

LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

AN ORAL STRATEGY FOR TRAINING LEADERS AMONG THE AZTEC INDIANS

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Doctor of Ministry

By

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LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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ABSTRACT

AN ORAL STRATEGY FOR TRAINING LEADERS AMONG THE AZTEC INDIANS

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Today there are over 150 Unengaged Unreached People Groups and Unreached People Groups in Mexico. Current methods of outreach are missing the mark with the indigenous people groups. Leaders are poorly equipped to take the Gospel to these least reached areas. The purpose of this project is to research and implement a program to train leaders in an indigenous context in Southern Mexico. The development of this program is based on the biblical mandate to reach all people groups, communication among indigenous peoples as affected by culture and worldview, surveys and interviews with missionaries and national leaders, and special considerations for evangelism and discipleship among the indigenous. The benefit of this project is to enhance and prepare indigenous leaders to reach unreached people groups.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Importance and Purpose

Missionaries and mission sending agencies work tirelessly to advance the Gospel into unreached areas of God's world. Clearly, these groups desire to reach people for Christ. However, in Mexico alone, over 155 Unengaged Unreached People Groups (UUPGS) and 93 Unreached People Groups (UPGS) wait to receive the transforming power of the Gospel.¹ The task is enormous. Missionaries alone will never complete the assignment. Well-equipped indigenous leaders are needed to advance the Gospel where Christ is still unknown. Current methods of training leaders lack effectiveness in the indigenous people groups. A plethora of leadership training resources are available in Spanish; however, few resources exist in the indigenous languages. Discipleship and leadership training depends on knowledge of the Spanish language and literacy, thus, the indigenous are disadvantaged in both areas.

The Nahuatl (Aztec) Indians are the largest indigenous group in Mexico². According to the Mexican Government, 20% of Aztec men and 40% of Aztec women have never attended school at any level.³ Further, in this people group only 20% of men and 17.7% of women finish

1. Center for Global Research of the IMB, Richmond, VA,
<http://public.imb.org/globalresearch/Pages/ResearchData.aspx> (accessed June 4, 2012).

2. INEGI, *Hablantes de lengua indígena en México*,
<http://cuentame.inegi.gob.mx/impresion/poblacion/lindigena.asp> (accessed December 18, 2012).

3. INEGI, *Perfil sociodemográfico de la población hablante de náhuatl*. (Aguascalientes, Ags. México. Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática, 2005), 60,
http://www.inegi.org.mx/prod_serv/contenidos/espanol/bvinegi/productos/censos/poblacion/poblacion_indigena/Hablantes_Nahuatl.pdf (accessed May 6, 2010).

their elementary education.⁴ Considering the education level of the Aztec Indians, as well as many other indigenous groups, this group lacks the basic educational requirements of standard discipleship programs. Language and literacy should not hinder or impede access to the Gospel.

Jesus Christ demonstrated His great love for the nations on the cross. God reveals His plan for all people groups in His Word. John wrote, “And they sang a new song, saying, Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth” (Rev. 5:9-10).⁵ One day, the redeemed from every people group will stand before God. The plan of God reaches to even Mexico’s most remote UUPG.

Jesus Christ delegated the responsibility of making disciples of these people to the Church. In his Gospel, Matthew writes: “And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20). The other Synoptic Gospels, the Gospel of John, and the Book of Acts include a version of the Great Commission.⁶ The mission of the Church is to make disciples of the nations. To neglect God’s command is to condemn the people of the world. Dr. Jerry Rankin, former president of the International Mission Board, IMB, explains the intent of the word nations when he writes, “[the] nations are not the geographic, political units we know on our maps as

4. Ibid.

5. Rev. 5:9-10.

6. Specifically these references are Matt. 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Luke. 24:44-49, John 20:21, and Acts 1:8.

countries but rather the multiplicity of culturally diverse language and ethnic people groups throughout the world.”⁷ This mandate is the basis for missions and for the training of indigenous leaders.

Statement of the Problem

Using current methods of training leaders and print materials, indigenous groups will never be reached with the Gospel. To remain faithful to God’s commands necessitates a better solution to train indigenous leaders. The purpose of this project is to research and implement an oral strategy to train leaders among the Aztec Indians in Southern Mexico. This project provides the framework to train people who are illiterate or with low levels of literacy. An oral strategy provides a plan for training indigenous leaders without depending upon written materials as the primary source for communicating and teaching God’s Word. “Orality” encompasses the use of storying, drama, film, and song. Oral communication is the preferred method of learning and communication for the majority of the world.⁸ By following an oral strategy, more people groups will have the opportunity to hear and know God’s love. This project proposes that by using oral forms of communication, indigenous leaders are trained more effectively. Essentially, teachers will teach in the manner they are taught.⁹ In order to effect positive change in training indigenous leaders, a new form of communication is needed. Christian leaders must pursue an oral strategy that speaks to the heart of the indigenous people.

7. Jerry Rankin, *Empowering Kingdom Growth To The Ends of the Earth: Churches Fulfilling the Great Commission* (Richmond, VA: International Mission Board, SBC, 2005), 16.

8. Grant Lovejoy, ed. *Making Disciples of Oral Learners* (Bangalore, India: International Orality Network and Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 2005), 84.

9. Paul F. Koehler, *Telling God’s Stories With Power: Biblical Storytelling in Oral Cultures* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2010.) 67.

The intent of this project is to impact Aztec Indians in Southern Mexico. This study will examine the special needs of UUPGS and UPGS in South-central Mexico, with special attention given to the Nahuatl Indians. However, as there are many shared characteristics among indigenous peoples, other indigenous groups will also benefit from this study as this project serves as a model strategy for other indigenous people groups.

New Tribes Mission (NTM) has popularized a similar type mission strategy. Trevor McIlwain of NTM developed Chronological Bible Teaching as part of sharing Scripture with tribal peoples.¹⁰ This style of teaching is demonstrated in the video, EE-Taow.¹¹ The difference between the content of NTM and this proposed strategy is the method of teaching. ION explains the content Chronological Bible Teaching. “It references biblical stories but does not necessarily tell them as intact stories. It uses exposition and explanation as teaching approaches. This presupposes at least semi literacy on the part of the teacher.”¹² This strategy focuses on the exact telling of God’s Word without interruption or comment. Teaching is centered in the Bible story and literacy is not required for leaders to reproduce this strategy.

Special Terminology

The following special terms are used throughout this thesis project:

Animism is “the belief that personal spiritual beings and impersonal spiritual forces have power over human affairs and, consequently, that human beings must discover what beings and forces are influencing them in order to determine future action and, frequently, to manipulate

10. Lovejoy, 75.

11. More information on CBT may be found at: <http://usa.ntm.org>.

12. Ibid.

their power.”¹³

Bible Storying/Storying is “a narrative presentation designed to communicate a Bible story to oral-preference communicators; ideally it includes dialogue, interpretation, application, and accountability. It may also include drama, songs, poetry, and proverbs depicting the story.”¹⁴

A Functionally Illiterate *is* “a person who cannot engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing and calculation for his own and the community’s development.”¹⁵

Heart Language is “a person’s first language; the language of the hearth and home; the language a person understands best.”¹⁶

Indigenous Leader is a leader from within a particular people group.

Lostness refers to the condition of individuals and people groups without a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Mestizo is the term used to represent the Spanish speaking and majority culture of Mexico and Latin America. The Mestizo culture is the dominant culture and often perceived as superior to the indigenous cultures.

Nahuatl Indians are the descendants of the Aztec Indians. Nahuatl indicates the language of this people group. The Nahuatl Indians have a distinct culture and language that separates

13. Gailyn VanRheenen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1991), 20.

14. Avery T. Willis and Mark Snowden, *Truth That Sticks: How to Communicate Velcro Truth in a Teflon World* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2010), 213.

15. UNESCO. *Resolutions, vol I*. (UNESCO, Twentieth Session, Paris, October 24 to November 28, 1978), 183, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001140/114032e.pdf#page=183> (accessed May 30, 2012).

16. Lovejoy, 82.

them from the Mestizo culture. The terms Nahuatl and Aztec are interchangeable in common use.

An Oral Bible is “the accumulated Bible stories that are told to an oral society, typically between 25 and 225 stories. These are usually told in chronological order, though not always, since many times specific problems, concerns, and fears may need to be addressed first. The stories chosen may differ from one culture to another, depending on felt/actual needs, worldview, and theology.”¹⁷

An Oral Communicator is a person who prefers to learn through oral means regardless of his or her literacy level.¹⁸

An Oral Strategy is a discipleship plan that relies upon and utilizes oral methods of communication rather than print media.

“Orality is the communication and learning characteristic that expresses one’s dependence and /or preference upon the spoken word as the basic mode for sharing thoughts, ideas, observations and experiences.”¹⁹ Orality encompasses the use of storying, drama, film, and song in communication.

A People Group is “the largest group within which the gospel can spread as a church-planting movement without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance.”²⁰

A Story Set/Track is a series of Bible stories that address issues and concerns of a particular people group. Sets normally are arranged in chronological order and are developed giving attention to culture and worldview. Often stories for a track are chosen for a specific

17. Willis and Snowden, 211.

18. Lovejoy, 83.

19. J. O. Terry, *Basic Bible Storying* (Fort Worth, TX: Church Starting Network, 2008), 7.

20. Lovejoy, 85.

purpose. Evangelism, discipleship, and church planting are common themes for a Story Set/Track.

An Unreached People Group (UPG) is “a people group in which less than 2% of the population are Evangelical Christians.”²¹

An Unengaged Unreached People Group (UUPG) is an UPG where “...there is no church planting methodology consistent with Evangelical faith and practice under way. A people group is not engaged when it has been merely adopted, is the object of focused prayer, or is part of an advocacy strategy.”²²

The Statement of Limitations

The intent of this project is to enhance the training of indigenous leaders in Southern Mexico. Specifically this project focuses on the Nahuatl Indians. The research of this strategy relies on missionaries working in indigenous fields, Mestizo pastors, and indigenous leaders. Based on this idea, there are several limitations to this project.

First, the focus group of this study is the Aztec Indians of Southern Mexico. Specific examples of culture and worldview issues in this text are taken from this group. This project does not assume to meet the needs of every indigenous people group. To effectively use this strategy, the principles presented must be followed. Story sets should be adjusted based on culture and worldview of individual people groups.

Second, this strategy does not offer a printed program for training leaders. This project targets oral communicators. A story-set recorded in Nahuatl serves as the model for this work.

21. Department of Global Research, International Mission Board, SBC, <http://public.imb.org/globalresearch/Pages/FAQs.aspx> (accessed June 18, 2012).

22. Ibid., (accessed June 19, 2012).

Finally, this project does not serve as a guide for developing a worldview or cultural overview of indigenous people groups; rather, the design is to develop indigenous leadership within the context of the Aztec Indians of Southern Mexico.

Major Assumptions

In order to apply this strategy it is assumed that the user has knowledge and understanding of their target people group. The context and setting of this work is with the Nahuatl Indians of Southern Mexico. Without a clear understanding of culture and worldview the effect of this project will be limited in application with other UUPGS and UPGS. Further, advanced language skills are necessary in order to apply the principles of this work. Using this strategy will be difficult without an advanced fluency in the heart language of the target people group.

Theoretical Basis for the Project

Comparing the mission of the church and the lostness of the Aztec Indians and other indigenous people groups in Mexico seems to indicate that traditional methods of discipleship/leadership training fail to impact UPGS and UUPGS. This project proposes that teaching indigenous leaders in a culturally appropriate oral format in the heart language allows for learning to take place. An understanding of God's Word brings change as the Holy Spirit is faithful to work on the hearts of men. Learning God's Word leads to obedience; this process is biblical discipleship. An oral strategy provides a plan for training indigenous leaders without depending upon written materials as the primary source for communicating and teaching God's Word. Orality encompasses the use of storying, drama, film, and song. Biblically, disciples

produce disciples. The Review in Literature section will demonstrate that Scripture, current trends in missions, discipleship, and evangelism support this project.

Statement of Methodology

The development of this program is based on research concerning communication in the indigenous context as affected by culture and worldview, Bible Storying, discipleship, and evangelism in an indigenous people group. Extensive interviews and surveys of indigenous leaders, Mestizo pastors, and missionaries assist the formation of the ideas of this project. Special considerations are given to the views of indigenous leaders, as contrasted with opinions of Mestizo pastors and missionaries.

In order to better understand a proper strategy to train indigenous leaders, several fields of study must be consulted. The Word of God is the primary source in training any Christian leader. Therefore much attention is given to the biblical mandate to reach all peoples with the Gospel. There is no true Christian leader that works and functions void of the Bride of Christ as the model church in Acts 2 demonstrates. Christian leaders work within and as a part of God's church.

Development of this strategy largely draws on the oral methods that Jesus and His disciples used to train leaders. The cultural insights gained through a careful study of Paul's ministry form the missiological content of this project. Paul's missionary journeys serve as a model for cross-cultural ministry. Further, the Pastoral Epistles provide a biblical foundation for training Christian leaders. The study of missions is essential in training indigenous leaders. Current ideas in missions, orality, and especially Bible Storying greatly influence and sustain the direction of this work.

This project consists of the following chapters:

Chapter One: Introduction

Chapter Two: Research

Chapter Three: Findings

Chapter Four: A Strategy for Training Indigenous Leaders

Chapter Five: Conclusion – Summary of Principles Learned in this Project.

Chapter One: Introduction

The Introduction consists of the statement of the problem, the statement of limitation, the theoretical basis for the project, the statement of methodology, and a review of literature. This chapter is the foundation and outline for this project.

Chapter Two: Research

Chapter two provides an overview to the research conducted for this project. This chapter includes a rational for this research, the design of the research, the participants, the approach, tools, and results. Finally, there is a summary of the chapter.

Chapter Three: Findings

Chapter three discusses the findings of this research. The research demonstrates the impact of orality and heart language in the indigenous world. Using Scripture, surveys, data collected by the Mexican government, and current mission resources, this section demonstrates the need to communicate God's Word to indigenous leaders using heart language and oral methods. Exploring Jesus and orality, a biblical case is presented for orality. This chapter will

examine Paul's missionary journey to Lystra to better understand the need for heart language and awareness of cultural and worldview norms. Research concerning the views of Mestizos, missionaries, and indigenous leaders reinforces the need for orality in the indigenous world. This section shares the need for oral methods of communication in training indigenous leaders.

Further, this chapter addresses the special needs of the indigenous as affected by training in evangelism and discipleship. This section presents the unique nature of evangelism and discipleship in the indigenous context. Based on Scripture, collected data, and current trends in these disciplines, this chapter constructs an indigenous model for evangelism and discipleship. Accountability, reproducibility, and servant evangelism are essential components of the chapter. Special attention is given to Paul's missionary journeys and his methods of evangelism and discipleship.

Chapter Four: A Strategy for Training Indigenous Leaders

Chapter four is a proposed strategy for training indigenous leaders. This chapter includes an extensive look at Bible Storying and develops a training story set based on the culture and worldview of the Aztec Indians in Southern Mexico. The story set is a model strategy to be used in training indigenous leaders in other areas.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Chapter five is a summary and conclusion of the principles learned in the project. This chapter includes suggestions for adapting this model for use with UPGS and UUPGS in Mexico and Central America. This chapter provides useful application of this project.

The Review of Literature

Books

Indigenous Church Planting: A Practical Journey, by Charles Brock, is one of the most important writings concerning indigenous missions. This work lays the foundation for effective ministry with UUPGS and UPGS. By exposing many ideas and extra-biblical traditions that hinder church planting, this work encourages biblical church planting. Brock lists the following, five features of the indigenous church: 1) self-governing, 2) self-supporting, 3) self-teaching, 4) self-expressing, and 5) self-propagating.²³ By presenting the five “selfs” of a true, indigenous church, Brock establishes a standard for planting indigenous churches and training indigenous leaders.

Missions in the Third Millennium, by Stan Guthrie, covers numerous topics and sets forth a valuable discussion in Christian missions. By introducing multiple issues, the reader is introduced to the complexity of Christian missions. The strength of this text is the wide range of topics covered. Also, the discussion and further reading sections of each chapter provides opportunity to explore subjects of interest. Concerning the indigenous leader, much insight is gained into the complexity of missions. This book serves as an excellent introduction to missions and provides a broad spectrum of material to train indigenous leaders in missions.

Making Disciples of Oral Learners, edited by Grant Lovejoy, is a collection of articles that directly relate to the training of indigenous leaders. The content draws attention to the need to share God’s Word in an oral format. Through statistics concerning literacy and preferred learning styles, this book demonstrates that the world will never be reached using literate means

23. Charles Brock, *Indigenous Church Planting: A Practical Journey* (Neosho, MO: Church Growth International, 1994), 90-94.

to share the Gospel. Oral methods must be incorporated into training when partnering with indigenous leaders.

Shaped by the Story, by Michael Novelli, is an introduction to Bible Story Telling. Based on the author's personal experience, a strong case is presented for teaching the Bible using oral methods. Working and living in an oral society necessitates the use of stories as a means to communicate the Gospel. Learning the mechanics of storytelling is a laborious process. Yet, the results are well worth the process. This work has many ideas that are useful in indigenous ministry. The usual goal of any minister is to teach others the principles of God's Word. In the indigenous context, teaching others is challenging. Only a few written materials exist in the language of most indigenous peoples. Storying provides a way of making an eternal impact on indigenous peoples. The Word of God has the power to transcend culture and penetrate the heart of man. However, one must be faithful to share and teach others as clearly as possible. Novelli shares: "From the Bible we can see that the apostle Paul adapted his approach to sharing truth through reason in order to reach a Greco-Roman culture that was steeped in philosophy and proposition."²⁴ This method of communicating God's Word is faithful to the Scriptures and communicates the Gospel clearly and effectively.

Maximum Impact Short-term Mission, by Roger Peterson, offers theological and practical information concerning short-term missions. Clearly, the experience and passion of the authors create an informative work. Also, this text sparks interest in short-term missions. The greatest contribution of this work is the inclusion of theological, practical, and historical data. This work provides useful insight to training indigenous leaders for ministry. The practical information works as a how-to guide for missions.

24. Michael Novelli, *Shaped by the Story: Helping Students Encounter God in a New Way*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 22.

Serving as Senders, by Neal Pirolo, is great for persons interested in becoming actively involved in missions. As indigenous leaders are called to fulfill God's command to reach the nations, this work provides helpful ideas to aide this process. Filled with living examples, Neal Pirolo enforces the need to support missions and missionaries. Fulfilling the intended purpose, this book explains the steps necessary to positively affect missionary care. These concepts give great insight to the needs of indigenous leaders as well. The practical nature of this book makes it a valuable mission tool. Finally, exposure to the real problems that missionaries face creates a new respect for people called to serve on mission with God.

In *Growing True Disciples*, George Barna proposes "a better strategy for growing the Kingdom of God."²⁵ This strategy is based on the study of many churches, pastors, and individuals throughout the United States. The principles of this research are applicable to the indigenous world as well. This research shows that few Christians are true disciples or followers of Christ. This book is a call to be a disciple and to make disciples for Christ. This call is based on Scripture. Barna explains that several reasons have led to the weakened condition of the Church. Surveys show that the majority of Christians have little commitment to discipleship. Also, there is little difference between the beliefs of Christians and non-Christians concerning moral and ethical issues. Barna shows examples of churches that have ministries where true discipleship takes place. Considering the lack of disciples among the indigenous, this book encourages a commitment to making true disciples.

The Good Book on Leadership, by John Borek, Danny Lovett, and Elmer Towns, provides case studies from the Bible on leadership. The strength of this book is the use of biblical characters that exemplify different models of leadership. Working in an oral society necessitates the use of stories to teach indigenous leaders the principles of God's Word. The narrative format

25. George Barna, *Growing True Disciples* (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2001), 2.

of this book naturally fits into an oral model for teaching leadership. A clear vision or goal creates a starting point for the leader. Leaders who fail to set goals and plan ways to reach these goals rarely find success. Vision guides the process; yet, the strategy gets everyone moving on a daily basis. Lofty goals are accomplished one step at a time. Indigenous leaders need a strategic plan that will facilitate moving toward the goal of reaching the world for Christ. This work presents strategy as the driving force of leadership.

Mentoring Matters, by Rick Lewis, is written to help Christian leaders understand mentoring. True and relevant mentoring relationships are rare. This seems especially true in the indigenous world. The notion of mentoring and being mentored is biblical. The nature of a mentoring relationship forces participants to be honest and open. In training indigenous leaders, mentoring creates an opportunity to develop true disciples. This work teaches that mentoring leaders is an essential part of missions and must be intentional. Lewis writes: “Christian mentoring is intentional because in its primary sense it is done on purpose. Now, to be fair, there are many examples of relationships carried out in a haphazard, unintentional way that might be termed ‘mentoring’ in a secondary sense.”²⁶ Being intentional about mentoring is crucial. This book provides a working model for training indigenous leaders.

Leading Cross-Culturally, by Sherwood Lingenfelter, is written for people leading in a cross-cultural setting. Much attention is given to issues of power and control. The emotional aspects of cross-cultural teams weigh heavily on the outcome and success of these types of partnerships. Numerous examples of team failures illustrate the need to improve cross-cultural relationships. The principles taught in this book support the effective training of indigenous leaders. Indigenous people typically are skeptical of outsiders. Lingenfelter writes, “The first

26. Rick Lewis, *Mentoring Matters: Building Strong Christian Leaders, Avoiding Burnout, Reaching the Finish Line* (Grand Rapids, MI: Monarch Books, 2009), 21.

characteristic of leading is building trust within a relational community.”²⁷ It is difficult to lead or follow without trust. Further, truth demands a life of integrity. Promises must be kept and vows must be fulfilled. Building trust requires giving time to relationships. Building strong and effective relationships must be a priority in discipling indigenous leaders.

The Book on Leadership, by John MacArthur, is an excellent resource in leadership. MacArthur presents character as the essence of spiritual leadership. Without character, leadership fails. Christians must hold themselves to a higher standard of leadership than the acceptable norm of the world. Often leadership styles of secular institutions seem to contradict the biblical models presented in Scripture. However, MacArthur believes that leadership principles taught by Jesus are necessary for success in any setting. The indigenous world needs leaders with biblical integrity.

Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership, by Aubrey Malphurs, is useful to help one develop as a leader and to better train others. The focus on Christian leadership based on biblical principles sets it apart from the normal book on leadership. The numerous inventories help the reader evaluate personal strengths and weaknesses. The content forces one to realistically evaluate gifts for ministry. Applying these principles to indigenous people groups will insure the formation of godly, indigenous leaders. Malphurs makes it clear that leading in the Christian world brings others closer to God and closer to His purpose for their lives. This process begins with a personal relationship with God. In order to show Christ to others, the indigenous leader must know Him in a growing dynamic fashion. Malphurs writes: “In a church or parachurch ministry, leaders not only serve by leading the church in some capacity, but they also model Christlikeness. In 1 Corinthians 11:1 Paul writes to the city church

27. Sherwood Lingenfelter. *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 16.

at Corinth, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.”²⁸ The dedication to lead others begins with faithfulness to God. Indigenous leadership must be based on a vibrant relationship with Christ.

