as a compound word for “great” such as in megaphone. The “archs” were both religious and secular rulers with the basic idea of being “first” or “chief”. In the secular world there were civil rulers to obey (Rom. 13:3). The synagogues had their rulers (Luke. 8:41 – lit. “arch”-synagogue). The Pharisees had their “archs” (Luke. 14:1). In the temple the high priests or chief priests were “arch”-priests. This is the root word for “hierarchy”. There were also “Megas”. In fact, the population seems to have been divided between the small and the “Megas” (Act 8:10; 26:22).

In Matthew 20:20-28, when the Disciples aspired to these top positions in the coming kingdom, Jesus introduced a new order. The top positions in the kingdom would not be rulers and great ones but instead, servants and slaves. Instead of lording it over people by using authority, the greatest in the kingdom of Jesus and the ones at the forefront would be identified by serving and giving of themselves as Jesus did (v. 28). It seems clear that in the new order, the emphasis was not on position but on serving and suffering as they followed the example of Jesus. It has been pointed out that, while the disciples were looking for crowns, Jesus offered them crosses.

Here is the question to be answered: was this to be the standard for the church? I believe it can be proven that it was. Searching the rest of the New Testament, you will discover that “arch”, either in noun or verb form, is never used of leaders in the church. There were “archs” in the synagogue and temple but not in the church. There are priests in the church (I Peter 2:5) but the only “arch”-priest is Jesus Christ (Hebrews 2:17). There were pastors or shepherds in the church ((Ephesians 4:11) but the only “arch”-shepherd is Christ (I Peter 5:4) and He is the only “mega”-shepherd (Hebrews 13:20). So where does that leave hierarchy in the church. The answer seems to be, “Nowhere”, because Christ is the only chief or “first one” in the church. The hierarchy is a “lowerarchy” as the way up is down.

It would also seem to be no accident that “arch” is never used of leaders in the home. Therefore, patriarchy from an etymological standpoint does not have an exegetical base in the New Testament. Instead, there is a new order for leadership in the home and in the church that needs to be examined.

There are two main words for leadership that are sometimes translated as “rule” or “ruler” in the New Testament, particularly in the King James Version. The first is

“hegeomai” seen in Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24. It carries the concept of leading because of the esteem with which the leaders are held. Verse 7 points out that their position was backed up by their lives so they led by example. The same word is translated “esteem” or “highest regard” in I Thessalonians 5:13. It does not have the concept of a “boss”. In Luke 22:26, the one who rules takes the position of a servant. Being a young pastor, Timothy must have had a problem with acceptance. Paul did not tell him to demand recognition because of his position but rather to gain acceptance through a good example (I Tim. 4:12).

The second word is “proistimi” which literally means to “stand in front of” and has the concept of standing in front to protect. This word developed a secondary meaning of “caring for”. It is actually one of the spiritual gifts in Romans 12:8. The father’s leadership in the home is described by this term in I Timothy 3:4, 5, 12, while discussing the qualifications of overseers (bishops) and deacons. The TDNT has some significant discussion of the meaning of this word. Reicke notes “There is the thought of standing or going before someone or something in protection...In most cases ‘proistimi’ seems to have sense a.) ‘to lead’ but the context shows in each case that one must take into account sense b.) ‘to care for’ ...the task of the ‘proistamenoī’ is in a large measure that of pastoral care, and the emphasis is not on their rank or authority but on their efforts for eternal salvation of believers” (TDNT, Vol. 6, pp.700ff).

This latter word for leadership defines the position of pastor in the church and father in the home as one who has the responsibility for protection and care. I Timothy 3:5 equates this type of leadership with “taking care”, a word used in Luke 10:34, 35 in the parable of the Good Samaritan, “Then he...took him to an Inn and took care of him...‘Look after him’, he said”. The father is not a patriarchal boss in the home but someone who provides protective, caring leadership. The pastor or elder is not a hierarchal boss in the church but one who provides protective caring leadership especially against what Paul calls “savage wolves” (Acts 20:29). The King James translation of I Timothy 5:17 has led some to establish an “Elder-rule” that is far more authoritarian than is warranted by the texts in I Timothy.