Mentoring Leaders, by Carson Pue, is challenging and filled with useful ideas and illustrations for developing a strong mentoring relationship. Pue’s approach to mentoring is a relational and intentional process. Ideas from this work promote a thorough program for training indigenous leaders. Accountability is essential to ministry and leadership development. Every leader needs to be held accountable for his or her actions. Accountability provides feedback. With the absence of honest feedback leaders and ministries never fully develop, as God desires. Pue writes, “There are pseudoaccountability structures within every Christian organization. I use the term ‘pseudo’ because they may have the appearance of accountability-without it actually being there.”²⁹ True accountability is pertinent and necessary to training indigenous leaders. This work provides helpful insights for successfully training indigenous leaders.

Conspiracy of Kindness, by Steve Sjogren, demonstrates that words and deeds are both an integral part of ministry. Bible-believing churches speak a strong and clear message of salvation; yet, for the church’s actions or inaction the world dismisses these words as irrelevant. As the author writes, “the Church’s credibility is at an all-time low.”³⁰ Few churches are winning the battle. Many struggle to maintain their status. In the indigenous world, this is particularly true. There is no evangelism or discipleship without a relationship. Living out the Gospel causes a fresh new look at the words spoken by the church and her messengers. This book promotes

28. Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2003), 13-14.

29. Carson Pue, *Mentoring Leaders* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 33.

30. Steve Sjogren, *Conspiracy of Kindness: A Unique Approach to Sharing the Love of Jesus* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2003), Kindle eBook, 32.

intentional acts of kindness as a foundation for the message of the Gospel. Actually living out one's faith by showing kindness to others seems too simple. However, the indigenous church needs more than words in order to win the world for Christ. Kindness is the way for victory in the indigenous world.

Innovate Church, edited by Jonathan Falwell, discusses the importance of innovation in the church. Ministry is filled with challenges. These challenges often leave the minister discouraged and tied to a daily routine that fails to produce "good fruit."³¹ Vision and dreams are stifled. Holiness is replaced with busyness. Churches are left in need. Dr. Towns writes: "Some churches have narrowed their vision. They are focusing only on maintaining their flock. As a result, they are not influencing many areas of their communities with the gospel."³² There is a clear need for innovation in the Church. In training indigenous leaders, this work offers a challenging view of a truly biblical church. The writers offer the reader practical advice in moving past mediocrity. By addressing eight, innovative areas of concern the reader is challenged to refocus priorities and dreams and challenged to dream God sized dreams. Simple innovation is not the desired outcome of this text. God blessed ministry is the goal of this work. The areas of focus in this text are Leadership, Worship, Discipleship, Outreach, Church Planting, Apologetics, Culture, and Prayer. By targeting both the minister and ministry, the authors demonstrate a well-rounded approach to training leaders.

Breaking the Missional Code, by Ed Stetzer and David Putman, moves past programs to missiological principles for ministry. The desire for success moves our world. It seems everyone wants more. Largely, success is measured with numbers. This mindset affects the church as well.

31. Jas. 3:17.

32. Jonathan Falwell, ed., *Innovate Church* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2008), Kindle eBook, 273.

Many indigenous pastors and leaders search for the key to great success. This book helps Christian leaders evaluate their personal ministry situation. Providing numerous examples of successful Churches and ministries, this book provides a positive outlook for the reader. The author writes: “This book will assist you in being able to think through your context, apply universal principles in your mission setting, and then identify and apply strategies that will make you more effective in your context.”³³ The idea is to think differently. Tradition is not the guiding principle. Missiology guides all work and ministry. The work of the Christian leader is the work of the missionary. This focus allows indigenous leaders to find success God’s way.

Transformational Church, by Thom S. Rainer and Ed Stetzer, evaluates the work of the church in relation to the individual person. The Gospel of Jesus Christ transforms life. The indigenous people groups need this transformation. Transformation of lives through the local church is the prevailing theme of this text. The mark of successful ministry is changed lives. Effective churches impact the world as they lead people to live for Christ. Rainer and Stetzer write: “The concepts of transformation and church play off each other, complement each other, connect to each other. And when you put not just the nouns transformation and church together (as we have in the title), but put together the actual occurrence of transformation and the community of people called the church, the result is powerful.”³⁴ The local church impacting people for Christ is God’s plan. When churches fail to impact the community, they have abandoned God’s mission. In many indigenous communities the church is ineffective and irrelevant. Supported by research and numerous examples, the information in this book provides

33. Ed Stetzer and David Putman, *Breaking the Missional Code: Your Church Can Become a Missionary in Your Community* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006), Kindle eBook, 1.

34. Thom S. Rainer and Ed Stetzer, *Transformational Church* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2010) Kindle eBook, 1.

hope for indigenous ministries and churches. The authors encourage churches to move past tradition and programs to ministry that facilitates change. Accordingly, the indigenous leader must work to bring change to the individual believer and to the greater world.

Antioch Revisited, by Tom Julien, is an encouragement for local churches to become actively involved in global missions. The author asserts that the church is "...divorced from her mission."³⁵ As many missionaries have no church to call their own, and few have the benefit of a pastor's care, the author's contention proves true. Few indigenous leaders will be trained without a proper union between the local church, global missions, and the missionary. Clearly, the church is God's agent for reaching the world with the Gospel. In order to effectively share Christ with the indigenous world and train leaders, the church must understand God's mission. Julien writes: "The Church is missionary not primarily by what she does, but by what she is-that the church is missionary by her very nature, not merely by her activities. Mission is an expression of her essence."³⁶ Missions should never be separated from the church. Bringing the church and the indigenous leader together is natural and beneficial to everyone.

Articles

"Communicating Effectively to Non-Readers: Communicating God's Message in an Oral Culture," by Rick Brown, provides insight to the communication needs of the majority world. Narrative fills the world and therefore speaks effectively to the indigenous people groups. Nonliterate persons learn at an exponential rate when taught using oral methods. The author writes, "When taught in a narrative format, retention of information by oral communicators can

35. Tom Julien, *Antioch Revisited: Reuniting the Church with Her Mission* (Winona Lake: BMH Books, 2006), 1.

36. Ibid., 17.

be several times higher than when taught in a lecture format.”³⁷ This resource provides numerous insights to understanding communication in the indigenous context.

“Disciple Making and Church Planting: God’s Way to Transform Nations,” by Floyd McClung, shares the importance of making disciples. This article proposes moving past the traditional church to a real and dynamic disciple-making movement. McClung writes:

Jesus bypassed the cumbersome religious structures and irrelevant worship practices of his day, and started something living and organic. The word “organic” is a good one to describe a spontaneously reproducing simple church movement because it describes something that grows naturally, without artificial additives. It consists of elements that exist together in natural relationships that make growth and multiplication possible. That is how a simple church movement grows: it is not a top down hierarchical organization, but a movement held together by people who share the same vision and values. I have observed that successful churches in the conventional church model can actually be a hindrance to a simple church planting movement.³⁸

Training indigenous leaders is the most effective way for the Gospel to spread through a people group. As disciples are made, churches are formed. Discipleship and church planting are intimately linked together as part of God’s plan and design. This article is a positive resource in training indigenous leaders.

“Orality: The Next Wave of Mission Advance,” by Mark Snowden, stresses the importance of orality in fulfilling God’s call to the nations. Bible Storying is the thrust of this article. The content provides excellent ideas for sharing Scripture with others. In order to better communicate with the world, Snowden presents compelling evidence and practical advice for sharing through stories. This work encourages the training of indigenous people groups by using oral methods.

37. Rick Brown, “Communicating Effectively to Non-Readers: Communicating God’s Message in an Oral Culture”, *International Journal of Frontier Missions* 21, no. 3 (Fall, 2004), http://www.ijfm.org/PDFs_IJFM/21_3_PDFs/122_Brown.pdf (accessed February 23, 2012).

38. Floyd McClung, “Disciple Making and Church Planting: God’s Way to Transform Nations,” *Mission Frontiers* 33, no. 5 (September-October 2011): 19. <http://www.missionfrontiers.org/pdfs/33-5.pdf> (accessed February 25, 2012).

“Planting Indigenous Churches: Missionary Money Muzzles Movement,” by Gene Daniels, challenges the church leader and missionary to avoid dependency when working with national leaders. The desire of missions is to see true reproducing churches with well-trained indigenous leaders. Too often, the western mindset never sees past the poverty of the indigenous. Good intentions bring methods that stifle indigenous growth. Daniels encourages the development of indigenous leaders without dependency.

“Training Leaders for the Majority World Church in the 21st Century,” by Michael David Sills, addresses the need for oral communication when sharing with persons of low literacy. This work exposes the need for trained leaders in the indigenous world. Current literate methods of training are not effective in most third-world nations. Sills writes, “Additionally, most training programs are operated in the language of the country’s dominant culture which has excluded many potential pastors from marginalized cultures.”³⁹ This article provides insight into forming an oral strategy to help train indigenous leaders.

Theses and Dissertations

“Bible Storying: A Recommended Strategy for Training Church Leaders In Oral Societies,” by Kuem Lee, discusses the benefits of storying in an oral society. This work provides a review of traditional methods for training leaders. Based on his research, Lee purports that Bible Storying is a better means for indigenous persons. Kuem Lee provides an excellent view of biblical storytelling. As the Bible is communicated to others, leaders are equipped to fulfill the mission of the church. The ideas given are beneficial in planning a strategy to train

39. Michael David Sills, “Training Leaders for the Majority World Church in the 21st Century,” *Global Missiology* (April 2004) <http://ojs.globalmissiology.org/index.php/english/article/download/130/378> (accessed March 30, 2010).

indigenous leaders.

“The Nonliterate and the Transfer of Knowledge in West Africa,” by LaNette Weiss Thompson, offers great insight to how nonliterate learn. This work exposes the fallacies of a Western-style education and teaching methods in an oral society. Bible Storying meets the needs of oral communicators. The context of this work is West Africa; however, the content proves valuable in forming a strategy to train oral learners in other cultures. Training indigenous leaders and discipleship are necessary parts to any ministry. Culture and orality are indispensable components of effective communication in the indigenous world.

“Towards Contextualized Bible Storying: Cultural Factors Which Influence Impact in a Sindhi Context,” by Mark Naylor, provides an overview of the importance of sharing Bible stories in the context of culture. This work is specific to the Sindhi context; however, the material benefits any cross-cultural ministry. Bible stories presented through oral means penetrate the hearts of those who listen. The experience of Mark Naylor demonstrates the need for oral methods of communication and teaching in the indigenous world. The insights gained from this source help provide a positive plan for training indigenous leaders.

“Telling God’s Stories with Power: Biblical Storying in Oral Cultures,” by Paul F. Koehler, establishes a firm rationale for Bible Storying in oral cultures. This work shows how the Word of God is learned and processed in an oral context. Storying is reproducible and naturally flows through oral communicators. The fieldwork for this project demonstrates the effectiveness of using orality in nonliterate cultures. The learning style of oral learners naturally moves Scripture from information to knowledge when oral methods are utilized. The story is a necessary part of communication in the indigenous world. This work is a solid resource for anyone working in indigenous cultures.

“Words that Cry Out: Evoking Passion and Commitment through Story,” by Craig Carpenter, demonstrates the importance of telling stories. This work looks at the tangible results of using stories to effectively move Christians to action in ministry. The affect of the story is a powerful and life changing message to the believer. By hearing and feeling with the heart, workers are excited and more easily recruited and placed within ministry. This work presents a biblical rationale for utilizing stories in the discipleship process. Indigenous leaders benefit from the tone and content of this work. By using stories, leaders are recruited and trained for ministry.

Scripture Review

Much of Scripture was spoken and then later produced in written form.⁴⁰ Through the careful guidance of the Holy Spirit, men were able to record God’s Story as it unfolded in history. In most cases, the spoken Word preceded the written Word.⁴¹ The stories of God’s work are alive in Scripture. These stories are to be told. As God’s Word indicates, the world is waiting to hear. John writes, “Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.”⁴² Speaking God’s Word to others brings lifesaving results. The harvest comes as people hear the Good News.

The Word of God must direct life and ministry. Proper strategy results from principles found in Scripture. The missiology and training methods of this project rely on insights gained from studying the Bible. Orality and the telling of stories are found throughout both the Old and New Testaments. This review will examine passages from the historical books of the Old

40. Koehler, *Telling God’s Stories With Power*, 28.

41. Ibid.

42. Jn. 4:35b.

Testament, Psalms, and several New Testament passages. Further, the study of three biblical characters help shape a strategy to train indigenous leaders.

The Old Testament teaches that God's story must be told, heard, and obeyed. Deuteronomy 6:6-7 speaks to the importance of speaking God's Word. This command relates teaching to hearing. Concerning these verses, Koehler writes, "This pattern for transferring knowledge consisted of parents 'teaching' it to children, literally by repeating the words again and again as through sharpening a sword."⁴³ These verses teach that speaking and repetition are important aspects of training others.

Through song, the psalmist exhorts Israel to listen to God's commands. He writes, "Hear, O my people, while I admonish you! O Israel, if you would but listen to me!"⁴⁴ Song reinforces the importance of God's story. Hearing moves past the sound of words or the tone of instruments. The spoken Word of God in story and song transforms life. This psalm encourages discipleship that creates a life of obedience. Discipleship is training Indigenous leaders for obedience.

The Bible is God's written word. However, God himself demonstrates the necessary component of the spoken word. Exodus 20:1 records God's conversation with the children of Israel. He spoke his commandments, and an entire nation listened. For meaning, the spoken word requires an audience. Hearing is the natural result of speaking. As God spoke, He commanded His people to listen. Multiple verses share the importance of hearing God's Word.⁴⁵ In Deut. 4:10, God calls the children of Israel to come and hear. Hearing is a necessary aspect of the

43. Koehler, *Telling God's Stories With Power*, 28.

44. Ps. 81:8.

45. Deut. 5:1, 6:3, 6:4, 20:3, and 33:7.

discipleship process.

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul echoes this idea of hearing Scripture. Concerning the Apostles Paul's writings as related to hearing God's Word, Kelber writes: "Paul, when viewed from orality-literacy studies, presents himself as an oral traditionalist whose commitment to faith is based on oral, rhetorical grounds: 'faith comes from hearing'" (Rom. 10:17).⁴⁶

Hearing leads to understanding. This process moves one towards obedience. The training of indigenous leaders requires the proper hearing of God's Word in order to produce true disciples.

Jesus Christ, the greatest teacher, is the example to be followed in form and presentation. Examining Jesus' method of teaching, as seen in Matt. 13:34, Mark. 4:1-3a, and Mark. 4:33, demonstrates an oral model for discipleship. Consistently throughout his ministry, Christ shared parables with his followers. These stories bring meaning and enable true discipleship. Indigenous leaders incorporate godly principles into life more easily through stories.

Further, Luke 8:4-18 is one example of Jesus teaching through storying. Jesus' favorite method of teaching is the telling of stories in the form of parables. Although some are repeated, there are over forty-five parables found in the Gospels. The multitudes were captivated by Christ's teachings. His Story still has the power to catch the hearts and minds of the people. Jesus Christ provides an oral model of communication to emulate.

Next, Peter preached one of the greatest sermons ever on the day of Pentecost.⁴⁷ He presented God's Story and three thousand came to faith in Jesus Christ. A careful study of this sermon aids the development of this project. Differing greatly from modern preaching, Peter simply tells God's Story as seen throughout the Old Testament. His summary of Biblical history

46. Werner H. Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1983), xx.

47. Acts 2:14-36

links God and man in an amazing fashion. God undeniably demonstrates his love and power through this narrative. Understanding the content and presentation of this sermon gives great insight to training others to speak God's Word. God's Story, in itself, is sufficient and has power to change lives.

The Apostle Paul provides exciting information concerning orality and heart language issues. One of Paul's missionary journeys, as recorded in Acts 14:8-28, teaches much about culture and worldview. Principles for evangelism and discipleship flow from Paul's life and ministry. Strategy based on 2 Tim. 2:2 directs the choosing of indigenous leaders. A teachable heart is essential to leadership and the discipleship process. Forming a strategy to train indigenous leaders demands faithful reliance on principles found in Scripture. Examples from Paul's life and ministry greatly support this project.

CHAPTER II

RESEARCH

Research Design

The design of this project is to advance the Gospel into UPGS and UUPGS in Southern Mexico by developing a strategy to train indigenous leaders. The research design of this work investigates the learning needs and preferences of indigenous leaders. The focus of this research is to understand the benefit of oral communication and the use of heart language in the training indigenous leaders. Communicating the Gospel is the core of the missionary task. Hiebert writes, “No language is unbiased, no culture theological neutral. Consequently, the translation and communication of the gospel in new cultures is no easy task. If we do not understand this, we are in danger of being ineffective messengers at best, and, at worst, of communicating a gospel that is misunderstood and distorted.”¹ This research provides insight to the communication needs for the indigenous leader.

Three groups were considered in this research: missionaries, Mestizo pastors, and indigenous leaders. Special consideration is given to the views of indigenous leaders as contrasted with opinions of Mestizo pastors and missionaries. These groups are representative of current work and practice in the indigenous communities. The survey supposes ministry in indigenous people groups. Understanding current mission practices aids the development of a strategy to train indigenous leaders. By questioning the practices of missionaries working with indigenous people groups understanding is gained concerning current training methods employed in the UPGS and UUPGS of the Americas.

1. Paul G. Hiebert, “Cultural Differences and the Communication of the Gospel” in *Crucial Dimensions in World Evangelization*, Arthur F. Glasser, ed., (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1976) 381.

Surveying the practices of Mestizo pastors working in indigenous fields allows insight to the views and practices of the majority culture in working with indigenous groups. Finally, surveys of indigenous leaders trained using heart language and oral methods of communication provide information concerning the views of the indigenous themselves. By researching these three groups a comprehensive understanding of the needs of indigenous leaders is obtained. This project offers a comparison of current methods used by missionaries, Mestizo pastors, and indigenous leaders. Finally, this study measures the benefits of training indigenous leaders using oral communication in the heart language.

Research Participants

The participants of this study provide much insight to the training of indigenous leaders. All participants were between the ages of 18-65. Both male and female participants were used. All participants are active in ministry as pastors, missionaries, and church leaders. Each participant works directly with a UUPG or UPG in the Americas. The participants represent the current mission practices among indigenous people groups.

The first group studied is missionaries working with indigenous people groups. Primarily missionaries were chosen based on their work within indigenous communities. The group consists of current IMB and Wycliffe missionaries. Thirty-nine missionaries participated in the study. The second group involved in this study is Mestizo pastors and church leaders in the Tehuacan Valley of Southern Mexico. This group of participants is actively enrolled in the Bible Institute of Horeb de Tehuacan. The focus of the Bible Institute is to develop leaders to serve as church planters, pastors, and church leaders. Horeb de Tehuacan works extensively in the Nahuatl communities of Southern Mexico. Twenty students participated in the study. The final

group in this study is indigenous leaders from the Tehuacan Valley of Southern Mexico. Each person from this group serves in a leadership role in an indigenous church or mission. The members have studied for at least one year in Instituto Bautista Azteca del Valle de Tehuacán (IBAT). The focus of this Bible Institute is training indigenous leaders through oral forms of communication in the heart language. Nine indigenous leaders participated in this survey. The three groups relay information related to current ideas and practices in missions.

Research Approach

The approach of this research is to evaluate current practices in training indigenous leaders for ministry. Figure 1 indicates the progressive relationship between the participants and the indigenous peoples. Each group provides a unique perspective to the training needs of indigenous leaders. Missionaries work cross-culturally with the indigenous people. The Mestizo pastors work from a culture that is close to the indigenous culture. Many characteristics are shared between the Mestizo culture and indigenous culture; yet, the cultures are different and distinct from one another. Each group is considered a separate “homogeneous unit.”² The indigenous work from within their same culture.

The missionaries were invited to participate in this study by email. Appendix A provides a copy of the email sent to the participants. Missionaries voluntarily participated in this study. Appendix B is the survey completed by the missionaries. The Mestizo pastors were read a Consent Form explaining the content and purpose of the survey, Appendix C. The participants were then given a survey during one of their regular class sessions, Appendix D. The members then responded to the survey and the surveys were collected anonymously. The indigenous

2. Donald McGavran, *Church Growth and Christian Mission*, (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1965), 69.

leaders were read a consent letter before participating in this study, Appendix E. Next, the members were read the survey in Spanish. The survey was then orally translated into Nahuatl to ensure understanding. The participants then responded to the survey and their answers were recorded. The survey is found in Appendix F. This group provides insight to the views of the indigenous leaders in Southern Mexico. By evaluating these three groups much information is gained for forming a strategy to train indigenous leaders. This study shows the strength and weakness of current practice in missions. Insight is obtained concerning the needed change in missionary methods.

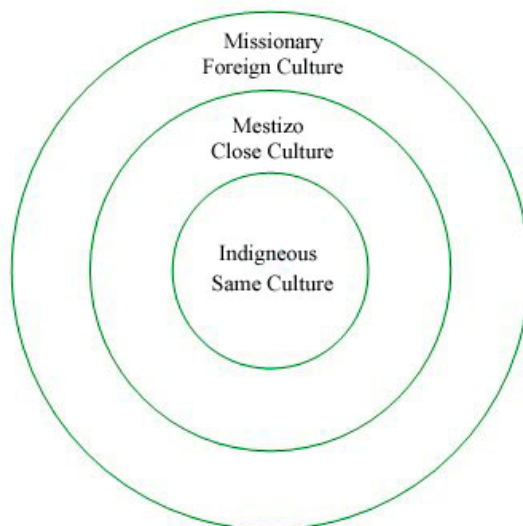


Fig. 1. Relationship to Culture

Research Tools

The three groups studied in this work were surveyed to measure the methods of communication, the use of heart language, and the common practices in evangelism and discipleship. The missionaries and Mestizo pastors were given the same survey while the indigenous leaders were given a separate survey. The survey given to the missionaries was

administered in English. The Mestizo pastors were given the survey in Spanish. The survey was administered to the indigenous leaders in Nahuatl. The content of the survey given to the missionaries and the Mestizo pastors is divided in three categories: discipleship, evangelism, and language. The indigenous leader survey focuses on education, language, and leadership. These surveys provide support for an indigenous leadership strategy that utilizes oral communication and heart language.

The discipleship portion of the missionary and Mestizo pastor survey measures several key factors. The first area of concern is literacy. Traditional forms of discipleship are not effective in indigenous areas, as most indigenous persons are illiterate or of low literacy³. It is important to understand whether missionaries and Mestizo pastors are willing and equipped to work with persons with limited education. Next, communicating God's Word is essential to leadership development. Having Scripture in the heart language of the indigenous is necessary. This survey measures the availability of the Bible in the indigenous communities. Also, the participants are asked questions concerning their ability to read the indigenous translations and the indigenous people's ability to read them as well. This information relates to the indigenous leaders need to hear and understand God's Word in their own language. Finally, this section of the survey probes the availability and reproducibility of discipleship materials in the heart language of the indigenous peoples. This section informs concerning current leadership training programs and points to the need of this proposed strategy.

The evangelism section of the missionary and Mestizo pastor survey measures the current practices in sharing the Gospel in indigenous communities. First, the participants are surveyed concerning their training in sharing the Gospel with indigenous people groups. Next, the survey

3. As stated in Chapter I, the Mexican Government states that 20% of Aztec men and 40% of Aztec women have never attended school at any level. Further, in this people group only 20% of men and 17.7% of women finish their elementary education. INEGI, 60.

investigates the methods utilized in presenting God's Word. This factor examines the use of oral communication in evangelism. The final question relates to building relationships as a necessary part of sharing God's Word in indigenous communities. These three areas of concern help clarify the need for evangelistic methods that use oral communication and foster growing relationships with indigenous peoples.

The language section of the missionary and Mestizo pastor survey identifies the common use and need for heart language in training indigenous leaders. First, participants are polled concerning language. This indicates the missionaries and Mestizo pastor's use of heart language versus trade language when working with indigenous peoples. Next, the survey asks the common language spoken by the indigenous while in the home. This question probes into the preferred use of heart language by the indigenous people.⁴ Further, this section moves to the preferred language of the women in the indigenous society. As noted in Chapter I, the indigenous women generally have a lower level of education than men. Therefore, women often prefer the indigenous language to the trade language of their society. This section on language supports the development of a strategy for leadership development that utilizes the heart language of the indigenous people.

The indigenous leaders were surveyed in order to understand their level of education, heart language, and preparation for leadership. Study of language in this research indicates the need to train indigenous leaders in their heart language. An understanding of the indigenous leaders view and practice of training others aids in forming a proper leadership strategy. Each of these areas surveyed confirm the need to train indigenous leaders orally in their heart language.

The indigenous survey first measures the education level of the indigenous leaders.

4. As defined in Chapter I, Heart Language is "a person's first language; the language of the hearth and home; the language a person understands best." Lovejoy, 82.

Literate and highly literate persons prefer literate means of learning; whereas, illiterate and persons of low literacy cannot effectively learn using literate forms of communication.⁵ One's level of education normally indicates the level of literacy and one's preference for oral communication.⁶ As noted in Chapter I, most indigenous people in Southern Mexico have only a remedial level of education.⁷ This research confirms the low level of literacy among indigenous leaders.

Next, the indigenous survey measures the preferred language of the indigenous leaders. This section clarifies the use of the native language within the indigenous communities of Southern Mexico. Although many indigenous people in Southern Mexico speak Spanish, the survey measures the commonly used language among the indigenous leaders. This portion of the survey supports using heart language as a part of a strategy to train indigenous leaders.

The final section of the indigenous leader survey probes the effects of training indigenous leaders using oral forms of communication in heart language. Reproducibility was the primary factor measured. This survey asked indigenous leaders to rate their readiness in leading and training others. The responses obtained in this section support this proposed strategy to train indigenous leaders.

Research Results

The research conducted with the missionaries and the Mesitzo pastors is divided into three categories: Discipleship, Evangelism, and Language. These categories provide a basis to investigate the communication methods and use of heart language in the indigenous

5. Lovejoy, 23.

6. Lovejoy, 22-23.

7. INEGI, 60.

communities. The survey used with the indigenous leaders measures education, language, and leadership preparation. Comparing the findings of the surveys allows one to understand the communication and language needs of the indigenous.

The research concerning discipleship and evangelism shows that many missionaries and Mestizo pastors use literate forms of teaching and communicating when working in indigenous areas. The data explains that 45% of Mestizo pastors view literacy as necessary for discipleship. In evangelism, 74% of Mestizo pastors rely on literate means of communication. In discipleship, 41% of missionaries utilize print materials in training indigenous leaders. Of indigenous leaders surveyed, only one person out of nine had attended middle school. All of the others only studied through the primary grades. Among the Mestizo pastors 74% feel inadequately prepared to share the gospel in the indigenous communities. This indicates that they need a new method in sharing the Gospel with indigenous people groups. Comparing the methods used by the Mestizo pastors and the missionaries with the education level of the indigenous leaders indicates that current practices do not meet the communication needs of the indigenous leaders.

In the indigenous communities many rely upon the native languages for communication.⁸ This research reveals that among indigenous leaders 89% speak an indigenous language while in the home. When working in indigenous areas only 19% of missionaries communicate using the indigenous language of their people. Mestizo pastors have a higher rate than missionaries; yet, only half speak in the heart language of the indigenous people. The majority of indigenous leaders prefer studying the Scripture in their indigenous language. Missionaries and Mestizo pastors most often use the trade language. Indigenous leaders desire to hear God's Word in their

8. INEGI states that 6.6% of the Mexican population speaks an indigenous language. Of this number, 1.4 million people speak Nahuatl. INEGI, *Hablantes de lengua indígena en México*, <http://cuentame.inegi.gob.mx/impresion/poblacion/lindigena.asp> (accessed December 18, 2012).

own language. This research indicates that a disparity exists between the language needs of the indigenous leaders and the practices of the missionaries and Mestizo pastors. The research results in this project indicate the need for an oral strategy to train indigenous leaders.

Summary

The research conducted for this project focuses on three groups: missionaries working in indigenous areas, Mestizo pastors, and indigenous leaders. This research focuses on the communication and language needs of indigenous leaders. By collecting data concerning current practices in evangelism, discipleship, and heart language this project develops a strategy to train indigenous leaders. Each person surveyed is active in ministry and they currently work among indigenous people groups. Each of the three groups surveyed provides valuable information concerning the training of indigenous leaders. Further, data gives insight to the special needs of indigenous leaders. The surveys in this study inform concerning current mission practices and the needs and desires of the indigenous. Finally, the results indicate that indigenous leaders need a strategy that trains leaders orally in their heart language.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS

Communicating Scripture Among the Aztec Indians

In most cultures, the communication thoughts, feelings, and ideas direct and enhance life. This interaction travels through the cultural norms of society. All communication takes place within the context of culture. Understanding the means of communication is the work of the missionary and intricately relates to the mission of the church. David Hesselgrave writes, “The missionary task is fundamentally one of communication. In a very real sense the missionary participates in man’s basic challenge, for while communication is an elemental human activity, it also constitutes a fundamental human problem—perhaps second only to the problem of his Adamic nature!”¹ The mission of the church relies upon communication. Without it, the church merely exists dormant and ineffective in this world. In order to facilitate proper leadership development, there must be a clear understanding of communication as experienced and exercised in each host society.

Using Scripture, surveys, census data, and mission resources, this chapter presents the need to communicate God’s Word orally in the heart language. This task involves understanding how indigenous leaders learn and then communicating in a manner that corresponds to this preference. Leadership development requires effective knowledge of communication as influenced by worldview and culture.

1. David Hesselgrave, *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally: An Introduction to Missionary Communication* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978), 61.

The Necessity of Oral Communication

Discipleship, as introduced in the majority of the world, presupposes literacy.² Certainly, the task of reaching the nations would be more manageable if the world were literate. In societies with high literacy, simple Bible distribution would theoretically advance the Gospel and facilitate discipleship. Numerous discipleship programs exist in print. Many of these sources are very effective and appropriate in reaching the literate world. Yet, the indigenous peoples are far removed from the literate world.

Literacy bypasses many of the Indigenous people groups of the world. UUPGS and UPGS normally are the marginalized and forgotten. These people groups live separated from and unknown to the world. Print materials are scarcely available for these groups. As Figure 2 indicates, research conducted for this project reveals that 74.4% of indigenous missionaries have Scripture available in the language of their people. Reportedly, the majority of the populace among these groups does not have the skills necessary to read the Bible in the native language (Figure 3). Figure 4 indicates that only 28% of missionaries are able to read the indigenous translation of the Bible.

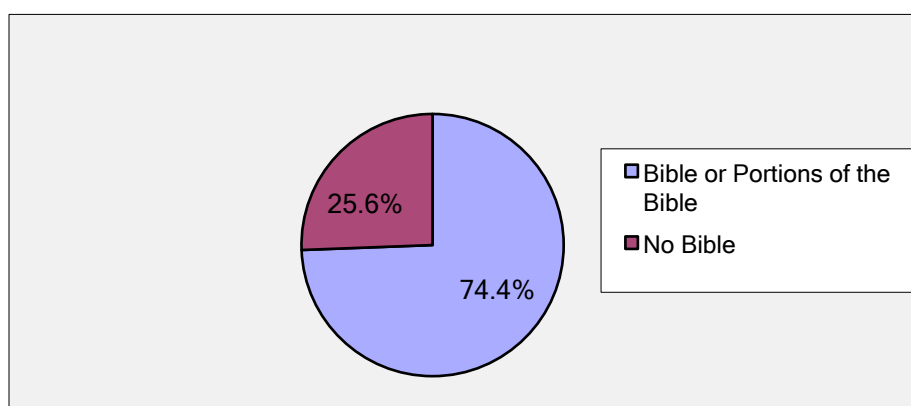


Fig. 2. Bible or Portions in the Heart Language

2. Lovejoy, *Making Disciples of Oral Learners*, 3.

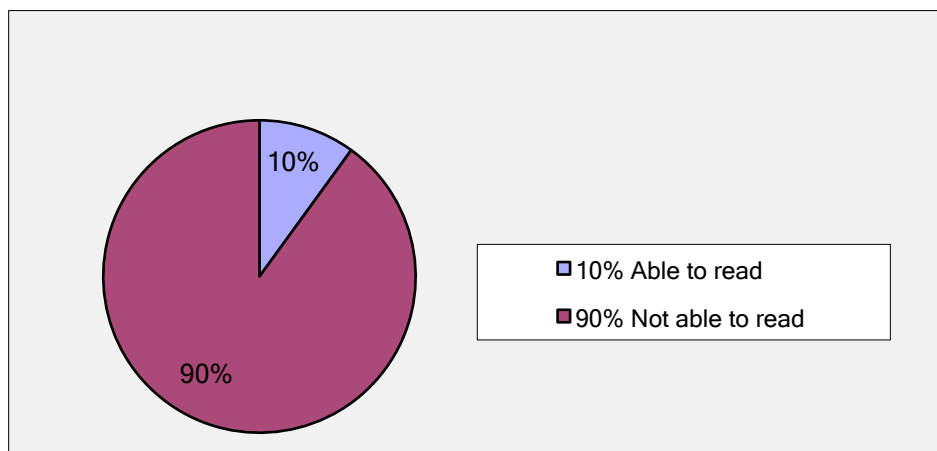


Fig. 3. Indigenous People Literate in Their Heart Language

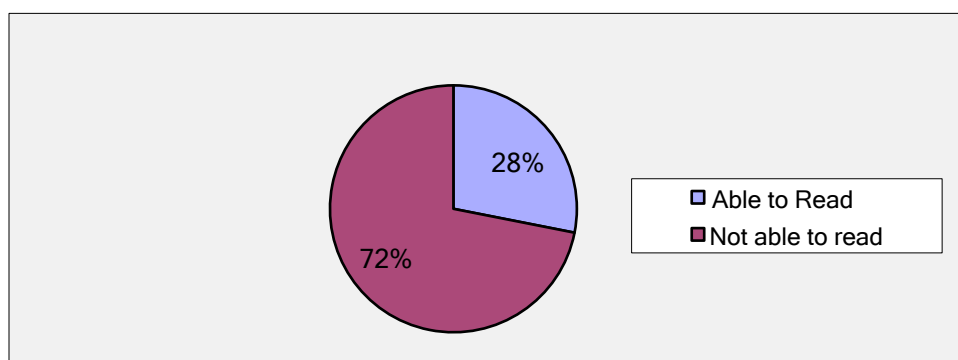


Fig. 4. Missionaries Literate in Indigenous Language

Where Scripture is available for UUPGS and UPGS, few people have the expertise to effectively learn from the written Word. A literate means of communicating and learning have little to no practical effect in the indigenous groups. Literacy stifles discipleship and the training of indigenous leaders, as few learn well from written materials.³ According to the International Orality Network (ION) this problem permeates all cultures and societies. ION states: “Unfortunately, most evangelical leaders do not realize the magnitude of the problem. Those affected by it include the 4 billion oral communicators of the world: people who can’t, don’t, or won’t take in new information or communicate by literate means. Oral communicators are found

3. Lovejoy, *Making Disciples of Oral Learners*, 6.

in every cultural group in the world and they constitute approximately two-thirds of the world's population.”⁴ Written materials and literate forms of teaching, regardless of content, communicate little to oral communicators. Indigenous groups need oral methods of communication in discipleship and leadership training.

Further compounding the failure of training indigenous leaders is the educational presuppositions and patterns of those called to serve: “Almost all missionaries and other Christian workers are literate or highly literate, and they communicate primarily by literate means.”⁵ Missionaries are fully prepared to teach literate learners. Systems, lists, and sermons are literate ways of organizing and learning information. Avery Willis notes that typical sermons contain the following:

1. One-way communication, with the hearers unable to respond
2. Word analysis
3. Expository arguments
4. Bible stories as illustrations more than content
5. Use of outlines-three points and a poem
6. Lists-like this!⁶

A literate presentation with points and sub-points fails to communicate truth to the indigenous world. Narrative is essential to oral cultures and a more natural way of learning and communicating. As Walter Ong notes,

Although it is found in all cultures, narrative is in certain ways more widely functional in primary oral cultures than to others. First, in a primary oral culture ... knowledge cannot

4. Ibid., 3.

5. Ibid., 23.

6. Willis and Snowden, *Truth That Sticks*, 43.

be managed in elaborate, more or less scientifically abstract categories. Oral cultures cannot generate such categories, and so they use stories of human action to store, organize, and communicate much of what they know.⁷

Presentations and teaching methods that rely on written forms of communication are difficult for indigenous groups to process for real learning. Others confirm this understanding. In regards to teaching oral learners, ION writes, “Our presentations must match their oral learning styles and preferences. Instead of using outlines, lists, steps and principles we need to use culturally relevant approaches they would understand.”⁸ Indigenous cultures learn best when oral communication is used.

Belonging to the dominant culture, many presume that Mestizo pastors better understand the indigenous cultures. Yet, the Mestizo church leaders and pastors are often educated and trained in literate means of teaching and communication. Seminaries teach a Spanish curriculum based on traditional forms of education.⁹ Completing a seminary degree program is difficult for anyone with a low level of literacy.¹⁰ Donald McGavran writes, “Although Spanish-speaking Mestizo pastors were better educated and more advanced than Aymara pastors, they seldom made Aymara churches multiply. Multiplying Aymara congregations, he observed, were led by Aymaras.”¹¹ Reading and other literate means of learning must never be a prerequisite for evangelizing a people group nor for assimilating disciples. A survey of Mestizo pastors in

7. Walter Ong, *Orality & Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1982), 140.

8. Lovejoy, *Making Disciples of Oral Learners*, 4.

9. Michael Crino, Professor, Seminario Teológico Bautista Mexicano, Lomas Verdes, Mexico, e-mail to Anthony Conner, August 14, 2012.

10. Tom Dyson, Interim Director, Seminario Teología Bautista G.H. Lacy, Oaxaca, México, e-mail to Anthony Conner, August 7, 2012.

11. Donald A. McGavran, ed., *Church Growth and Christian Mission* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1965), 77.

Southern Mexico shows that pastors normally incorporate literate forms of evangelism when dealing with indigenous groups (Figure 5). Further, 45% of Mestizo pastors place reading as a necessary skill for discipleship. Approximately one-third of Mestizo Pastors would never consider training someone who could not read.¹² If literacy is a requirement for discipleship, then few indigenous leaders will ever be trained. Pointedly, developing indigenous leaders requires a different approach for communicating God's Word in leadership training.

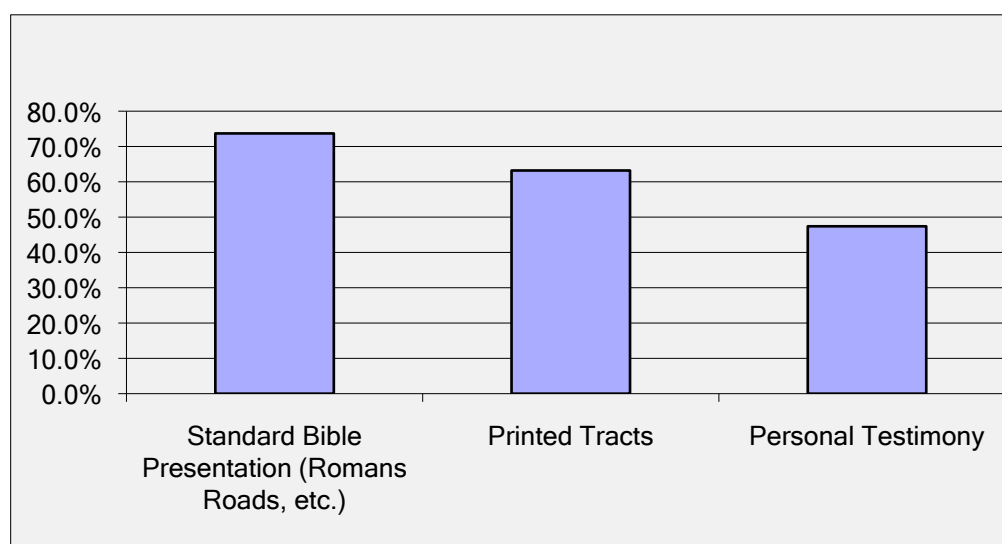


Fig. 5. Method of Sharing the Gospel

The indigenous groups of Mexico benefit little from the available educational systems. Among the Nahuatl Indians over the age of fifteen, approximately 32% are considered illiterate and nearly one-third of the population cannot read and write.¹³ The majority of the remaining two-thirds only have a basic level of literacy. William Tillman writes, “Reading is more than word recognition. It is the ability to get at the sense or point of the material you are reading. It is synthesizing what you are reading with the body of knowledge you already have.”¹⁴

12. Research conducted August 2012.

13. INEGI, *Perfil Sociodemográfico de la Población Hablante de Náhuatl*, 16.

14. William Tillman, *Christian Ethics: A Primer* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1986), 55-56.

Basic reading skills never ensure learning. Professor Michael Sills addresses this issue: “Many of the groups of new Christians in Africa, Asia, and Latin America are preliterate and often monolingual in their native tongue. These new Christians are often from aural cultures and are not ‘printed-word’ based cultures. They do not use, or value, the written word as do those of us from the more developed world.”¹⁵ A survey of indigenous leaders in Southern Mexico shows that only 11% have studied beyond the fifth grade, as figure 6 demonstrates. Although their education level is higher than averages in many Nahuatl groups, oral teaching methods are necessary in their development. The education of current indigenous leaders disallows literate forms of discipleship. The indigenous leader’s preferred style of learning Scripture is through oral communication methods.

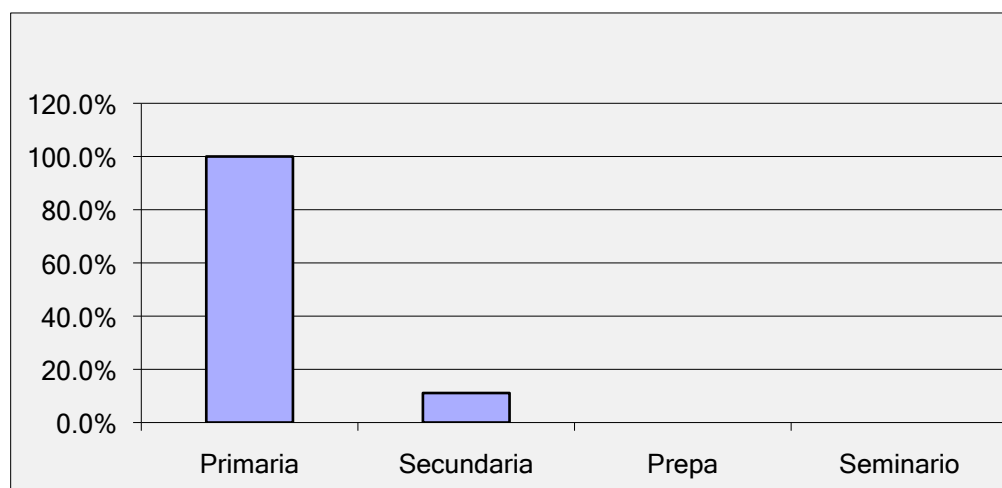


Fig. 6. Education Level

Orality is the most natural part of the learning process among indigenous peoples. Concerning indigenous learning, Merriam and Caffarella note: “Often steeped in oral traditions and art forms, conscious use of indigenous forms of learning can enhance nonformal and perhaps even formal educational programs. Storytelling, for example, is often used by African American

15. Michael David Sills, “Training leaders for the majority world church in the 21st century,” *Global Missiology* (April 2004): 3, <http://ojs.globalmissiology.org/index.php/english/article/download/130/378> (accessed March 30, 2010).

women to teach about the joys and sorrows of life. When teaching these women, instructors could incorporate storytelling as a major method of learning about the topic at hand.”¹⁶

Proper leadership training in indigenous groups enlists the use of Bible Storying. This method of teaching Scripture relies on the spoken word. Yet, Storying involves much more than simple words. Former IMB Vice-President, Avery Willis shares, “People can more easily embrace God’s ways when they can see, hear, smell, taste, and touch the gospel. We need to press God’s biblical truth hooks into our sensory loops, through personal interaction and vicarious experiences.”¹⁷ Storying allows the learner to feel and experience the action as it is spoken. The task of an oral strategy in training indigenous leaders is properly communicating Scripture to persons unable to learn from literate methods. God’s love compels the church to communicate His grace and mercy to all peoples. God’s call to make disciples of indigenous groups requires the church to consider orality. Storying God’s Word provides the needed form of communication and proper content for training indigenous leaders. Scripture provides examples of training leaders through stories.

The Biblical Model of “Orality”

God communicates clearly and effectively with His creation, and the Bible is the record of this message to humanity. The Bible is God’s Story. The Old Testament enriches one’s understanding of God and man through stories of victory, frailty, passion, strength, and even failure. Seeing God’s people live life, without hiding its pain and sorrow, allows future generations to learn and grow. The New Testament is alive with the story of God’s Son, “...told

16. Sharan B. Merriam and Rosemary S. Caffarella, *Learning in Adulthood*, 2nd ed., (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1999), 31.

17. Willis and Snowden, *Truth That Sticks*, 43.

four times over.”¹⁸ This is followed by the glorious story of the Church and her future with Christ. Scripture presents God’s desire for creation through stories, drama, history, poems, letters, songs, and sermons.¹⁹ When understood, this diversity moves the heart of man toward obedience. The Bible proves itself the perfect story. It is God’s story to man.

Learning God’s Story involves more than simply reading words. The style, form, and content all speak to the needs of mankind. Up to 70 percent of the Bible is narrative.²⁰ Thus, the Bible is easily told and retold in story form. The natural method of teaching the Bible is telling the stories found in the text. The setting and culture of Scripture required an oral transmission of the written text. The intent of the written Word is to be voiced aloud, heard, understood and then obeyed. Concerning the written Word, Werner H. Kelber writes, “In ancient and medieval media history, manuscripts functioned in an oral contextuality. By way of compositional dictation, recitation, and auditory reception, they were closely allied with the oral-aural medium. Dictated to a scribe and read aloud to audience, most manuscripts were, therefore, meant to be heard and processed in memory.”²¹ As the psalmist exclaims, “I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.”²² The spoken word allows oral learners to meditate upon the meaning of the text.