Obviously, this understanding of New Testament leadership has important implications for the whole gender issue in both the home and the church. In dealing with the question of women’s ministry in the church, the issue first addressed is frequently that of what a woman may not do. It is interesting to note what women did do. Since Paul is viewed by some as a chauvinist who suppressed women by directing them to “keep silent” (I Corinthians 14:34) and not “to teach” (I Timothy 2:12), one needs to look at the ministry Paul did recognize in women.

The personal greetings section of Romans has numerous references to women co-workers. In fact, a significant portion of those singled out for special mention are women. Phoebe was some kind of servant or minister (16:1). Priscilla along with her husband were fellow workers who risked their lives for Paul. Mary “worked very hard” for the Roman church (16:6). Junias was included as a fellow prisoner and “outstanding among the apostles”, “apostle”, probably used in the sense of “missionary” (16:7).

Tryphena and Tryphosa also “worked hard in the Lord” as well as Persis (16:12). When it speaks of these women working very hard in the Lord, you can’t help believing it was more than making bagels. It communicates that their ministry was very important to Paul and counteracts the charge that he had a low view of the value of women.

Similarly in Philippians, Paul speaks of Euodia and Syntyche as “women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel” (4:3). The expression points to an equal partnership along with Clement. Paul not only allows women in ministry but also treats it as something normal and desirable.

When it comes to teaching ministry, everyone accepts older women training younger women (Titus 2:4). There also seems to be no problem with women teaching their children the Scriptures concerning salvation (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15). More disputed is the fact that both Priscilla and Aquila “exegeted” (Acts 18:26) the way of God more adequately to Apollos. While it is pointed out that it was in conjunction with her husband, the verb is plural. Both were involved. That opens the door to the fact that under some circumstances women can be involved in teaching men.

The question boils down to this: If women can receive and pass on insight from the word of God, should men be denied the benefit of those insights? One of the best commentaries on II Corinthians is by Margaret Thrall. Should she not have written it in case some man might be taught by a woman? When riding in the car and my wife is listening to a tape by Kay Arthur or Ann Graham Lotz, should I use earplugs lest I learn something about the scripture from a woman?

The issue is more basic than that. Should not women be able to exercise their gifts in the church to the benefit of all, including men? If we answer these questions in the affirmative, does that necessarily mean that there are no gender distinctive ministries or offices in the church? Proponents of a certain egalitarian viewpoint say, “No!” They propose that all offices in the church including elder, pastor or overseer should be equally accessible by both men and women. Anything less gives women only a secondary place in the church. It means that women are denied the top positions in the church.

Two questions need to be addressed. First, what are the top positions in the church? Returning to our original argument, if the top positions in the new order are servants and slaves rather than “megs” and “archs”, then the top positions are equally open to women and men. One doesn’t find very many men fighting to keep women from being servants and slaves. On the other hand, the right to be equal servants and slaves doesn’t seem to be what the egalitarians are contending for either.

It is worthwhile to note what called for recognition and commendation in the writings of Paul. It was serving and suffering, reflecting the same priorities as Jesus in Matthew 20:20-28. In Romans 16, Paul gives special recognition for service and work (vv. 1, 3, 6, 9, 12, 21). Recognition of leaders is “because of their work” (I Thessalonians 5:13). Double honor is due elders, especially for those who “work” (lit. hard back-breaking labor) at preaching and teaching (I Tim. 5:17). Aspiring to be an overseer was desiring a

good “work” (1 Timothy 3:1). Special recognition is given to those whose work involved suffering: “risked lives” (Romans 16:4); “in prison” (Romans 16:7); “fellow prisoner Aristarchus” (Colossians 4:10). Paul, along with Barnabas, are both commended by the church for laying their lives on the line (Acts 15:26).