Stories of the Bible relate to life and serve as a mode to communicate truth. In 2 Sam. 12:1-7, Nathan tells a story to King David in order to teach and convict the King of his guilt.

18. Balmer H. Kelly, ed., *Introduction to the Bible*, vol. 1 of *The Layman’s Bible Commentary* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1959), 10.

19 Ibid.

20. Alan Lyons, Melodie Lyons, Keith Stamps, and Penny Stamps, *Historias Biblicas para Nuevos Creyentes*, (El Paso, TX: Editorial Mundo Hispano, 2008), 5.

21. Werner H. Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1983), xxii.

22. Ps. 119:11.

Through hearing a story, the King condemns his own sinful actions. The effectiveness of Nathan's story brought King David to his knees in repentance. The use of this story allows the prophet to indirectly confront and instruct concerning the seriousness of sin. The personal affect of the story strikes the heart and moves the King to seek restoration with his Creator. The craftiness of this story teaches several principles about learning through narrative: 1) Stories evoke deep emotions. 2) Stories allow the hearer to form personal opinions. 3) Stories relate directly to life. 4) Stories create personal awareness. The effective use of a story allows the hearer to understand, process, and assimilate information. This outcome is the desired product of all teaching methods. A story is an effective means of teaching.

The use of story extends into the New Testament era. The culture and context of biblical times dictated oral methods of communication. The literacy rates in the first century reveal that few were capable of reading the Scripture for themselves. The expense of obtaining a copy of Scripture was prohibitive for the average person. Few people in New Testament times enjoyed the privilege and benefit of a personal copy of Scripture. Grant Lovejoy writes,

Likewise, given the expense of making scrolls of the Old Testament, few first-century Christians would have had a private copy. Even if people could have afforded their own Old Testament scroll, many could not have read it. Historians estimate that at the time of Jesus, between 3 percent and 20 percent of the populace were truly literate. Even if we take the high estimate, 80 percent of the population would have encountered God's written revelation by hearing it read rather than reading it for themselves. God graciously encountered them through public reading and oral proclamation, not directly from a written text to their eyes.²³

The nature of the biblical text and literacy rates of biblical times serve as a model for Storying and Orality. Even today, research reveals that the majority world still prefers oral communication. For first-century Christians, hearing the Word was necessary to the discipleship

23. Grant Lovejoy, "Gospel's Global Advance Can't Wait for Literacy" (Richmond, VA: IMB News & Information, September 4, 2007), <http://www.imb.org/main/news/details.asp?storyID=6008&languageID=1709>, under "Updates," (accessed February 23, 2012).

process. This need continues to the present in UPGS and UUPGS.

Jesus Christ chose and trained his disciples using oral methods. Often he taught through narrative discourse. Jesus, the greatest teacher is the great storyteller. His life and ministry demonstrate the effectiveness of a story in teaching others. His favored method of training others deserves attention. The stories penned in Scripture were first spoken and then later written as the Holy Spirit directed. Narrative discourse resonates clearly in oral societies. Examining Christ's pattern in communication provides a biblical and a practical rationale for Storying as a means of training indigenous leaders. Storying is teaching as Jesus Christ taught.

The Apostle Paul writes that hearing is a necessary part of communicating the Gospel. Paul writes, "How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?"²⁴ Training leaders begins with hearing the message of the Bible.²⁵ Oral communicators value the spoken word in story form. Further, Paul instructed that his letter to the Colossian church be read aloud.²⁶ He writes, "After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you read the letter from Laodicea."²⁷ The word for read is ἀναγινώσκω in the Greek text.²⁸ This word in the verb form is common in the New Testament and is composed of two words. The first word being ἀνά; meaning, "into the midst, in

24. Rom. 10:14

25. Certainly this is not excluding the hearing impaired or deaf. Preaching in the deaf context involves language specific to their context. According to Orality Strategies, deaf people communicate through "signed stories." For more information concerning learning styles of the hearing impaired see <https://oralitystrategies.org/strategies.cfm?id=10>.

26. John Gill, *Exposition of the Entire Bible*, e-Sword, Ver. 10.0.5, Bible, Col. 4:16.

27. Col. 4:16, NIV.

28. James Strong, *Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries*, e-Sword, Ver. 10.0.5, Dictionary, G314.

the midst, amidst, among, between.”²⁹ The second word is γινώσκω, meaning, “to learn to know, come to know, get a knowledge of, perceive, feel.”³⁰ The original meaning denotes more of the idea of learning again or anew, or knowing again. The translation to the word *reading* is the secondary meaning of the word.³¹ It seems the original intent of the word is more than a simple passing over of the text. Reading in the New Testament often meant reading aloud. Concerning the concept of public reading, the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia states, “The verb ‘to read’ occurs frequently both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament: especially of the public reading of God's Law or of prophecy, as by Moses Ezra, Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth, of the regular reading of the Law and the Prophets in the synagogues, and of the reading of apostolic epistles in the Christian church.”³²

John, the author of Revelation, furthers the idea of public reading and the hearing of God's Word. He writes, “Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.”³³ Hearing is more than sound. Rather, the intent is both hearing the sound and understanding the meaning. The Greek word ἀκούω means, “to hear, come (to the ears), be noised, be reported, understand.”³⁴ It seems that from evaluating John's words in Revelation that the intended transmission of the Scriptures involved the public reading and hearing of the text with understanding. This process contributes to the training of leaders.

29. Joseph Thayer, *Thayer's Greek Definitions*, e-Sword, Ver. 10.0.5, Dictionary, G303.

30. Ibid., G1097.

31. Ibid., G314.

32. James, Orr, ed., *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, e-Sword, Ver. 10.0.5, Dictionary, under reading.

33. Rev. 1:3, ESV.

34. Strong, *Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries*, e-Sword, Ver. 10.0.5, Dictionary, G191.

A further examination of Scripture provides a better understanding of Jesus' model of communication and training his leaders. Mark 4:1-3a gives insight to Jesus and His use of stories: "Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea, and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land. And he was teaching them many things in parables and in his teaching he said to them: Listen!"³⁵ As Jesus taught, he shared parables with the crowd gathered around him. The word parable as in the text is παραβολαις. The English word, parable, is merely a transliteration of the Greek. The meaning is the "placing of one thing by the side of another, a comparison of one thing with another, a likeness, or a similitude."³⁶ This noun is formed from the verb παραβάλλω. This word means "to throw before, cast to (as fodder for horses) or to put one thing by the side of another for the sake of comparison."³⁷ Therefore, the intent of the parable is to show meaning by making a comparison of the story to reality. By hearing the story, the audience learns values and lessons. Concerning Jesus' use of parables, Warren Wiersbe writes, "Our Lord did not invent the parable. You will find parables in the Old Testament (2 Samuel 12:1-4, for example), and the Jewish rabbis used them often. Jesus, however, was certainly the greatest exponent of parabolic teaching."³⁸ Jesus Christ used parables to communicate meaning in a manner familiar and acceptable to culture. These types of stories convey truth to the hearer by relating to and touching everyday life. Educators, Merriam and Caffarella, write, "Indigenous learning is

35. Mark 4:1-3a.

36. The NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon,
<http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/parabole.html>, (accessed August 17, 2012).

37. The NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon,
<http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/kjv/paraballo.html>, (accessed August 17, 2012).

38. Warren W. Wiersbe, *Meet Yourself in the Parables* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983), 10.

learning linked with a culture.”³⁹ Stories reach into a culture and contribute to understanding. The biblical use of stories is immense and furthers the effective training of leaders.

The Gospel of Matthew gives further insight into Jesus Christ’s use of stories. Matthew writes, “All these things Jesus said to the crowds in parables; indeed, he said nothing to them without a parable.”⁴⁰ Clearly, Jesus Christ did not always speak in parables. Scripture gives other accounts of Jesus’ teaching as well. However, this verse highlights his extensive use of parables. The pronoun οὐδείς means “no one or nothing.”⁴¹ This word must be regarded as correct. Therefore, it is plausible to conclude that stories represent the majority of the content of Christ’s teaching.

Mark’s Gospel strengthens this idea of biblical orality and oral communication. He writes, “With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it.”⁴² Jesus utilized stories as an effective means of sharing truth with his followers. It is therefore reasonable and advantageous to incorporate Christ’s style of teaching in the training of indigenous leaders. By following Christ’s example and using stories to communicate, indigenous leaders successfully learn, and leaders are formed.

This biblical model of training leaders should be emulated in the indigenous world. Storying God’s Word provides the oral format needed by indigenous groups. This method of teaching presents the Scripture in a way that is familiar and accepted by most everyone. The written Word is inaccessible to most UUPGS and UPGS. Storying fills this needed void. J. O.

39. Merriam and Caffarella, *Learning in Adulthood*, 31.

40. Matt. 13:34.

41. The NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon, <http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/oudeis.html>, (accessed August 17, 2012).

42. Mark 4:33.

Terry writes, “An Oral Bible is the ONLY Bible most of these people will have in their lifetimes, their children’s lifetimes, their grandchildren’s lifetimes.”⁴³ Utilizing oral methods of communication allows indigenous leaders access to the Bible to teach in a manner that allows true learning. The Bible teaches orality through the parables, sermons, poetry, and song. Following this model forms the basis for an effective, oral strategy to train indigenous leaders.

Heart Language

As defined, heart language is “[a] person’s first language; the language of the hearth and home; the language a person understands best.”⁴⁴ Often, heart language is referred to as one’s mother tongue. People think in the context of language and culture. Therefore, one’s heart language is the language where the Gospel is best understood. Gailyn VanRheenen writes concerning this connection, “Ethnolinguistics, the study of the relationship between language and culture, has shown that languages provide categories through which people think. They emphasize and systematize what is important to the culture and filter out what is not important.”⁴⁵ Language and understanding cannot be separated without confusion. One’s heart language is the language best suited for training leaders in the indigenous context.

This section focuses on the communication of God’s Word, as affected by heart language. Surveys of indigenous leaders, Mestizo pastors, and missionaries provide insight into the need for heart language. Acts 2 presents a positive view of God’s desire for ministry in the

43. J.O. Terry, “Bible Storying as a Methodology,” <http://wsaresourcesite.org/Files/Storying/BIBLE%20STORYING%20AS%20A%20METHODOLOGY%20by%20J.O.%20Terry.doc>, (accessed July 27, 2011).

44. Lovejoy, *Making Disciples of Oral Learners*, 82.

45. Gailyn VanRheenen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1991), 45.

heart language of the people. There is an extensive look at one of Paul's missionary journeys and the effects of language on ministry. Finally, there is a study of the importance of language as demonstrated in the book of Revelation.

Language is personal and intimate. Language is a normal and necessary part of life. The spoken word, sharing stories and ideas, fill most every moment of the day. Through song, story, and varied conversation, the world communicates. Hearing words and understanding their intended meaning is the basis of communication. When language is understood, communication is possible. Concerning heart language ION writes, "Using heart language or the mother tongue, together with an oral approach to learning (e.g., storytelling, drama, etc.), transforms hearts and communities around the world. And in this approach we are simply following the example of Jesus who... spoke to His disciples from the Scriptures in such a way that their hearts burned within them."⁴⁶ By respecting heart language, indigenous leaders receive and understand God's plan for discipleship.

God has chosen to divide the world into multiple language groups. Currently there are 6,909 living languages in the world.⁴⁷ J.O. Terry, renowned missiologist, estimates this number to be 9,000 languages.⁴⁸ Regardless of which number is accepted, the number is great. These languages represent the people of the world. The Gospel intent requires training leaders to serve in each of these language groups. Discipleship must take place in the indigenous groups, anything less fails the Great Commission.

46. Samuel, Chiang, ed., *Orality Breakouts: Using Heart Language to Transform Hearts* (Hong Kong: International Orality Network and Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 2010), 5.

47. Paul M. Lewis, ed., *Ethnologue: Languages of the World*, 16th ed. (Dallas, TX.: SIL International, 2009), <http://www.ethnologue.com/>, (accessed September 5, 2012).

48. J.O. Terry, "Bible Storying as a Methodology" <http://wsaresourcesite.org/Files/Storying/BIBLE%20STORYING%20AS%20A%20METHODOLOGY%20by%20O.%20Terry.doc>, (accessed July 27, 2011).

The responsibility of making disciples of the nations rests with the church. It is within a vast sea of languages that this mission takes place. Jim Bowman writes,

Since the tower of Babel, man has been divided by a multitude of languages and cultures. In modern times the clash has deepened between cultures, ideologies and values, between geographic regions, between ethnic boundaries and even between East and West. It is within this framework that cross-cultural church planters must effectively communicate God's message. Our work is to learn the process of building bridges of communication.⁴⁹

Missionary workers achieve little without a comprehensive knowledge of the host culture's language. Familiarity with language precipitates the task of making disciples and training indigenous leaders.

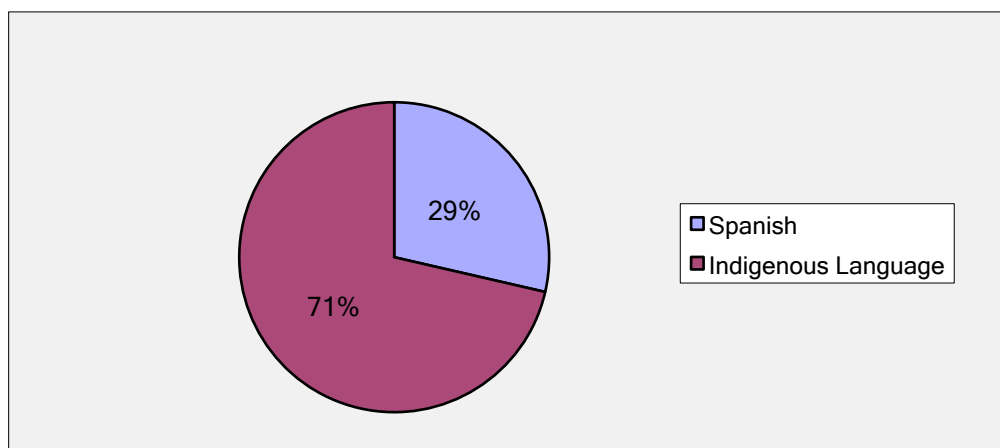


Fig. 7. Persons Speaking Primarily Indigenous Languages

Proper study of the indigenous languages is essential to missions and training indigenous leaders. Without a solid understanding of the language, missionaries are unable to effectively minister to indigenous communities. A survey of indigenous leaders indicates that the majority, 71%, normally communicates in indigenous languages (Figure 7). The percentage of persons using indigenous languages while in the home increases to 89%, as Figure 8 indicates.

49. Jim Bowman, *Communication Bridges to Oral Cultures* (Tucson, AZ: Scripture In Use, Grass Roots Training Ministry, 1987), 8.

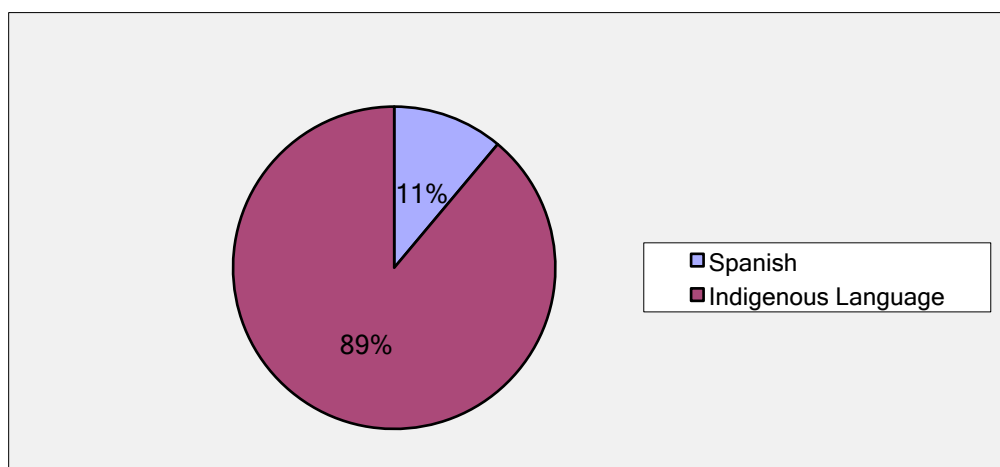


Fig. 8. Persons Speaking Indigenous Language in the Home

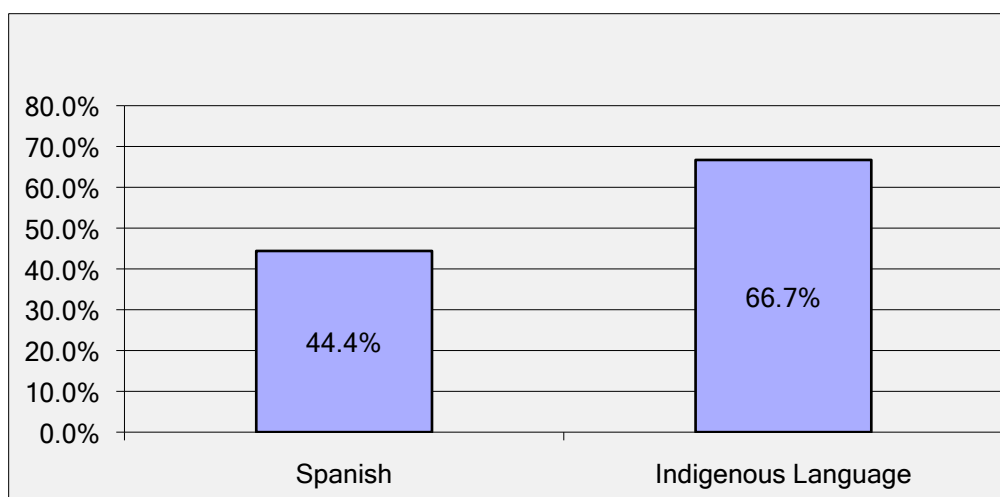


Fig. 9. Preferred Language for Bible Study

Most of the time indigenous leaders communicate in their indigenous language. The Language study is vital, as success in this endeavor rests in clearly communicating God's Word. Further studies show that 67% of indigenous leaders prefer to study God's Word in their own native language, as Figure 9 demonstrates. Attention must be given to the preferences of the indigenous leaders. To ignore their desires is to minimize the importance of their language and culture. Missionaries working in indigenous fields with UUPGS and UPGS normally rely on the trade language of their people for communication, as Figure 10 indicates. It seems missionaries

in the indigenous fields most often resolve to work in the trade language of the indigenous groups.

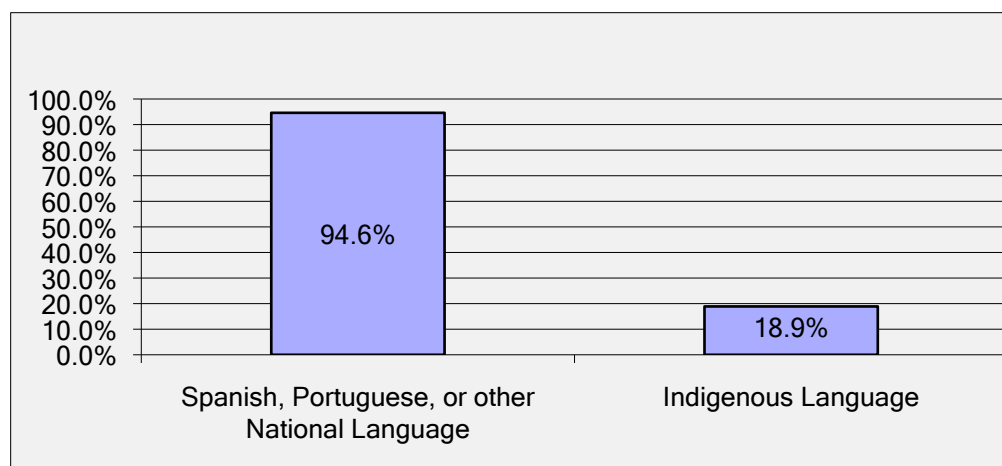


Fig. 10. Preferred Language of Missionaries

There is a link between communicating in the indigenous language and success in training leaders. It seems that understanding culture and communication depends on heart language. Dayton and Fraser offer reasons why working in the trade language has limited results among indigenous groups. A trade language approach usually means the following:

1. Only those who are bi-lingual can hear or read the good news.
2. Often the bi-lingual are the modernizing sector of a people, those assimilated to the dominant surrounding culture. This usually leads to the neglect or exclusion of mono-lingual sectors of a people.
3. The training of the leadership by using the trade language leaves gaps in incorporating the gospel into the indigenous culture.
4. Mono-lingual individuals with leadership qualities are passed over in favor of young people who are in the educational pipeline. Community leadership patterns are bypassed in favor of those that depend upon use of the trade language.
5. The cross-cultural evangelist in effect remains an outsider. The bypassing of the vernacular language means the gospel is not bridged into that language (and often not incarnated in that culture).⁵⁰

The use of trade language produces diminished results in indigenous fields. Further, David Garrison identifies the use of heart language in worship as a key factor in Church Planting

50. Edward R. Dayton and David A. Fraser, *Planning Strategies for World Evangelization*, rev. ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 59.

Movements: “Worship in the heart language allows the gospel to flow freely through a people group. Missionaries who take the time to adapt the gospel to the heart language of the people are aligning themselves with the way that God is at work.”⁵¹ A better strategy for training indigenous leaders requires speaking the Word in the heart language of the people.

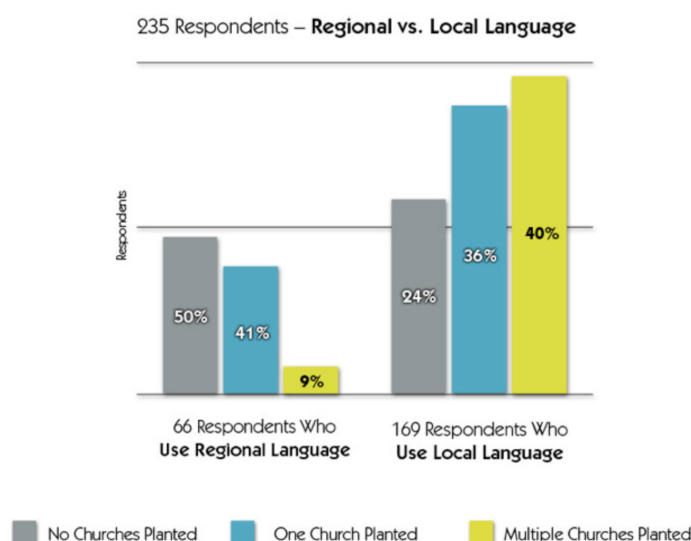


Fig. 11. Regional vs. Local Language

Further, research links successful church planting to the use of heart language. Dr. John Woodberry collected data relating church planting and the use of heart language. Overwhelmingly, church planters working in the heart language realized much greater success than those working in the trade language. Figure 11 illustrates the research findings.⁵² Workers using heart language achieved a much greater success rate in planting churches than workers using the regional or trade language. Heart language allows indigenous leaders to better

51. David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements: How God is Redeeming a Lost World* (Midlothian, VA: Wigtake Resources, 2004), 231.

52. Grant Lovejoy, “Orientation to Orality,” (PowerPoint presentation, slide 9, Richmond, VA: IMB, date?), quoted in John Dudley Woodberry, *From Seed to Fruit: Global Trends, Fruitful Practices, and Emerging Issues among Muslims* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library), 2008.

understand and obey the Word of God. God demonstrates the importance of language in his Word.

Acts 2 records the extraordinary account of the coming of the Holy Spirit. The disciples received the Holy Spirit and were empowered by him. The filling of the Holy Spirit resulted in the proclamation of the Gospel in multiple languages. The author of Acts writes,

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.⁵³

God's giving of the Holy Spirit blessed the city of Jerusalem with the Gospel message. The people heard the Good News, each in their own heart language. This instance is the first and most dramatic proclamation of God's story of salvation. Concerning Pentecost Dayton and Fraser write, "Pentecost is a sign that the new people of God will include the vast array of tribes, tongues, castes, clans, and subcultures. The miracle of tongues signals that each language group is to have the good news in its own tongue."⁵⁴ Examining the story of Pentecost provides important details concerning language and provides sound missiological principles for training indigenous leaders.

This passage often brings controversy. The issue of speaking in tongues divides many Christians. Speaking in tongues is listed among the spiritual gifts given to the church (1 Cor. 12:10, 28, 30). However, a clear understanding is needed to direct principles concerning heart language. This passage demonstrates the miracle of tongues. This act of power and majesty from God enabled the people to hear God's story of love with clarity. The Greek noun γλῶσσα, most

53. Acts 2:1-4.

54. Dayton and Fraser, *Planning Strategies for World Evangelization*, 86.

often translated as tongue, has a fuller meaning. The definition is “a tongue; the language or dialect used by a particular people distinct from that of other nations.”⁵⁵ In the context of Acts 2, a better understanding of this word is *languages*. Concerning this event Adam Clark writes, “At the building of Babel the language of the people was confounded; and, in consequence of this, they became scattered over the face of the earth: at this foundation of the Christian Church, the gift of various languages was given to the apostles, that the scattered nations might be gathered; and united under one shepherd and superintendent (ἐπισκοπος) of all souls.”⁵⁶ The Holy Spirit’s filling enabled the communication of the Gospel story in the heart language of the people. A similar event takes place in Acts 19. Luke records the story of the Apostle Paul and his ministry among the Gentile converts. He writes, “And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.”⁵⁷ The word, tongues, is the same root word used in Acts 2:4. Accordingly the translation, *languages*, represents the intent of the word.

In communicating the Scripture to the indigenous using heart language is biblical and necessary for evangelism and discipleship. Although difficult and laborious, the task is essential to properly train indigenous leaders. ION concurs, “Our task is to identify the ethnic people groups around us, and [disciple] them one by one in their heart language.”⁵⁸ Therefore, effectively communicating God’s story requires speaking the heart language of the people.

Further, the Apostle Paul’s missionary journey to Lystra greatly enhances understanding of the need for communication in the heart language of the people. Luke records this visit in Acts

55. Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek Definitions*, G1100.

56. Adam Clarke, *Adam Clarke’s Commentary on the Bible*, e-Sword, Ver. 10.0.5, Acts 2:4.

57. Acts 19:6.

58. Chiang, *Orality Breakouts*, 75.

14:8-20. Paul, perhaps the greatest missionary ever, teaches much about principles of heart language and missiology. Through his victories and defeats Paul's ministry instills awe and wonder at the power available to the believer. In this story, the impact of heart language resounds throughout. A review of the events of this story aids the understanding of the positive and negative aspects of Paul's actions.⁵⁹ Paul and Barnabas enter a new city. They see a need and through the Holy Spirit a miracle takes place. Next, the city responds according to their worldview and understanding of the gods. The people speak, share, and make plans in their heart language. Apparently, Paul and Barnabas were unfamiliar with the culture and did not speak the Lycaonian language. It seems Paul and Barnabas spoke Greek, the trade language of the people. The people, according to the expectations of their beliefs and culture, prepared to offer a sacrifice to worship Paul and Barnabas. In their context, they assumed Barnabas to be Zeus and Paul to be Hermes. The planning took place under the direction of the Priest from the temple of Zeus. Once Paul and Barnabas understood what was about to take place, they were horrified by the actions of the people. At this point Paul and Barnabas plead with the people to halt their sacrifice. A testimony of God's love and grace is given to the people and with some hesitation the sacrifice is stopped. Next in the story, Jews from a neighboring town turn the people against Paul. They stone Paul and drag him out of the city, believing him to be dead.

These events are confounding. It is hardly believable that the people could reject God's message after seeing a divine act of love. God works a miracle through his disciples and the people stone the messenger. One is amazed that the people could miss the majesty and beauty of God. It seems the language barrier prevented the people of Lystra from understanding the message spoken by Paul. Culture, worldview, and language are all intimately intertwined within

59. Rick Rasberry offers an excellent review of the events that took place in this story in his podcast for BIBL 165 – Acts, *Preaching to Pagans: Paul's Message in Athens (Acts 17)*, Liberty University, 2010 (accessed October 25, 2011).

the communication process. Would there have been a different outcome if Paul and Barnabas had spoken in the heart language of the people? It seems reasonable that a better understanding of language and culture could have produced better results. Speculation on this point produces hope that clear communication of the Gospel will bring salvation to the hearers. In this instance,

Paul failed to communicate using the heart language of the people, and the results were disastrous.

Paul quickly learned and adapted his practice of sharing God's Word and making disciples. Later in his ministry, Paul effectively used heart language to better communicate with a hostile crowd. Luke records the following story:

As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the tribune, "May I say something to you?" And he said, "Do you know Greek? Are you not the Egyptian, then, who recently stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand men of the Assassins out into the wilderness?" Paul replied, "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no obscure city. I beg you, permit me to speak to the people." And when he had given him permission, Paul, standing on the steps, motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great hush, he addressed them in the Hebrew language, saying: "Brothers and fathers, hear the defense that I now make before you." And when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew language, they became even more quiet.⁶⁰

When addressing the officer, Paul spoke in Greek. When sharing with the crowd, he spoke in Hebrew. In the story, Paul received a favorable response from both the officer and from the crowd. The use of heart language helped Paul's audience feel more at ease. The officer allowed Paul to speak. The Jewish crowd moved from a state of anarchy and violence to simply listening to Paul words. Heart language provided an opportunity to relate effectively to each group. A kinship and commonality is formed between groups when heart language is utilized.

Learning from Paul, adapting language and culture are necessary steps in training indigenous leaders. From examining Paul's missionary experience, several missiological

60. Acts 21:37-22:2.

principles are revealed: 1) The Holy Spirit empowers the believer for ministry. 2) God desires for His Story to be spoken to the nations. 3) God's chosen messengers are his followers. 4) The presentation of the Gospel must be in the heart language of the people.

Indigenous leaders understand and assimilate Scripture better when taught using oral methods in the heart language. ION emphatically links heart language and reaching UUPGS and UPGS with the Gospel:

For more than two hundred years Christian missionaries, anthropologists, and others have begun to understand, through research, the importance of indentifying an ethnic people's worldview and evangelizing and discipling them in their heart language. The bottom line of that research is that there is no substitute for working in a people's heart language. Failure to work in the heart language and failure to identify the worldview of the people group are just two reasons why some ethnic people groups have remained unreached for centuries.⁶¹

Heart language must be emphasized in training indigenous leaders. Heart language is a vital part of training indigenous leaders, as each language group holds a special place in God's kingdom.

The Book of Revelation shows the importance of the nations in God's story. In his wisdom, God chose to divide mankind in multiple language groups. Through his mercy, God sent Christ to shed his blood to save humanity. Jesus Christ saves people from every language group. John writes, "And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation."⁶² As man's purpose is worship, one day the nations will gather to sing before the throne of God. In his presence the languages of the world are spoken and the redeemed humbly bow before Jesus Christ. Here, every language group is represented: "After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from

61. Chiang, *Orality Breakouts*, 75.

62. Rev. 5:9.

every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’”⁶³ As God places importance on every language, so must discipleship ministries. The multitude of languages expresses the beauty and diversity of the nations. For God’s purpose and glory, the nations sing before his throne. In the present, this diversity of languages offers a glimpse of the greatness of God’s Kingdom. Therefore, in training indigenous leaders, heart language must be respected and utilized for effect in the community and for the magnification of God’s glory. A biblical missiology requires the training of indigenous leaders in their heart language.

The Effects of Culture and Worldview on Communication

Culture and worldview affect every aspect of life. Normal action and interaction stems from culture. Beliefs and attitudes develop from within one’s worldview. People groups filter communication through their culture and worldview. Training indigenous leaders depends upon an understanding of these factors. Related to communication, this section investigates the animistic worldview of the indigenous people groups. Also, a biblical view of communicating Scripture in culture and worldview is explored. Primarily drawing from the life of the Apostle Paul and from the incarnation of Christ, this section suggests biblical principles for communicating with indigenous leaders. Understanding how culture and worldview affects the sharing of God’s Word results in a better strategy for discipleship.

Mexico and much of Latin America claim the Catholic Church as an integral and necessary part of life. Most all celebrations involve the Church to some degree. Cultural rites of passage (such as birth, death, and marriage) center in Catholic traditions. Yet, in the indigenous

63. Rev. 7:9-10.

communities these traditions are filled with animistic practices and beliefs. Van Rheezen explains, “Throughout Latin America the drive to forcibly baptize the native without any regard for his mythology has resulted in syncretism, the blending of traditional animistic beliefs with Catholic beliefs and rituals. For examples, mythological characteristics are frequently given to Christian characters, and pagan gods are equated with Christ, Mary, and Catholic saints.”⁶⁴ Understanding the animistic culture provides better opportunities to communicate truth to indigenous communities. One Nahuatl Indian explains their beliefs: “We were always a religious people. When the Spaniards came the transition was easy. The Sun and Moon were our gods. So, we named the Sun, God and the Moon, Mary. Nothing else changed much.”⁶⁵ These words demonstrate the syncretism and animistic beliefs in indigenous groups in Mexico. The concept of god for the Aztec is by no means the God of the Bible. In order to effectively communicate Scripture, a common understanding is needed.

Myths and traditional beliefs distort the indigenous people’s view of God. Understanding the Gospel means sharing who God is from His perspective. Knowing culture and worldview allows this type of communication to take place. Often in the indigenous communities, culture and traditional beliefs distort the understanding of the Gospel. Therefore, learning these cultural beliefs allows for a fuller explanation of Scripture. In order to combat traditional beliefs that contradict the Gospel, communication must touch the heart of the people. Van Rheezen writes, “By studying rites of transition, a missionary can discover cultural motifs that would otherwise be hidden. Christian alternatives to these rites show the teachings of Christ have been fit into the

64. VanRheezen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts*, 42.

65. This dialog was part of a conversation with Anthony Conner and Senor Noriega as part of a background investigation of the Nahuatl people in Southeast Puebla, Mexico. This conversation took place on July 15, 2006.

context of the new culture.”⁶⁶ God’s Story is the alternative to the animistic beliefs of the indigenous. The missionary becomes the storyteller in order to challenge falsehood. The storyteller presents God’s truth in a manner that confronts the worldview and culture of the indigenous.

Culture shapes more than just the spoken word. Gestures and body language are an important part of communication. In Acts 21:40, as Paul was about to speak to the people, he motioned with his hand. The people understood this gesture to mean that he wanted to speak. As a result of his hand motion, a hush fell over the crowd. Gestures convey meaning; however, they are not universally understood. In the indigenous world there are multiple gestures. In order to better communicate with the people it is necessary to understand gestures and other nonverbal forms of communication. One must ask, is it proper to shake hands? Should one look directly in the eyes of the person with whom they are speaking? Are there rules for standing or sitting? Are common gestures from the United States offensive in other cultures?



Fig. 12. Hand Gestures

66. VanRheenen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts*, 38.

The use of gestures allows one to better relate to the host culture. Figure 12 demonstrates the meanings of some common hand gestures in Southern Mexico. These gestures are common in Mexico, but they do not communicate the same meaning in other cultures. Using gestures improperly results in miscommunication and incorrect gestures may offend the host culture. Learning gestures specific to culture allows for better communication with nationals.

The Apostle Paul served many years as a missionary. His cross-cultural experience provides great insight into biblical missiology. Paul confronted culture and differing worldviews with great effect. Based on culture and worldview, Paul varied his approach to sharing the Gospel. This sensitivity allowed Paul to effectively relate to different people groups. Concerning his personal philosophy of missions Paul writes to the Corinthian church:

To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.⁶⁷

In order to effectively communicate Scripture to others, Paul tailored his presentation in form and style to his target audience. Further, Paul adapted his mannerisms and cultural preferences to better communicate Christ to others.

Paul's words reflect how one must shape patterns of communication based upon the culture and worldview of the recipients. To a Jewish audience, Paul followed the norms of Jewish society. He obeyed the law, even though in Christ he was free from the law. When traveling with Timothy, a Gentile believer, Paul circumcised him for the sake of the Jews.⁶⁸

67. 1 Cor. 9:20-23.

68. Acts 16:3.

Concerning this event Adam Clark writes, “For this simple reason, that the Jews would neither have heard him preach, nor would have any connection with him, had he been otherwise.

Besides, St. Paul himself could have had no access to the Jews in any place, had they known that he associated with a person who was uncircumcised: they would have considered both to be unclean.”⁶⁹ Paul understood the importance of cultural norms and traditions to communicating the Gospel. In order to better communicate Scripture in the indigenous people groups, attention must be given to their culture.

When sharing with a Gentile audience, Paul left behind his Jewish culture. For a former Pharisee, this is a tremendous undertaking. In order to share the Gospel message, Paul put aside the customs, which he had held dear since birth. John Gill writes concerning this act: “And to these the apostle accommodated himself, as if he was without the law; by conversing with them without any difference; by eating any sort of food with them; by not circumcising Titus, when the Jews would have had it done; and by resisting Peter, when he, by his example, would have influenced the Gentiles to have lived as did the Jews.”⁷⁰ Adapting to one’s host culture allows for a better presentation of the Gospel. This is clearly seen in the life and ministry of Paul. The reason Paul changed his methods from culture-to-culture drives the training of indigenous leaders. His purpose was so that people would hear the message of Jesus Christ and find salvation in Him. Paul’s example teaches several missiological principles: 1) the form and presentation of the Gospel must match the host culture. 2) Missionaries must study culture in order to better communicate the Gospel. 3) Personal preference is secondary to communicating the Gospel.

69. Adam Clark, *Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible*, e-Sword, Ver. 10.0.5, Acts 16:3.

70. Gill, *Exposition of the Entire Bible*, 1 Cor. 9:21.

Adapting to another culture brings fear and unrest. Many reject this notion of adapting to culture for fear of moving too far into a pagan culture. This fear is unfounded. All cultures are from God. As noted earlier, one day every ethnic group will be represented before God's throne. The idea that equals certain aspects of culture to sin is a demonstration of filtering an unfamiliar culture through one's personal worldview. Thus, aspects of other cultures become repugnant, unsettling, and incomprehensible when filtered through personal worldview. The problem is recognizing sin. God defines sin. Therefore, sin is sin in every culture. Pure culture seems to be merely a reflection of God's creative beauty. Cultures grow and change into a more perfect representation of God's design when impacted by the Gospel. David Hesselgrave writes,

If missionaries have any influence at all, they touch culture every time they speak and wherever they work. For better or for worse, they are agents of cultural change in accordance with the commands of Christ (Matt. 28:20). They must recognize that every culture has elements of divine order and satanic rebellion; each has potential for the revelation of God's truth and for its concealment or mutilation.⁷¹

God created a vast number of cultures. These cultures are separated by language, belief, and a multitude of other differences. Yet, the Gospel is for all men in all cultures. The uniting factor of all cultures is God's redemptive plan. The message of salvation must be clearly communicated, penetrating into the culture of every indigenous group. This is the beginning of discipleship. Training indigenous leaders with culturally appropriate methods brings the Gospel to more individuals. Incarnational ministry brings the Word of God to the indigenous in a form that is clearly received and understood.

The greatest example of incarnational ministry is found in the Gospel. God sending his son to live as a man demonstrates his love and mercy. Jesus Christ, the God-Man, entered this world and lived as a man. The author of Philippians explains this relationship in Phil. 2:5-11.

71. David Hesselgrave, *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally*, 79.

Jesus Christ, being God humbled himself by becoming man. His birth and life on earth demonstrates a complete incarnational ministry. The necessity of the incarnation is seen in the unique nature of Christ. His humanity links him to man. His deity makes him God. This duality allows for the salvation of mankind. Millard Erickson explains,

Jesus humbled himself and became a man; ultimately he died to save mankind. Man is unable by his own moral effort to counter his sin, to elevate himself to the level of God. If there is to be fellowship between the two, they have to be united in some other way. This, it is traditionally understood, has been accomplished by the incarnation, in which deity and humanity were united in one person. If, however, Jesus was not really one of us, humanity has not been united with deity, and we cannot be saved. For the validity of the work, accomplished in Christ's death, or at least its applicability to us as human beings, depends upon the genuineness of his deity.⁷²

Jesus Christ relates perfectly to God and man. His willingness to become man makes him the perfect mediator.⁷³ In his humility, salvation came to man. This message must be communicated with the world.

In order to communicate the Gospel to the indigenous people groups, the church must enter these groups and live and serve as ambassadors for Christ.⁷⁴ Humbly living and serving the UUPGS and UPGS brings a complete message of salvation to these peoples. Christ serves as the perfect example of working and living within a culture.

Communicating God's Word is essential to training indigenous leaders. Without a clear understating of biblical principles, there is no discipleship. Indigenous leaders must be taught in a manner consistent with their communication and learning styles. Oral methods of communication allow indigenous people to hear and understand. Attention to the heart language allows for learning without confusion or misunderstanding. Cultural and worldview sensitivity

72. Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985) 706.

73. 1 Tim. 2:5.

74. 2 Cor. 5:20.

permits the indigenous leaders to relate and assimilate information with greater ease. This section of Chapter III reveals several missiological principles: 1) Orality is necessary in training indigenous leaders. 2) Heart Language is necessary in training indigenous leaders. 3) Sensitivity to culture and worldview is necessary when training indigenous leaders. Biblical doctrine and numerous examples from God's Word provide the foundation for these principles. This information is supported by statistical data collected by the Mexican government, surveys of indigenous leaders, Mestizo pastors, and indigenous missionaries. Following these ideas provides a solid foundation for communicating Scripture to indigenous leaders. Storying or Bible Story Telling follows these principles in training indigenous leaders.

Evangelism and Discipleship in an Indigenous Context

Life altering decisions are made as the result of God's ministry through Christian leaders. Without leadership, the local church fails in duty and mission. The goal for indigenous leaders is to live as a force that serves God and impacts lives for eternity. To accomplish this goal, indigenous leaders must grow in their understanding and practice of evangelism and discipleship. These two disciplines are interrelated and work together to fulfill Christ's mandate given in the Great Commission. This section explores the importance of evangelism and discipleship in the training of indigenous leaders.

Special attention is given to the needs of evangelism in the indigenous context. Culturally appropriate methods allow the acceptance of the gospel message. Examining Peter's proclamation of the gospel at Pentecost provides a biblical missiology for evangelism. The oral presentation of the Word of God in narrative form speaks directly to the needs of indigenous communities. Prayer is a necessary part of evangelism. Prayer is the foundational work of any

evangelistic strategy. Also, the social and cultural norms of UUPGS and UPGS require creative methods of sharing the gospel.

Discipleship in indigenous communities facilitates leadership development for UUPGS and UPGS. In order to follow the commands of Christ, pertinent and relevant leadership training is needed in the indigenous people groups. Oral methods of discipleship provide the indigenous leaders a method of learning that is culturally appropriate and reproducible. Biblical discipleship leads to reproducing disciples and naturally aids church planting.

Evangelism

Engaging the lost with the Gospel is essential to a healthy ministry. The power of God is seen and felt in the Gospel. Salvation in Jesus Christ is the message of the Gospel. Concerning the Gospel message, Rainer and Stetzer write, “The gospel is not something you easily get over. It is something you will live in.”⁷⁵ Remembering the importance of the Gospel’s impact on lives is a key factor in effective Christian service.

The message of the Bible rests with the redeemed. Without evangelism the church lives in willful disobedience to Christ. The privilege and responsibility of sharing the gospel message encompass the core of biblical Christianity. T.P. Weber provides a more complete definition of evangelism. He explains that evangelism is “[t]he proclamation of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ to bring about reconciliation of the sinner to God the Father through the regeneration power of the Holy Spirit.”⁷⁶ This is the process of telling God’s Story to the world.

75. Thom S. Rainer and Ed Stetzer, *Transformational Church*, (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2010) Kindle eBook, 209.

76. T.P. Weber, “Evangelism,” in *The Concise Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, Walter A. Elwell, ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991) 166.

Examining the Scriptures clarifies the substance of evangelism. The word evangelism stems from, εὐαγγέλιον. The noun derived from the verb εὐαγγελίζω, which is the combination of two words. The first εὖ, is an adverb, meaning “good, to be well off, fare, well, or prosper.”⁷⁷ The primary word is ἄγγελος, a noun, meaning “a messenger, envoy, one who is sent, an angel, a messenger from God.”⁷⁸ The combined meaning is the good news or a good message. The word in noun form is defined as “a good message, that is, the gospel.”⁷⁹ The verb, as often used in the New Testament, is then to share the good news. Whether in the verb form or written as a noun, the intent of this word is the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ. Biblical evangelism is never passive or dormant. Rather, it is actively telling others the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. David Wheeler addresses this issue, “Evangelism means ‘good news.’ Evangelism is the message! Therefore it is not reserved for the chosen few, rather it is the imperative and task of the whole church as an organism.”⁸⁰ A training program with an emphasis on evangelism fulfills biblical commands and directs leaders to live in obedience.

The telling of God’s Story brings life to the hearer. Paul writes to Timothy concerning the role of evangelism in ministry: “As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”⁸¹ The work of the evangelist is commanded as a natural part of ministry. Any ministry void of evangelism is lacking and incomplete. Without evangelism the church fades. Hiebert and Meneses write, “The gospel gives life to the church,

77. Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek Definitions*, G2095.

78. Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek Definitions*, G32.

79. James, Strong, *Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries*, e-Sword, Ver. 10.0.5, Dictionary, G2098.

80. David Wheeler, “Outreach: Back to the Basics in Strategic Planning” in *InnovateChurch*, Jonathan Falwell, ed., (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2008) Kindle eBook, 120.

81. 2 Tim. 4:5.

and the church proclaims the gospel. Either without the other soon dies.”⁸² Training in evangelism is a necessary part of the discipleship process. This facet of training brings life to ministry.

Hearing the Word of God and responding in faith brings hope and life where there is only death and despair. In the indigenous culture and worldview, the spirit world controls life. God’s Story of redemption must be told to affect the indigenous understanding of God. As the Word of God touches these people groups, change occurs. The animist aligns his or her worldview with the Gospel story. Van Rheezen notes, “Christian conversion without worldview change in reality is syncretism.”⁸³ The power of the Gospel transforms lives. Therefore, the Gospel must be clearly proclaimed.