There is no question that in the epistles, the most prominent label is servant or slave. In the Pauline Epistles, “diakonos” is used for church workers more than 20 times. Paul, Peter, James, Jude and John all refer to themselves as a “doulos”. In the noun form “pastor” is used only once for church leaders (Ephesians 4:11). This confirms that the early church reflected the teaching of Christ as to who would be at the forefront. These forefront positions are gender inclusive. We do need to recognize that there is very little emphasis, if any, given to people in the church based solely on an office. Paul authenticated his apostleship more by his work and suffering rather than the office (I Corinthians 9; II Corinthians 11, 12).

Having looked at the question of identifying the top positions in the church, the second question is simply this. Are men and women different? Is that difference significant? If it is, does that difference point to the Creator’s design for different functions in the home and church?

The correct answer to the question is the affirmative. They are different. These differences are significant and are not just minor differences in plumbing arrangements as some radical feminists suggest. The differences do point to different functions resulting from that creative design.

John Stossel hosted a program a few years ago for ABC on this very question, “Are men and women different?” The conclusion was that men and women are very different and that difference is evident from birth. He also recorded the sometimes ridiculous laws promoting equality in hiring and the feminists’ defence of these laws. One such law required an equal number of women employed as firefighters in San Francisco. When confronted with the problem of women not being as suitable to carry victims from a burning building, one well known feminist said that women can drag victims on the floor where there is less smoke so it is actually better. She ignored the fact that, frequently, victims must be carried down a ladder.

John Stossel correctly suggested that we should not try to ignore the differences, but instead recognize them and celebrate these differences. Each brings something different to the table and that is positive. As the French say, “Vive La Difference!”

Men are more naturally suited for a protective position such as elder or pastor. Women should not be sent to deal with “savage wolves”. While not excluding women from full partnership in ministry, the office of elder/pastor is intended to be occupied by men. Perhaps a failure to recognize this is being dealt with in I Timothy 2:12. Sometimes women may have to temporarily carry on these protective duties but should not demand the right to hold that office.

Likewise, in the home, the wife/mother should not aspire to husband/father. She has a protective role in the family but it is different from the male protective role. He is more suited for the first line of defence for protection of the family. That, in no way, gives him sole decision-making power. Decisions in each case should be primarily influenced by the one who has shown the most ability and has the best track record in that area, whether male or female. The real head of the home is Christ and He is the only “arch”. Any headship of the husband/father is a protective nurturing leadership.

This raises the issue of equality. Can a wife and children submit to the husband/father so he can exercise protective leadership without being inferior? Again, the answer is in the affirmative. One can submit to someone for protection without implying inferiority. We submit to policemen, doctors, dentists and a host of others so they can protect us. It has nothing to do with equality. When you submit to the directions of your dentist to open your mouth so he (or in my case, “she”) can insert a needle or drill into your mouth, you are not implying inferiority of personhood. You are doing it so that you can be protected from ending up sleeping separately from your teeth!

Cannot the acceptance of this concept of submission for protection be applied to the church and home? Should we not simply concentrate on what are our best distinctive ministry functions and not try to deny or blur the distinctions? We can and we should. There are protective structures of authority in the church and the home that are necessary for order. These should not become authoritarian. That is what Jesus condemned in Matthew 20:25.

Perhaps it would help if we were to promote the new order of “slaves” and “servants” rather than a hierarchy of “archs” and “megas”. We have magnified the position rather than the work and the suffering. We have done this with titles, placement of names on church signs as well as with seating arrangements.

A final suggestion is only partially tongue-in-cheek. The only real “Arch” or “Mega” in the church was not impressed with those who wanted to wear distinctive garments, have the “most important seats in the synagogue” and the title of “Rabbi”, “father” or “teacher” (Matthew 23:5-10). Perhaps if we removed distinctive clerical garb, the title of “reverend” or “pastor” or “doctor” from those functioning as elder, as well as their seats on the platform, non-elders would not feel inferior. If recognition were based on work and suffering (Matthew 23:11-12), the problem of our gender battle in the church might disappear entirely.

- Phil Stairs¹
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¹ Used with permission.

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