The content of the Gospel is salvation in Jesus Christ. Christ’s salvific work is the message to be spoken throughout the world. Paul explains the message of the gospel that he preached. He writes, “Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.”⁸⁴ Biblical missiology purports this same gospel in the context of language and culture. Van Rheezen writes,

The Christian evangelist in animistic contexts ministers on both a personal and a cosmic level. On the personal level evangelists are being used as earthen vessels by God to break the yoke of Satan; to convert specific people, clans, tribes, and cities; and to bring them under God’s sovereignty. . . . From this perspective evangelism is claiming for God what has been Satan’s. Christianization is the breaking down of the powers of Satan and making his territory God’s territory. On the cosmic level the battle is one of ideology. False models of reality are being contrasted to a Christian worldview. Allegiance to the

82. Paul G. Hiebert and Eloise Hiebert Meneses, *Incarnational Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1995), 375.

83. Gailyn Van Rheezen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1991), 89.

84. 1 Cor. 15:3-5.

sovereign God is being contrasted to allegiance to gods who claim incomparability but who are no gods in comparison to Yahweh.⁸⁵

The effect of the Good News moves UPGS and UUPGS into the Kingdom of God. A biblical view of evangelism requires the proclamation of Christ's death and resurrection to the world.

Training indigenous leaders in evangelism requires attention to speaking the gospel with respect to culture and worldview. As the gospel story moves through culture, people are brought into fellowship with the Creator. In order for the message to be heard, the messenger must speak through culturally appropriate means. The acceptance of the Word of God relies on the clear understanding of the message.

God's Story

Evangelism in the indigenous cultures requires the oral communication of God's Word. Evangelism in story form introduces UUPGS and UPGS to the gospel in a culturally acceptable manner. Traditional forms of evangelism produce little results in Latin America. As Kane notes, "...crusades resulted in rather meager church growth."⁸⁶ However, Peter's sermon in Acts 2 provides a biblical example of effective evangelism with respect to culture. His story affects change in the lives of the hearers. Luke records Peter's sermon in Act 2:14-38. Within this sermon, several characteristics are observed. First, Peter links the events of that day with prophecy from the Old Testament. By sharing portions from the book of Joel and words from King David, the people listen to his message. The use of the Old Testament prophets serves as a bridge for the gospel message. Bridges are essential for sharing the gospel in indigenous cultures.

85. Van Rheezen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts*, 125.

86. J. Herbert Kane, *Life and Work on the Mission Field* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1999), 252.

Concerning cultural bridges, Avery Willis writes, “Bridges [are] the beliefs, practices, or experiences of a culture that can have a beneficial influence upon a person’s consideration of the gospel. They include God-given opportunities for witness in which needs felt within the culture are met by the Christian faith. Bridges are discerned by studying the worldview and can provide openings for heightened interest and greater relevance of the biblical message to a person’s worldview.”⁸⁷ Effective indigenous evangelism means speaking the gospel to the people in a manner that relates to culture. Several facts are included in the telling of the gospel story: 1) Christ died for mankind’s sin, 2) Christ was buried, 3) Christ was raised on the third day, and 4) Christ revealed himself to humanity. When this message is heard, it invokes a response. Evangelism shares these facts and then offers the recipients an opportunity to respond.

Additionally, the work of Jesus Christ is the focus of Peter’s sermon. There is no evangelism without the spoken message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Peter teaches that evangelism is telling others of the miraculous work of Jesus Christ. Peter links the audience personally to Jesus Christ. Sharing Jesus’ work on the cross affects the heart and culture of the indigenous. Van Rheezen shares,

The great message to the animist is that God has mightily broken into human history in the ministry and death of Christ to break the chains of Satan. Christ has “disarmed the powers and authorities” (Col. 2:15). Thus to the Christian in an animistic society the cross signifies liberation—liberation from the demonic forces against which he is fighting, deliverance from the rules and regulations which these powers attempt to project upon society, and freedom from sin that has alienated his people from God and disharmonized society.⁸⁸

Sharing the gospel is speaking words of freedom to the indigenous world. As the people hear and understand they realize that a response is needed. The necessary response is given in Acts 2:38: “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your

87. Willis and Snowden, *Truth That Sticks*, 208.

88. Van Rheezen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts*, 303.

sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”⁸⁹ Repentance and baptism are given as the necessary response to the gospel. A.T. Robertson clarifies this word by defining repent: “to change your mind and your life or to turn right about and do it now.”⁹⁰ Repentance is to embrace Jesus Christ and to leave all else behind. This is the only acceptable response to the gospel. This change involves the mind, will, and actions of a person reacting to the work of Jesus Christ. As understanding is necessary to repentance, the message must be clearly presented to the target audience.

Baptism is presented as an integral part of evangelism. This act of obedience identifies the believer with the body of Christ. This ordinance is a public confession of faith. Erickson explains,

The act of baptism was commanded by Christ (Matt. 28:19-20). Since it was ordained by him, it is properly understood as an ordinance rather than a sacrament. It does not produce any spiritual change in the one baptized. We continue to practice baptism simply because Christ commanded it and because it serves as a form of proclamation. It confirms the fact of one’s salvation to oneself and affirms it to others.⁹¹

Including baptism as a part of evangelism moves the new believer towards becoming active as an evangelist. This proclamation accelerates the gospel witness. Being faithful to biblical commands requires attention to the ordinance of baptism. The act of baptism is an important aspect of training indigenous leaders in the understanding and practice of evangelism.

Storying the gospel is a natural way to evangelize indigenous communities. In the Bible, Stephen provides an account of sharing God’s story through narrative.⁹² This sermon provides a summary of God’s redemptive plan as demonstrated throughout the Old Testament. The stories

89. Acts. 2:38.

90. A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, e-Sword, Ver. 10.0.5, Commentary, Acts 2:38.

91. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 1096.

92. Acts 7:1-52.

of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, and David all are told in one setting. These stories lead to the story of Jesus Christ. The story of Jesus is the climax of this story and all of history. The Story of Jesus is the hope of salvation for all of mankind. This story serves as an extended gospel presentation. This method serves well in indigenous people groups.

The Aztec Indians of Southern Mexico have some biblical knowledge. Most know and understand the name of Jesus. However, due to language barriers, syncretism, and improper forms of communication, most have a distorted view of Jesus Christ and salvation. Stories provide a clear understanding of the nature and work of Jesus. By teaching indigenous leaders an evangelistic story track, they have the necessary tools to share the gospel clearly with their people.

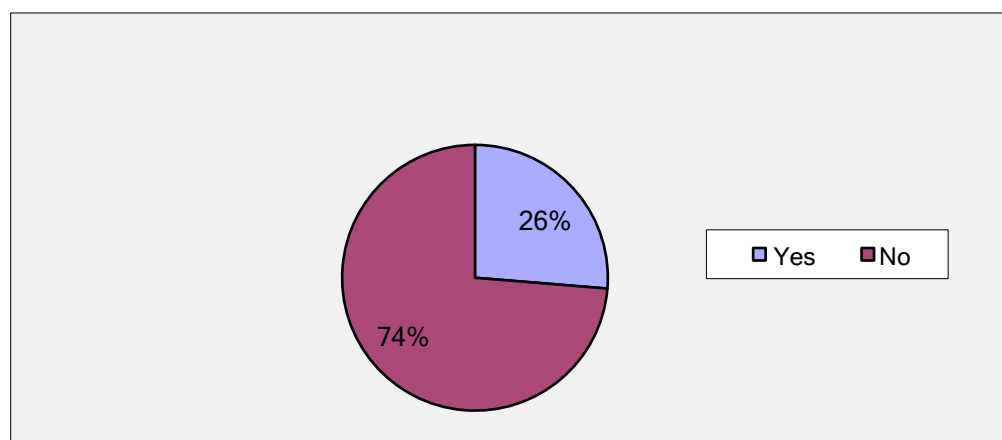


Fig. 13. Unprepared for Evangelism

Without training, many feel inadequate to go and share God's Word with others. Mestizo pastors in the Tehuacan Valley of Southern Mexico typically report that they feel unprepared to take the gospel to indigenous people groups. As figure 13 indicates, 74% are unprepared to evangelize others. In contrast, the indigenous leaders having been trained in storying and oral methods of communication seem ready to share the gospel with their people groups. Of indigenous leaders who have been taught an evangelistic story track, 100% indicated they were

ready to take the gospel to their people. These surveys indicate that oral training methods prepare indigenous leaders for service. Effective training in evangelism utilizes the learning and telling of God's Story to others. Learning God's Story empowers indigenous leaders and brings understanding to indigenous people groups.

Prayer in Evangelism

Prayer releases the power of God in ministry. In order to help prepare people to receive the Gospel, a focus on intentional prayer is needed. Maintaining a list of lost people provides an effective method of training indigenous leaders to pray evangelistically.⁹³ This focused prayer challenges indigenous leaders to pray for and maintain a list of lost people within their realm of influence. With this list in hand, leaders commit to pray for each person daily. Concerning prayer W. Oscar Thompson writes, "But when you intercede for someone, it is like a guided missile. It is instantaneous. And it is on Target. There is no defense."⁹⁴ Lives are changed as God's people pray specifically for lost people. Indigenous leaders open their villages to the gospel with prayer.

Additionally, teaching basic principles in prayer is necessary to impact lostness. Related to prayer Putman and Stetzer write, "Like many missional strategies, churches that are impacting lost culture are teaching people the eternal importance of prayer."⁹⁵ With indigenous leaders focused on prayer, God will answer and draw men to Himself. With individual effort alone, nothing great will happen. Yet, God is able to do great things. Indigenous leaders must rely on the words of the Apostle Paul. He shares that God "is able to do immeasurably more than all we

93. Wheeler, "Outreach: Back to the Basics in Strategic Planning," 123.

94. Oscar W. Thompson, Jr. *Concentric Circles of Concern: From Self to Others Through Life-Style Evangelism* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1981), 77.

95. David Putman and Ed Stetzer, *Breaking the Missional Code: Your Church Can Become a Missionary in Your Community*, (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2006) Kindle eBook, 126.

ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.”⁹⁶ For God’s glory and the salvation of UUPGS and UPGS, a proper evangelistic strategy relies on prayer.

Much is accomplished by and through prayer. Successful and effective discipleship corresponds directly to one’s time in prayer. Too often prayer is neglected or replaced with personal effort and work. The perceived need to do more robs time with God. Alves writes, “You can accomplish far more through prayer than through your works and deeds. You are meeting with God Himself, asking for divine intervention. Procrastination can be your greatest enemy, so use your time wisely – don’t waste it.”⁹⁷ Realizing that indigenous leaders need focused time with God in prayer for success in evangelism brings a new focus to strategy. Prayer must be a part of the evangelistic strategy in training indigenous leaders.

Few evangelistic programs focus on the importance of humbling ourselves through prayer and fasting. Bill Bright insists that fasting moves believers closer to God: “Fasting is a primary means of restoration. By humbling our souls, fasting releases the Holy Spirit to do His special work of revival in us. This changes our relationship with God forever, taking us into a deeper life in Christ and giving us a greater awareness of God’s reality and presence in our life.”⁹⁸ Desiring a closer and deeper relationship with God, indigenous leaders must spend time in fasting and prayer. The personal discipline gained through fasting will help move indigenous leaders to a greater relationship with God. Focusing on prayer as an integrated part of evangelism allows indigenous leaders to share more effectively the gospel message.

Relationship is the most important aspect for prayer. Often, prayer is thought of as

96. Eph. 4:20, NIV.

97. Alves, *Becoming a Prayer Warrior*, (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1998) 40.

98. Bill Bright, *The Coming Revival* (Orlando, FL: New Life Publications, 1995), 94.

elegant and profound words spoken to impress others. However, words are less important than the relationship. Intimacy and effectiveness of prayer depend on one's relationship with God. Elmer Towns writes, "When we approach God in prayer, we need to realize that He has invited us into His presence. Think about when someone invites us into his or her home. We can tell a lot about how that person feels about us by the way he or she treats us."⁹⁹ Being in the presence of God is a great honor. Certainly, the love of God is demonstrated in the life of Jesus Christ. Yet, to be invited into the very presence of God through prayer is astonishing. Understanding and living in this type of relationship with God empowers indigenous leaders to better serve and live as evangelists in their communities.

Servant Evangelism

Due to persecution and fear of outsiders, creative access is needed to share the gospel message in many indigenous areas. In order to gain access to many UUPGS and UPGS, servant evangelism is needed. To see people come to Christ, indigenous leaders must be faithful to invite others to become a part of God's family.

Relationships are critical in evangelism. In order to plant the seeds of the Gospel in indigenous communities, relationships must be formed with the people. Servant evangelism facilitates the spreading of the Gospel by helping build relationships with indigenous communities. This method of evangelism opens the hearts of people through "demonstrating the kindness of God by offering to do some act of humble service."¹⁰⁰

99. Elmer L. Towns, *How To Pray: When You Don't Know What to Say* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006), 15.

100. Steve Sjogren, *Conspiracy of Kindness: A Unique Approach to Sharing the Love of Jesus* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, Kindle eBook. 2003) 18.

In the indigenous communities the message of the gospel relates directly to the messenger. In order to win a hearing of the gospel, one must gain some level of trust. Servant evangelism provides the indigenous leader a way to gain trust and ultimately share the gospel in indigenous areas. Dayton and Fraser writes, “Evangelization takes place in the context of human needs. A study of the ministry of Christ impresses us with how he constantly responded to obvious needs of individuals and groups. He healed the blind, the lame, and lepers. He blessed children and fed the hungry. He instructed those who sought the truth, forgave the guilty, accepted outcasts, and reassured the fearful. He was sensitive to the deep needs of people and broke social conventions in order to help those in need.”¹⁰¹ Meeting physical needs provides opportunities to speak and share the gospel message. In order to better equip indigenous leaders, training must include aspects of servant evangelism as part of an evangelistic strategy.

Living and working in a community with the people provides ample opportunity to share the gospel message and to minister to the physical needs of the community. The objective is neither dependency nor the neglect of the spoken word. Rather, the indigenous leader must faithfully serve as unto Christ and proclaim salvation in Jesus Christ. To this end John Stott writes, “Our neighbor is neither a bodiless soul that we should love only his soul, nor a soulless body that we should care for its welfare alone, nor even a body-soul isolated from society. God created man, who is my neighbor, a body-soul in community. Therefore, if we love our neighbor as God made him, we must inevitably be concerned for his total welfare, the good of his soul, his body and his community.”¹⁰² In training indigenous leaders evangelism must involve action as well as God’s redemptive story.

101. Dayton and Fraser, *Planning Strategies for World Evangelization*, 116-117.

102. John Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 1975), 47.

A reoccurring problem in missions is dependency.¹⁰³ Too often training and church planting center on funding from outside of the indigenous communities. In order to sustain growth and evangelism, indigenous leaders must be trained using resources readily available in their indigenous community. To maintain the indigenous nature of the church, training should never include methods of evangelism that are not reproducible by indigenous leaders. Examples of servant evangelism ideas in the indigenous community include service projects that are financially sustainable by the indigenous leaders and the indigenous church. Gathering wood, sweeping streets, simple home repairs, and joining in on community projects are ways indigenous leaders may be trained to help their communities. Also, distributing simple, low-cost items, such as matches, provides opportunities to meet needs and share the gospel with others. Thompson writes, “God’s plan for your life is that his love flow through your life and reach out to others and meet their needs.”¹⁰⁴ This aspect of evangelism brings the gospel meaning in a relevant manner. Love in action moves past religion and demonstrates that the gospel of Jesus Christ changes lives. Indigenous leaders trained in servant evangelism better relate to their people and more effectively live out the gospel in their communities.

Evangelistic Summary

In order to advance the training of indigenous leaders, evangelism must be integrated into all areas of ministry. Telling God’s story is essential to any Christian leader. Good missiology requires a constant focus on telling the gospel story. Furthermore, biblical evangelism that focuses on Bible-story-telling, prayer, and acts of servant evangelism provides effective training

103. Daniel Rickett, *Dependency in Mission Partnership* <http://www.partnersintl.org/pdf/dependency.pdf>, (accessed December 18, 2012).

104. Thompson, Jr. *Concentric Circles of Concern*, 92.

for indigenous leaders in a culturally appropriate manner. Training in this way is reproducible and facilitates church growth. These three aspects of evangelism help form an oral strategy that effectively trains indigenous leaders and begins the discipleship process.

Discipleship

Discipleship is the emphasis of the Great Commission. In order to fulfill God's commands, disciples must be made. A disciple is a Christ follower. Conforming to and living according to the Scripture are the marks of a disciple. Living in loving obedience to Jesus Christ shapes the virtue of his followers. This life begins with hearing the gospel. Patterson and Scoggins write, "Those who receive Christ become corporate disciples, being added to the church through repentance, faith, and baptism (Acts 2:38-41). As discipling continues, the new Christian learns to obey the other commands of Christ and to serve in ministry."¹⁰⁵ In training indigenous leaders, discipleship is the core of the work. It is impossible to be a Christian leader without first being a disciple. This section provides an examination of the nature of discipleship in the context of indigenous people groups. Using the Apostle Paul as a model, a biblical rationale is developed for the training of indigenous leaders. This includes five principles of discipleship, as seen in Paul's life and ministry. Within these principles is seen a practical manner to disciple indigenous leaders.

In order to better train indigenous leaders, a clear understanding of discipleship is needed. Discipleship is defined in several ways. Oscar Thompson explains that "a disciple is a learner."¹⁰⁶ This definition stems from the original meaning of the word. In Greek, the word for

105. George Patterson and Richard Scoggins, *Church Multiplication Guide: The Miracle Of Church Reproduction* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2002), 45.

106. W. Oscar Thompson, *Concentric Circles of Concern*, 157.

disciple is μαθητής, meaning “a learner or pupil.”¹⁰⁷ In the biblical context, a disciple is one dedicated to learning or to following Christ. Following the command of Christ in Matt. 28:19-20, a disciple should produce more disciples. Discipleship affects the total person. This is to move past mere biblical knowledge to action. Disciples move out into the world and share Christ in word and deed. David Platt writes concerning discipleship, “Whereas disinfecting Christians involves isolating them and teaching them to be good, discipling Christians involves propelling them into the world to risk their lives for the sake of others.”¹⁰⁸ The work of discipleship is training believers, who in turn will train more people to follow Christ. This is an essential aspect of training indigenous leaders.

The goal of most missionaries is to establish a ministry that endures. Successful ministry requires the training of leaders. Borek, Lovett, and Towns write, “While vast crowds followed Jesus throughout much of His public ministry, Jesus chose to devote most of His time and energy in the training of the twelve. That effort resulted in eleven equipped leaders who reached the world with His message and gave birth to a movement that has survived two millennia.”¹⁰⁹ This is the discipleship process given to us by God. The impact is greater than what any individual could accomplish alone. A strategy of training indigenous leaders requires the multiplication of leadership. This is discipleship.

Following Christ as a disciple is a call to Christ himself. This call is for a life of obedience and at times a life of suffering. Jesus Christ said to his disciples, “If anyone would

107. Strong, *Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries*, G3101.

108. David Platt, *Radical* (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books, 2010), 105.

109. John Borek, Danny Lovett, and Elmer Towns, *The Good Book On Leadership: Case Studies From the Bible* (Nashville, TN: 2005), 29.

come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”¹¹⁰ In training indigenous leaders, the aspect of suffering must be included as a normal part of following Christ. Concerning discipleship Thom Rainer states, “Discipleship still means cross-bearing. The new pagans still need a Savior. For them and us, Jesus is still our only hope.”¹¹¹ Discipling indigenous leaders requires preparing them to follow Jesus Christ. This call may lead to suffering and hardship. However, the hope of salvation is found nowhere else.

The goal of discipleship in training indigenous leaders is making disciples of the nations. As disciples are formed in the UUPGS and UPGS, churches are born. ION writes, “Discipling oral communicators should lead directly to church planting as new converts come together in covenant communities of believers to carry out the functions of the church.”¹¹² The joy and benefit of training leaders is new churches. The standards and measure of success continue to rise. Competition and striving to be the best, at times, creates undue pressure. Blackaby writes, “If excellence is understood to mean perfection in everything one does, then that is not God’s standard. If excellence refers to doing things in a way that honors God, then all leaders should strive for it. There is a difference between giving God your best and giving God the best.”¹¹³ Doing one’s best is achievable. Setting a standard of perfection is unrealistic; not everyone can be the best. This principle is freeing for the indigenous leader. The indigenous leader is to live and do his or her best without guilt or shame. Indigenous leaders must do their best, expecting everyone else to do the same.

110. Matt. 16:24.

111. Thom Rainer, *The Book of Church Growth* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 1993), 223.

112. Lovejoy, *Making Disciples of Oral Learners*, 51.

113. Henry Blackaby, and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership*, 123.

A Biblical Model of Discipleship

Discipleship is the thrust of the Great Commission. The life and ministry of the Apostle Paul provides the patterns and principles to form a biblical missiology for training indigenous leaders. The model of the Apostle Paul, as seen in 2 Timothy, is a mentoring relationship. Paul writes, “You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”¹¹⁴ These words provide an outline to disciple indigenous leaders through a mentoring relationship. In this passage five missiological principles are understood. These principles form the structure for discipleship in the indigenous context: Relationship, Message, Entrust, Faithful, and Reproducible. Each principle represents a unique aspect of discipleship. By understanding and applying these ideas to the training of indigenous leaders, a biblical missiology ensues. These principles form the basis of discipleship in the indigenous context.

Relationship

Paul addresses Timothy as *my child*. From other Scripture passages, one learns that Paul’s relationship with Timothy is as a mentor rather than his biological father. Though, the nature of this address indicates a strong and caring relationship. Learning from Paul, the missionary must seek to build meaningful relationships with indigenous leaders. In any discipleship relationship, there are two roles: the teacher and the student. Paul assumes the role of teacher and Timothy is his student or mentee. To facilitate effective discipleship in the indigenous world, relationships are essential. Mentoring provides a means to produce effective indigenous leaders. In the context of training indigenous leaders, mentoring is greatly needed.

¹¹⁴ 2 Tim. 2:1-2.

Mentoring includes pointing indigenous leaders to Christ. Rick Lewis shares that the greatest task of a mentor is directing others to God. He writes, “Mentors serve others best when they encourage them to lift their sights from their own agendas to seek after God’s agenda.”¹¹⁵

Directing others to God is the key component of mentoring. Growing as a mentor and as an indigenous leader requires growing in relationship with God.

Maintaining a vibrant relationship with God is necessary in training indigenous leaders. A true disciple must continue to grow into the image of Christ. Jesus is the standard for Christian life and in all leadership. The nature and beauty of His life demonstrates the quality of faithfulness. MacArthur states, “Leadership is all about character-honor, decency, integrity, faithfulness, holiness, moral purity, and other qualities like these. All these virtues may be combined and summed up in one final statement. This rounds out and perfectly summarizes every fundamental requirement of a true leader: A leader is Christlike.”¹¹⁶ In every aspect of life, true leaders conform to the image and standard of Christ. Therefore, discipleship must point indigenous leaders to live faithfully for Christ.

The missionary must love his disciples and instruct them with the love of a father. In turn they must teach indigenous leaders to love their followers. This aspect of leadership training is not a part of secular leadership and is often overlooked inside the church. Malphurs writes, “The love of leaders for their followers is the reason servant leaders serve; it’s their motivation.”¹¹⁷ This type of relationship follows the pattern and structure of the family.

In training indigenous leaders, time is a critical issue. Most desire to see disciples made

115. Rick Lewis, *Mentoring Matters: Building Strong Christian Leaders, Avoiding Burnout, Reaching the Finish Line* (Grand Rapids, MI: Monarch Books, 2009), 31.

116. John MacArthur, *The Book on Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 177.

117. Aubrey Malphurs, *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003), 41.

as quickly as possible without wasting a second of time. Yet, discipleship is not a speedy process. Patience and time are both needed in building relationships. Effectively training indigenous leaders is a commitment of time. There are few programs available for training the indigenous. There are no quick solutions. The Bible provides examples of giving time to others in the discipleship process. The Apostle Paul spent three years discipling believers in Ephesus.¹¹⁸ Jesus Christ spent three years with his followers. Paul spent sufficient time with Timothy to address him with the endearing term of, *my child*. A commitment of time is needed to properly build mentoring relationships with indigenous leaders.

The unique relationship in discipleship is different than other relationships in life. Lingenfelter writes, “Every multicultural team must have this theological understanding as the foundation of its relationships. Without this understanding, their relationships are no different from those of secular or government employment, whose purpose is the power and profit goals of the employer.”¹¹⁹ The discipleship relationship is based upon principles of Scripture. Therefore, the purpose of a discipleship relationship is christocentric in nature. The effect is for the glory of God, and the bonds of this relationship are enjoyed for eternity.

Message

The message of discipleship is the Word of God. Paul urges Timothy to remember the message that he has been taught. Much of the dialogue between Paul and Timothy has been lost. However, the Bible gives the inspired teachings of Paul and two letters that Paul penned for Timothy. The Word itself is therefore the content of discipleship. This begins with the Gospel

118. Acts 20:31.

119. Sherwood Lingenfelter, *Leading Cross-Culturally: Covenant Relationships for Effective Christian Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 75.

message and continues with the stories from the Old Testament and the letters of the New Testament.

In order to make true disciples, it is imperative to teach the word of God. In the Great Commission, Christ commands his followers to make disciples by “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”¹²⁰ This task is teaching and modeling obedience to the Word of God. The message is then the complete word of God. Eugene Peterson writes,

Christians feed on Scripture. Holy Scripture nurtures the holy community as food nurtures the human body. Christians don’t simply learn or study or use Scripture; we assimilate it, take it into our lives in such a way that it gets metabolized into acts of love, cups of cold water, missions into all the world, healing and evangelism and justice in Jesus’ name, hands raised in adoration of the Father, feet washed in company of the Son.¹²¹

The nature of the message in discipleship is two-fold. The first is learning God’s Story.

Indigenous leaders must know Christ’s commands before they are able to obey his commands.

The second aspect of the message is obedience. Living and serving as a Christian leader is following Christ’s every command.

Storying teaches biblical content and allows for the application of truth from God’s Word. This method allows the indigenous leader to absorb Scripture in his or her cultural context. Indigenous leaders relate and respond to hearing God’s Word in story form. Michael Novelli writes, “Throughout history, societies have passed on their values, beliefs, and traditions through stories. Woven into the fabric of our cultures, families, and communities, they’re the strands that bind us together. Stories define who we are. Story is at the core of our identities and

120. Matt. 28:20a.

121. Eugene Peterson, *Eat This Book: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), 18.

is the essence of our memories. We live in stories.”¹²² Storying facilitates the discipleship of indigenous leaders by teaching biblical content in an oral method that easily conforms to culture. The message found in God’s Word is sufficient to bring indigenous leaders into a dynamic and life-changing relationship with God.

Entrust

The work of discipleship is teaching the message of Jesus Christ. Paul exhorts Timothy to *entrust* God’s message to others. The word translated as entrust is παρατίθημι in the original text. This verb means “to place beside, or near, or set before; to deposit; to entrust, commit to one’s charge.”¹²³ Very rich in meaning, this word denotes more than the simple transmission of knowledge. This action is to give away with purpose. Therefore the concept of discipleship is never solely passing along biblical knowledge. Discipleship is giving away God’s Word in a way that it is practical—lived by and lived in. The Word of God is taught in a way that the hearer receives it and acts upon it. The responsibility is therefore on the missionary/discipler. The person discipling others must entrust or give away God’s Word in a way that disciples hear, understand, and follow.

As noted earlier, indigenous leaders feel ready to evangelize their people after receiving training in Storying. These same leaders feel ready and capable to lead others as well. Figure 14 illustrates this point. During this training, each student learned a story set of twenty-five Bible stories. These stories address the cultural and religious views of the Aztec people and serve as an extended Gospel presentation. This set serves as an evangelistic tool and as a means of training indigenous leaders. The results indicate that 67% of surveyed, indigenous leaders feel prepared

122. Novelli, *Shaped by the Story*, 57.

123. Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek Definitions*, G3908.

to lead and 33% feel somewhat prepared. After the training none of the indigenous leaders were left feeling inadequate to lead, and the majority were confident in their ability to lead. Storying brings the Word of God to indigenous leaders in a way that they can process and reproduce. Storying is entrusting indigenous leaders with God's Word.

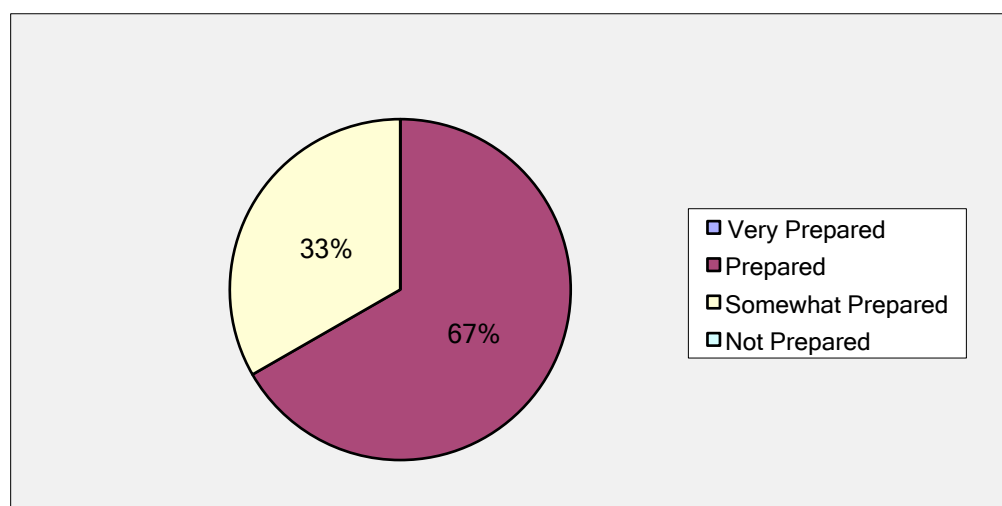


Fig. 14. Prepared to Lead

Faithful

From Paul it is clear that choosing disciples is a tremendous task. Timothy was instructed to choose faithful men. The word faithful is translated from πιστός in the Greek. This word means “trustworthy; of persons who show themselves faithful in the transaction of business, the execution of commands, or the discharge of official duties; one who kept his plighted faith, worthy of trust; that can be relied on.”¹²⁴ Paul encourages Timothy to invest his time in persons who would honor and keep the commands of God.

In discipleship, faithfulness implies action and obedience. George Barna writes, “Becoming spiritually mature in our imitation of Christ demands that we give both the head and

124. Ibid., G4103.

the heart sufficient opportunity to grow and to make a difference in our lives and in the world.”¹²⁵ The faithful demonstrate Christ’s love by their actions. Choosing disciples means finding those who will follow and obey Christ. Faithfulness speaks to the condition of one’s heart. This begins with knowing God and living in obedience to his commands. Rather than seeking the perfect disciple, missionaries need the faithful.

Reproducible

The final principle of discipleship is reproducibility. Training others is for the purpose of expanding the kingdom of God. Discipleship moves new disciples to train\disciple others. The discipleship process continues until the return of Christ. Paul explains to Timothy that the people he chooses to disciple must be *able to teach others*. In the original text the word able is derived from, ικανοι. This word is defined as “sufficient in ability, enough, or fit.”¹²⁶ In context his word denotes one’s capacity to teach. The focus of time and energy is given to training those fit to train others.

The teaching of others is the nature of discipleship. The idea of this word is “to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them.”¹²⁷ Therefore, the responsibility of the missionary is to teach the indigenous leader. The indigenous leader will then train others with the same message from God’s Word. The object of the verb teach is *others*. Therefore, this passage explains discipleship as a continuous cycle. Biblically a disciple must be able to teach others, who in turn will teach others. Reproducibility is God’s plan for discipleship as seen in the life and ministry of Paul.

125. Barna, *Growing True Disciples*, 90.

126. Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek Definitions*, G2425.

127. Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek Definitions*, G1321.

Summary

The nature of evangelism and discipleship comprise the major content of a strategy to train indigenous leaders. In the indigenous context, evangelism involves the spoken Word of God. In order to ensure that others clearly hear and understand God's story, the spoken word must be accompanied with biblical acts of love and kindness. Prayer is the supporting work of evangelism. Prayer allows God to work and move within the sharing of the Gospel.

Methods of training indigenous leaders must therefore be limited to resources available within the host culture. Storying is a natural part of all cultures. This method of training indigenous leaders follows the principles of discipleship as found in Paul's life and ministry. Also, stories are reproducible as indigenous leaders can freely share learned stories with others. Discipleship is the teaching of God's word with practical application. The guiding principles of discipleship are relationship, message, entrust, faithful, and reproducible. By following these principles in discipleship, indigenous leaders have a missiology that facilitates biblical discipleship.

The practical application of evangelism and discipleship in the indigenous context is through Bible-Story-Telling. This method allows indigenous leaders to learn and apply biblical truths. Further, Storying reaches into the indigenous culture in a manner easily understood and received. An oral strategy for training indigenous leaders utilizes Storying to effectively share the Gospel and make disciples.

CHAPTER IV

A STRATEGY FOR TRAINING INDIGENOUS LEADERS

A strategy provides a process to move indigenous leaders forward in ministry. Intentional planning is necessary to insure successful development of indigenous leaders. Dayton and Fraser explain, “A strategy is an overall approach, plan, or way of describing how we will go about reaching our goals or solving our problems.”¹ Following a strategy allows missionaries to work in a consistent and methodical manner toward the goal of a sustained force of indigenous leaders. God’s plan for reaching the nations is realized as the indigenous leaders take personal responsibility for the proclamation of the Gospel.

In order to properly train indigenous leaders, a strategy is needed that meets the communication, discipleship, and evangelism requirements of the indigenous people. As established in previous chapters, Bible-Story-Telling, Bible Storying, or Storying provides a way to address each of these concerns. J.O Terry writes that Bible Storying is “a missionary method of proclamation.”² ION provides a fuller explanation of Storying: “The term storying is “an attempt to make a strong statement about the value of the intact, uninterrupted Bible narrative as a valuable means of teaching God’s Word leading to salvation, church planting, discipling, leader training, and various ministry activities. Storying is not limited in purpose to teaching nonliterate. It is used because it is reproducible by listeners and because the use of story helps to

1. Dayton and Fraser, *Planning Strategies for World Evangelization*, 13.

2. Terry, *Basic Bible Storying*, 1.

overcome resistance or hostility to traditional Westernized teaching.”³ A strategy involving Storying then provides the needed tools to make disciples of indigenous leaders. Using narrative discourse allows for learning in a culturally sensitive manner. The value and message of God’s Word is seen, heard, and assimilated into the indigenous groups through Storying.

In this chapter, an oral strategy for training indigenous leaders is developed. This strategy is presented in four parts: Learning God’s Story, Telling God’s Story, A Model-Story-Set, and Teaching God’s Story. Each section contributes to the discipleship process and leadership development for indigenous communities. Within this chapter a Model-Story-Set is presented. This story set contains twenty-five stories for a yearlong discipleship program.

Learning God’s Story

In order to share God’s Story, one must know his stories. Learning Scripture requires a commitment of time and energy. Preparing a sermon requires work and study; equally, learning a story involves more than a simple review of a Children’s Bible. As God’s Word is holy and pure in the written form, the spoken Word reflects this same content without compromising the truth. Therefore, in order to story God’s Word, the storyer must be fully prepared. J.O. Terry writes, “Until you can know the stories well enough to be free to tell them without having to refer to your Bible or notes, you will be limited. When you realize that you can open your Bible and then just tell the story it will free you up to give full expression to the story, its plot, and characters.”⁴ The intent of an oral presentation of the Bible is to give the oral learner the Scripture in an understandable and learnable form. Since the written Word is the standard, the oral Bible must

3. Lovejoy, *Making Disciples of Oral Learners*, 88.

4. Terry, *Basic Bible Storying*, 74.

represent it in content and message. Attention to the exact subject matter and meaning is essential. Therefore, a process is needed to effectively learn Bible stories.

The written Word is the source for Bible Storying. For the missionary, learning God's story begins with reading the Scripture text. The passage should be read ten or more times aloud.⁵ Reading and learning in one's heart language is necessary for learning the story. After spending sufficient time reading the text, the leaders should begin telling the story in his or her words. A helpful tool in learning a story is to learn the story by scene or by photograph. Dividing the story into a series of pictures makes remembering the story more manageable. Also, this method greatly aids the process of teaching others the story. Once the story is easily told in one's heart language, the storyteller may proceed to learning the story in the language of the target people group.

Reading and listening to the passage in the target language helps in understanding and in preparing for the telling of the story. Language skill and competency are necessary to the missionary task and essential to Storying. It is assumed that the missionary/storyteller will have an advanced level of fluency in both the speaking of and listening to the heart language.⁶ Without an advanced level of fluency, the missionary will not have the competency to complete the process. Recorded versions of the Bible are available in most of the major language groups of the world and are obtainable at little to no cost.⁷ If possible, the learner should use multiple

5. Terry, *Basic Bible Storying*, 58.

6. An advanced level of fluency is the minimum level needed for Storying. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) determines the standard for this level of language learning. Competency at this level may take several years to obtain. Time will vary according to the individual and his or her commitment to learning the language. For learning an indigenous language in Southern Mexico, one to two years of fulltime language study is recommended before beginning a Storying project. Complete information and standards of language learning are available at: <http://actflproficiencyguidelines2012.org>, (accessed October 10, 2012).

7. Faith Comes By Hearing®, offers over the audio recordings for over 680 languages for free download at: <http://www.bible.is/audioplayer>, (accessed October 10, 2012).

versions of the Bible for a more complete understanding of the story.

Many indigenous languages do not exist in written form. Therefore, in order to insure the integrity of the Word of God, it is recommended that the storyteller record the telling of the Story. A bilingual person should then translate the recorded story into the trade language of the target group. This translation should then be checked for authenticity and biblical content. Every phrase must be linked to the written Word of God. Any additions, significant deletions, or errors must be noted. Corrections should then be made to the story and then the process should be repeated until the story is told without error. The storyteller never has “freedom to make drastic changes in the stories.”⁸ This process normally will be repeated two to three times in order to obtain a pure, biblically accurate story. This process is similar to the method employed in the development of a written translation.

Often the desire is to cut corners and speed up the time required to learn a story. However as the story represents the only Bible many indigenous will ever hear or know, the process is necessary. The faithful storyteller works tirelessly to learn God’s Story without compromise.

ION writes,

For many oral communicators the only Bible they will have and effectively use is the one they have in their heads and hearts. It is this Bible, an “oral Bible,” that enables them to meditate upon God’s Word in their quiet times and devotionals and use it in evangelism, discipleship, church planting, and leadership development. This oral Bible can go where many times the written Bible cannot go. It can cross borders, enter prisons... An oral Bible becomes the permanent possession of an oral communicator and is available for use at all times. Oral communicators are able to retain, recall, and repeat from memory their oral Bible.⁹

The storyteller must know the story completely before sharing with others. The truth and integrity of Scripture demands the careful and accurate learning of God’s Story. This attention to

8. Terry, *Basic Bible Storying*, 57.

9. Lovejoy, *Making Disciples of Oral Learners*, 83.

truth prepares the storyteller for the sharing of Scripture with the indigenous world.

Telling God's Story

The basic responsibility of the missionary is to tell God's story. Paul's charge to Timothy is to "Preach the Word."¹⁰ The understanding of this word has great implications for the church and for missions. Preach is from the word κηρύσσω meaning "to herald, or to publish, proclaim openly: something which has been done."¹¹ To proclaim God's Word is the task of preaching. In training indigenous leaders, the missionary must share Scripture in a way that is heard and understood. Telling a story then is more than simply recounting a memorized text. J.O. Terry writes, "A well-told story is dynamically recreated in the telling rather than regurgitated verbatim from memory."¹² The story must accurately represent God's Word and be spoken according to culturally appropriate norms.

Crafting a story to meet the needs of the indigenous leader is the emphasis of Storying. Crafting is the foundational work of telling a story. A good story reaches into the culture with God's Word in a way that the hearers feel and experience God's message to man. ION writes, "Crafting Bible stories is shaping the stories from a literature format to an oral format and making such changes as needed to maintain a clear focus on the story's main point(s), to give clarity in telling, and to make necessary changes needed for accommodating certain worldview issues."¹³ A crafted story touches culture with Scripture in a way that the hearers know and experience God's life-changing power. Each story must be crafted to speak to the culture and

10. 2 Tim. 4:2a.

11. Thayer, *Thayer's Greek Definitions*, G2784.

12. Terry, *Basic Bible Storying*, 56.

13. Lovejoy, *Making Disciples of Oral Learners*, 76.

worldview of each indigenous group. In order to craft a story, certain aspects of the culture must be understood. The following table demonstrates the necessary aspects of the creation story as created for the Aztec Indians of Southern Mexico:¹⁴

Scripture	Nahuatl	English	Rationale
Title	Cuando Totatadios Okicriaro Nochi	When God Created the World	
Gen 1:1-2	Totata Dios okicriaro in cielo iwan tlaltikpaktle. Achtoaj amo okatka intlaltikpaktle.	God created the heavens and the earth. Before this there was nothing.	This is to demonstrate that God is the creator of all. Nothing existed before the creation.
Gen 1:16	Totata Dios okinchijchi ome tlawilte. Non weytik para tlawis de tlajka iwa non tzitzikitzi para tlawis de yuak.	God made two great lights. The larger gave light to the day and the smaller gave light to the night.	This fact shows that God is not the Sun; rather, he is the creator of the Sun, Moon and all else.

Table 1. Creation Story Worldview Issues

Worldview and culture greatly direct the needed emphasis of a story. The indigenous leader changes and grows in understanding of God as his or her worldview is challenged and then changed by Scripture.

The creation story, as crafted with the necessary components, confronts the false beliefs of the Aztec Indians. Many believe that the sun is the ultimate god and must be honored and appeased. Others believe that god and the sun are the same. Within the Nahuatl culture, the Sun is central and considered of utmost importance. Miguel León-Portilla writes “Aztec religion, on the mystic-militaristic level, sought to preserve the life of the Sun, threatened by the fifth and final cataclysm, through ceremonial warfare and human sacrifice. The supreme ideal of the Aztec warriors was to fulfill their mission as the chosen people of Tonatiuh, the Sun, who needed

14. The example stories are taken from a creation story that was crafted by Anthony and Melissa Conner. This story is part of a story set created for the Aztec Indians of Southern Mexico. The story was back translated by Claudia Montiel Lorsa and checked for biblical integrity and accuracy by a Bible translator, Arnulfo Prado. This story set is in the proposed model for training indigenous leaders. Angelina Montiel Lorsa recorded the audio version of this story.

the precious liquid if he were to continue to shine over Cemanáhuac, the world.”¹⁵

This story shows that there is one God and that he is the creator of all things. Using Gen. 1:16 in this story demonstrates that the sun and moon are merely creations of God. By confronting the beliefs of the Aztec Indians concerning the sun, indigenous leaders hearing the story are given hope in a new and more powerful God.

	Hebrew	Nahuatl	English
Key Terms	אלהים	Totatadios	God: Signifies the great almighty God.
	ברא	Criaro	To Create; this word is a form of the Spanish word for create. There is no equivalent word in Nahuatl.
	אדם	Tlakatl	Man
	טוב	Kuale	Good
	בוש	Opinawiaya	Shame or Embarrassment

Table 2. Creation Story Key Terms

Another factor in crafting a story is the terminology to be used. Often, biblical language and terminology is misunderstood. Key terms in the Bible are often overlooked, or at times the storyteller assumes the terms to be universally understood. For those with a strong Christian background, this may be true. In the indigenous world, few understand religious terminology found in Scripture. For the Bible to resonate with the indigenous leaders, key terms must be recognized and correctly translated. Few indigenous leaders have the understanding or vocabulary needed to fully comprehend Scripture. Therefore, special attention to the translation of key terms is essential to effective training. When no comparable word exists, the terms must be explained. The table 2 lists the key terms, as found in the creation story. These terms correctly

15. Miguel León-Portilla, *Aztec Thought and Culture*, Translated by Jack Emory Davis (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 177.

translated insure that the indigenous leaders will understand the intended meaning of the story.

Storying allows the indigenous to hear and absorb God's truth. Scripture must be told in a way that it touches the heart of the indigenous people. In order to effectively story God's Word, there are several guidelines to consider. The following seven guidelines are proposed to help ensure that the story is clearly heard and understood by the audience.

- 1) Begin Each Story the Same Way. At the start state, "This is a story from God's Word." Other similar phrases may be used. However, the audience needs to understand that the story is from God and is not just another story.
- 2) Tell the Story from Beginning to End. Telling the story without pause or comment allows the audience to learn the entire story. Comments and questions should be held until the end of the story. If a mistake is made or a crucial part is left out, begin the story over from the beginning. The story is the spoken Word of God. Therefore every effort must be made to tell the story correctly. The indigenous need to hear God's Story as God Himself has given it to man. By telling the story from beginning to end, the audience better understands God's message to man.
- 3) End the Story. At the end of the story one should state, "And this concludes the story from God's Word." The hearers need to understand that the story is over. Any comments or commentary are not mixed into the story. Concluding the story helps preserve the integrity of Scripture, and personal comments are not mistakenly considered as part of God's story.
- 4) Limit the Stories to 3-5 Minutes. This time limit allows the hearers to better remember and assimilate the story into life. Extended discourse often becomes confusing and difficult to remember.
- 5) Limit the Number of Proper Names to Five. When sharing multiple names and places, the information easily becomes misunderstood. The hearers should not be left trying to figure out who did what action. Rather, the story should clearly communicate God's message.
- 6) Repeat the Story. In order to learn a story, the audience needs to hear the story over and over.

Retelling the story provides the indigenous leader the opportunity to better process and understand the story. Further, this will help clarify any parts of the story that were not heard correctly. Ong states, “Redundancy, repetition of the just-said, keeps both speaker and hearer surely on the track.”¹⁶ 7) Tell the Story as the Indigenous Tell Stories. If a true story in the indigenous community is told standing, the storyteller should stand. If a true story is told with the people sitting in a circle, then the storyteller should sit in a circle and tell the story. Cultural norms should be followed as closely as possible. Also, the missionary must know the difference between how a true story and a fable are told in society. The Word of God must be presented as truth without any misunderstanding.

By crafting and telling a story according to the culture and worldview of the indigenous groups, the Scripture is better understood and integrated into life. In order to effectively train indigenous leaders, the Word of God must be communicated in a manner easily received. Crafting a story according to the beliefs of the people allows Scripture to correct any views contrary to God’s Word. Following the guidelines for telling a story insures that indigenous leaders will receive God’s Story in a form that is reproducible.

A Model Story Set

The purpose of a story set is to meet the specific needs of a target people group. Training indigenous leaders requires introducing them to the whole counsel of Scripture. Selecting a series of stories based on culture and worldview, balanced with the desired learning goals, provides missionaries with a strategy to train indigenous leaders. The following story set is developed for the Aztec Indians in Southern Mexico. This story set provides the basic strategy for training

16. Ong, *Orality & Literacy*, 40.

Aztec leaders. The stories are listed and should be told in chronological order. Each story is followed by a brief overview and rationale for choosing the story.

Cuando Totatadios Okicriaro Nochi (When God Created the World: Gen. 1-2)

This story provides the indigenous leader with the biblical view of the creation of the world and the origin of mankind. Further, this story combats the belief in the sun god as the creator and sustainer of life. This story demonstrates the power and majesty of God.

Kualetlakatl iwan Amokualetlakatl (Angels and Demons¹⁷)

This story is a composite story composed of various Scripture references to angels and demons. This story provides an explanation of demons and confronts the prominent position of witchcraft in indigenous communities. Further, this story teaches about Satan and the dangers and power of the spirit world. This story helps indigenous leaders deal with the cultural issues of their people.

Cuando Amo Otlaneltokake (Disobedience¹⁸)

This story explains the fall of mankind. This story is central to one's understanding of evil, sin, and God's grace and provides a foundation for truly understanding man's fallen condition. Further, indigenous leaders understand that sin is more than murder, lying, or stealing. Disobedience is sin against God.

Tlamanale (The Offering: Gen. 4:1-16)

This story provides an understanding of a proper offering before God. Using the account of Cain and Abel, the indigenous leaders understand that an offering is never to appease an unfriendly god or to honor the dead. God, Himself, sets the standard for an offering and He alone

17. This is a composite story taken from the following passages: Gen. 1:1, Ex. 20:3-5, 2 Sam. 24:15-17, Is. 14:12, Ps. 103:20-21, Zech. 1:19, Dan. 6:22, Luke 2, Col. 1:16, Rev. 12:9, 19:10, 20:10.

18. This is a composite story taken from the following passages: Gen. 2:15, 3:8-24, John 8:44, 1 John 3:8, Rev. 12:7-9

is due worship. Also, this story teaches that there are severe consequences for uncontrolled anger and that sin is never hidden from God.

Cuando Okiauke Chikactick (The Great Flood¹⁹)

Noah's ark is one of the most well known stories in the Old Testament. This offers the indigenous leaders the opportunity to learn about the consequences of sin and the redemptive plan of God. Obedience is also a central theme demonstrated in this story. Aztec men struggle with peer pressure and often reject the Gospel for the fear of men. This story shows strength in a time of difficulty.

Se Trato de Esperanza (The Covenant of Hope²⁰)

Abraham and Isaac are both key figures in God's Story. The promise that God made with Abraham endures throughout history. This story offers the indigenous hope in the promises of God. Abraham is the model of faithfulness. His act of obedience and God's provision presents the indigenous leader with an unshakable view of God. This story introduces the concepts of substitution and hope in trusting in God.

David Nomi Omochi Rey (David is Chosen as King: 1 Sam. 7:1-17)

This story demonstrates that God cares more about one's heart than one's physical attributes. Latin America is obsessed with beauty and looks. Often the indigenous are ridiculed for their appearance and style. David's story allows the indigenous to understand that God sees the heart.

Totatadios Okimak se Promesa a David (God's Promise to David: 2 Sam. 7:1-17)

The indigenous communities often lack hope. God's promise to David provides needed

19. This story summarizes the story of Noah and is taken from the following passages: Gen. 6:5-9, 6:17-22, 7:1-4, 7:19-20, 8:5, 8:13, 9:12.

20. This story summarizes the story of Abraham and is taken from the following passages: Ex. 12:1-7, 15:6, 17:7, 22:1-18.

hope and assurance to the indigenous leader. This eternal promise validates the plan and provision given to mankind by God. This prophecy story prepares the indigenous leaders for the birth of Christ.

Cuando Otlalatke Jesus (The Birth of Jesus: Luke 1:26-38, Matt. 1:18-25)

Jesus' birth confirms and proves the faithfulness of God. The indigenous have a faithful God whom they can trust. The indigenous relate to the nature and circumstances of Jesus' birth, as most are of humble, economic means. Mary's song of joy to her Lord and Savior demonstrates Jesus' unique nature and Mary's need for a Savior. This story speaks directly to the heart of the indigenous in Southern Mexico. The Cult of Mary thrives and encompasses most every aspect of life in the indigenous world. This story frees the indigenous from false worship.

Bautismo de Jesús (The Baptism of Jesus: Luke 3:21-22, Mark 1:9-11, Matt. 3:13-17)

Baptism is revered, but misunderstood in Mexico. The ceremonial baptism of children and infants is a major rite of passage in the indigenous world. Baptism is steeped in a mystical and cult-like tradition. By showing Jesus' baptism, the indigenous leader understands the biblical role and mode of baptism. This story breaks the bond between salvation and the act of baptism.

Jesus Okimachti Nicodemo (Jesus Teaches Nicodemus: John 3:1-21)

The story of Nicodemus explains the nature and plan of salvation. The story breaks the hold that tradition and penitence have upon salvation. The love of God brings salvation through faith. The indigenous leader finds that religious rites and works are no longer valid as a means of salvation.

Jesus Okimititi de Kekipia Poder Sobre Nochi Cosa (Jesus Has Power over All Things: Luke 6:1-11)

This story demonstrates that Jesus is God. His power and authority reveal that He is God. Most indigenous know of Jesus. However, Jesus is seen as the son of Mary who died. This story

presents Jesus as powerful and with authority to save and to rule.

Se Tormenta de atl iwan ejecatl (Jesus Calms the Storm: Mark 4:35-41, Luke 8:22-25)

This story speaks directly to the animistic worldview. Jesus has power over nature. The water god has no power against Jesus. Nature has no power over Jesus. Many of the fears found in the indigenous culture and worldview are overcome in learning this story.

Cuando Jesús Okipajti se Endemoniado (Jesus Heals a Demon Possessed Man: Luke 8:26-39)

The curandero (white witch) and bruja (witch) are feared and honored in the indigenous communities. Yet, this story demonstrates that Jesus has power over both. Demons bow before Him. The indigenous believe and fear the spirit world. Jesus has power to free humanity from the forces of evil.

Jesus Okintlakualti a Cinco Mil Tlaka (Jesus feeds the Five Thousand: Matt. 14:13-21, Mark 6:30-44, Luke 9:10-17, John 6:1-15)

This story is the only miracle listed in each of the Synoptic gospels and John. For the indigenous, this story shows that God is able to meet their needs. The miracle of food allows the poverty stricken indigenous to trust and hope in Christ. Further, this story, as a lesson of faith, shows the power and majesty of Christ.

Se Kuale Tlajpikxe (The Good Shepherd: John 10:1-21)

This narrative being prophetic and practical teaches the importance of following Jesus. The indigenous leader learns that there are consequences for the choices that one makes. The content of this story relates directly to the life of many of the indigenous.

El Amor de Un Padre (The Love of the Father: Luke 15:1-32)

The story of the prodigal son is one of the most beloved in the New Testament. The indigenous leader learns much about the love and forgiveness of Christ. The indigenous are a hardened people. Love is rarely displayed or understood. This redemptive story reveals God's

plan of salvation for the indigenous.

Ycome de Totatadios Witz para Kijusgaros Nochte Naciome (When the Lord Comes to Judge the Nations: Matt. 25:31-46)

This story provides insight into the future and end of times. This story provides hope for the indigenous. Salvation is not based on works; rather, it is a relationship with God. Also, the indigenous understand and relate to the images used in this story.

Se Siuatl Okitekili Perfume Ipan Ikxiwa de Jesús (A Woman Anoints Jesus Feet with Oil: Matt. 26:6-13, Mark 14:3-9, John 12:1-11)

This story gives hope to indigenous women who are marginalized in a male dominated society. Indigenous leaders learn to value and appreciate God's love for both men and women. The act of kindness and love that this woman showed Jesus is an encouragement to show God's love to others.

Okitraisonaro (The Betrayal: John 18:1-8, Luke 22:51-52, Mark 14:45-50)

The story of Jesus and his followers in the garden of Gethsemane is necessary to show how Jesus was betrayed. This story allows the indigenous to see the humanity of Jesus Christ. This narrative is necessary for any evangelistic story set.

Jesus Okicrusificarojke (The Crucifixion of Jesus: Luke 23:1-56)

The Gospel cannot effectively be told without sharing the death of Jesus. This story allows the hearer to understand the great love of God for humanity. Jesus Christ's work on the cross is the ultimate act of love and mercy. The great love of God is beyond comprehension. The indigenous humbly see and experience God's love in this story.

Jesus Viviroa (Jesus Lives: Luke 24, Acts 1:8-9, Mark 16:19, Eph. 1:20-21)

This story is the most powerful story ever told. This story is hope given to the world. Without the resurrection, the rest of the Bible is incomplete and lacking. Yet, Jesus rose from the

grave. Telling this story to the indigenous communities brings life and the hope of salvation.

Jesus Okinnawati Idisipulowa (Jesus Sends Out His Disciples: Matt. 28:18-20, Acts 1:1-11)

This story shows Jesus teaching and sharing with his followers. When the indigenous leaders hear this story, they understand that God's call continues. This story moves Jesus' followers to share the Gospel story with others.

Witz del Espíritu Santo (The Coming of the Holy Spirit: Acts 2:1-40)

The final story in this story set demonstrates the power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. The indigenous see the benefits of prayer and obedience to God. The Holy Spirit links the mission of the church to the individual. This story inspires the indigenous leader to trust and hope in Christ.

This story set, tailored to the worldview of the Aztec Indians in Southern Mexico, provides the needed biblical content for training indigenous leaders in evangelism and basic discipleship. The stories focus on the evangelistic need of the Aztec Indians, while giving leaders an opportunity to learn the Bible. In this process, training in evangelism and discipleship are merged into one program. Appendix G provides a suggested calendar by which to use this story set. This calendar is based on the cultural norms of the Aztec Indians in Southern Mexico.

Teaching God's Story

The teaching of God's Story is the foundation of training indigenous leaders. The twenty-five stories as presented in the last section provide a one-year training cycle that meets the evangelistic and discipleship needs to begin training indigenous leaders. This model is applicable for small groups or for the individual mentoring of indigenous leaders. This section outlines the way this story set should be used in training indigenous leaders. A suggested outline for a story

session is given. This outline is followed by an explanation of Teaching Content, Teaching Theology, and Story Application.

The story session is a time of discipleship using God's Story to train indigenous leaders. A story session should contain the following components: Welcome, Personal Review, Story Review, The Story, and Learning from the story.

Welcome

The welcome is a time of socialization and friendly chat. Relationships are central to the life of the indigenous. In order to make disciples in the indigenous context, it is necessary to be involved in their lives. Without a real relationship, no true discipleship will take place. This time is informal and should fit the social customs of the indigenous group. For the Aztec Indians, this time is enjoyed with a cup of coffee or soft drink, as any invited guest is offered something to eat or drink.

Personal Review

This begins the more formal time of the story session. Each individual shares significant happenings of events from his or her life. Everyone should be given a time to share. However, the indigenous do not participate in conversation in a linear fashion. As one person shares, others may join in on the conversation. At times, more than one person may be speaking. This style of conversation is confusing and disruptive for westerners. Yet, this is normal communication for the indigenous. Allowing everyone time to share is the important part of this exercise. The missionary or group leader may guide the conversation by asking individuals questions about their life and ministry.

This time is not simple catching up on one another's life. Accountability is the purpose of this exercise. Members are held accountable to the leader and to the group for their actions, or at

times, their inaction. This type of relationship fosters growth in the life of the indigenous leader. Rick Lewis writes concerning accountability, “The habit of accountability also entails paying attention to feedback and being willing to act on sound advice.”²¹ As a person shares, the group interacts with the person and their problems. As the group offers positive advice to the individual, there is an opportunity for discipleship to take place. Indigenous leaders must be held accountable to act—to lead others. Barna reminds the church that “[f]aith that is not wholly and consistently lived out is a charade.”²²

One requirement for the indigenous leaders is to use the material they are learning. Each person is required to tell the last meeting’s story before the next session. During this time, indigenous leaders are held accountable for sharing God’s Story with others. Lingenfelter writes, “One of the most important principles of empowerment is to release people to do the work, always within a context of discipling them, and at the same time to resist the temptation to intervene to assure correct results.”²³ The indigenous leaders are responsible to use the stories they learn in their ministry. This is sharing the Word of God in the purest form. The time of personal review results in growth as a follower of Christ.

Story Review

The Story Review is recounting previous stories learned by the group. The missionary leads the group in retelling the story from previous sessions. The indigenous learn through repetition. Repeating God’s Story allows the Word of God to become a permanent part of the indigenous leader’s life. Walter Ong writes, “In an oral culture, knowledge, once acquired, had

21. Lewis, *Mentoring Matters*, 146.

22. Barna, *Growing True Disciples*, 90.

23. Lingenfelter, *Leading Cross-Culturally*, 123.

to be constantly repeated or it would be lost.”²⁴ The telling and retelling of the same stories allows Scripture to become the natural focus of discipleship. It is suggested that the missionary review all stories once a month. The monthly review insures that indigenous leaders retain the Word in their hearts and ministries. Although this may seem tedious for some, the process is necessary to keep Scripture fresh and a vital part of the indigenous leader’s life and ministry. As the indigenous have little access to the written Word, the Story is their Bible. Concerning learning God’s Word Moses writes, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.”²⁵ As Moses commanded the Children of Israel to meditate and learn God’s Commands, the indigenous too must apply God’s Story to their hearts. Telling the stories from Scripture makes God’s Word come alive in one’s heart. Therefore, a constant and systematic review of the Story is necessary.

During the story review, the indigenous leaders are given a time to reflect and share any new insights or possible problems in the understanding of past stories. This review helps prevent any misunderstanding or errors in thought or practice. Often, this is the most powerful time of learning. Indigenous leaders are given freedom to express their struggles with the Word of God. As God’s Word directly confronts the culture and worldview of the indigenous leader, change begins to take place. This change is the discipleship process. Novelli writes, “After the story permeates out theology and identity, it then begins to shape our convictions and beliefs. It moves beyond just forming how we see God and ourselves to how we see our world.”²⁶ As the

24. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 24.

25. Deut. 6:4-6.

26. Novellis, *Shaped by the Story*, 98.

indigenous leader compares God's truth to cultural beliefs and practices, the Holy Spirit convicts and leads the believer to evaluate his or her personal views. Discipleship in the indigenous context replaces the indigenous worldview with a God given view of all things. This transformation is the miracle of discipleship.

The Story

The story is the telling of Scripture. Without God's Word no Bible study or discipleship program is complete. The Word is the primary focus of leadership training in the Christian context. For the indigenous leader, this session is captivating and new, as few have had significant contact with Scripture. This fact is shocking for missionaries. To see firsthand the lack of biblical knowledge is humbling. This ignorance enforces the need to story God's Word to indigenous leaders.

During this time of the story session, the missionary should tell God's Story with integrity and perseverance. After the story is told, the storyteller may use drama, pictures, music, art, or other culturally appropriate methods to reinforce the learning of the story. The emphasis is telling the story. The missionary should tell the story and then tell it again. Michael Novelli reminds the storyteller, "Repetition is one of the most effective ways to learn. It builds retention and confidence, and it encourages your students to be more attentive to the story."²⁷ In Southern Mexico, the Aztec Indians enjoy drama as a means to reinforce learning. However, due to the reserved nature of the indigenous, this method is difficult for some groups to reproduce. Therefore, the missionary must know and understand their target culture in order to effectively tell God's Story. It is recommended that the storyteller follow the seven principles for telling a story as presented earlier in this chapter.

27. Novelli, *Shaped by the Story*, 114.

The final aspect of the story is leading the group through the retelling of the story. The missionary should give the indigenous leaders the opportunity to tell the story before leaving the group. This allows members to claim the story as their own. This method allows for effective communication in the indigenous context.

Learning from the Story

Understanding God's truth and applying this truth to life is the desired outcome of Learning from the Story. To facilitate discipleship, missionaries must use God's Story to teach biblical content, theology, and life application. God's Word is sufficient, lacking nothing in scope or in content. The responsibility of the teacher is to give the student Scripture in a way that is understandable and applicable to life. Understanding biblical content is the most basic and foundational aspect of discipleship. By employing the interrogatives, the content of Stories is reviewed and learned. The following questions are suggested to help indigenous leaders learn biblical content. The first four questions focus on the basic storyline. These questions allow the indigenous leaders to begin processing the action and learning the story. Questions four and five begin probing into the deeper meaning of the story. Learning the content of the story is necessary to begin processing the deeper meaning of the story.

Learning Questions
Who are the main characters in the story?
What action takes place in the story?
Where does the story take place?
When does the story take place?
Why did this take place?
How did this take place?

Table 3. Learning Questions

The study of theology offers challenges on any level of study. Many missionaries avoid lessons in theology, as the content seems too difficult or advanced for the indigenous. However,

the mental capacity of the indigenous is equal to or superior to that of the western missionary. The reason the indigenous seem to struggle with learning theology is the fault of the missionary rather than the indigenous leaders. The majority of seminary students in the Western world, including the United States, study Systematic Theology from a written text other than the Bible. Even advanced seminary students struggle to relate theology to the biblical text. When doctrine is learned separate from God's Story, it becomes a system unto itself. Application is difficult when the doctrine of God is removed from the biblical text. In order to effectively teach doctrine and theology to indigenous leaders, this study must be taught as part of God's Story. Systems and linear presentations of theology have little impact in discipling the indigenous.

Learning theology through the narrative effectively teaches indigenous leaders. This type of theology based in God's Story, or *Storying Theology*, teaches biblical doctrine and theology as part of the natural biblical narrative. God has revealed himself through his written Word. Theology, which can be defined as man's understanding of God, is progressive in nature.²⁸ Paul Koehler writes,

An important aspect of biblical theology is progressive revelation, which means that God worked over time, with different people and through different means to reveal himself and his truth in the Bible. Biblical theology is historical in its orientation. It attempts to get into the minds of the authors of Scripture in order to arrive at the meanings they intended for their original readers. Because revelation is progressive, biblical theology fits well with the CBS rationale of telling the Bible stories in chronological order.²⁹

Each story and each book of the Bible reveals a clearer picture of God. Properly telling God's story allows the indigenous leader to learn theology as revealed in the story. In order to assist missionaries in this process, a series of simple questions are offered.

28. This notion of progressive revelation does not extend past the canon of Scripture. A high view of God's Word ties progressive revelation specifically and completely to the biblical text. Theology is progressive in that God revealed himself to man over a specific period of time. This period ended as the last Epistle was penned.

29. Koehler, *Telling God's Stories with Power*, 73.

What Does this Story Teach about God?

This question probes into the nature of God. Theology derives meaning and content from this question. For the indigenous leader, the creation story from the proposed story set offers a great opportunity to learn biblical theology. Concerning a Bible story's effect on theology, Novelli writes, "When our focus and starting point is God's Story, theology is the first area that's shaped."³⁰ From this basic question much is learned. The following points are revealed in the creation story: 1) God created all things, 2) Nothing existed before God, and 3) God spoke all things into being. The eternal all-powerful nature of God is seen in his first story. Millard Erickson writes,

Attention also needs to be given to the narrative passages. While these are not so easily dealt with as the didactic passages, they often shed special light upon the issue, not so much in defining or explaining the concept, as in illustrating and thus illuminating it. Here we see the doctrinal truth in action. In some cases, the term under consideration may not even occur in a relevant passage. For example, Genesis 22 describes the testing of Abraham; he was asked to offer up his son Isaac as a sacrifice to God, a burnt offering. The words faith and believe do not appear in the passage, yet it is a powerful description of the dynamics of faith.³¹

Further questioning leads to a deeper understanding of doctrinal content. The concepts, although the terms are often unnamed, are learned and reinforced through Storying. The understanding of both God and man are revealed as the story is told.

What Does this Story Teach about Man?

This question offers insight into the nature of man. By examining the creation story the following points are understood: 1) Man is created in God's image, and different from the rest of creation, 2) Man is created with purpose, and 3) Man has boundaries established by God. Understanding man as determined by God creates a biblical anthropology. By using proper

30. Novelli, *Shaped by the Story*, 97.

31. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 69.

questions as one progresses through a story set, biblical doctrine and theology are easily taught as a natural part of the story process. Probing questions lead to a more complete knowledge and understanding of God. Asking, “Why did God create the world?” forces the indigenous to look to God’s Story for more answers.³² This serves as a sort of “cliff hanger,” as the indigenous leaders wait to see how God begins to answer this question in future stories.

A Storying Theology can move indigenous leaders to integrate God’s Word into their lives. As Scripture begins to shape and mold the indigenous into godly leaders, biblical discipleship emerges. Teaching God’s story results in action. Indigenous leaders intent on living out their newfound theology, apply God’s truth to their lives.

Story Application

As God’s Story is relevant to all societies and cultures, it is necessary to train indigenous leaders in a way that fosters obedience to Christ. Training indigenous leaders involves applying God’s truth to life. Concerning one’s actions, James writes, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”³³ It is deception to claim Christ and not act upon his commands. The word, *παραλογίζομαι*, often translated as “deceive” has a fuller meaning in the original language. This word conveys the meaning “to cheat by false reckoning, to deceive by false reasoning, or to deceive, delude, circumvent.”³⁴ It is more than deception to claim Christ and not act upon his commands. Faith without works is to cheat and delude oneself. As discipleship affects both learning and action, application is a necessary part of a sound strategy to

32. The creation story does not explicitly answer this question. However, God states that the creation was “good.” Later in Scripture, God progressively answers why he created man.

33. James 1:22.

34. Thayer, *Thayer’s Greek Definitions*, G3884.

train indigenous leaders.

In order to effectively train indigenous leaders, missionaries must teach their people how to apply God's Story to life. This section suggests a three-part strategy to insure that indigenous leaders begin to apply Scripture to their lives and ministry as a natural part of the discipleship process. Questioning, modeling, and accountability are the needed aspects for story application in the discipleship process.

Questioning

Application begins as the story is told. By asking a series of questions, indigenous leaders are given the opportunity to begin living out God's Word. After telling a story in order to move from knowledge to application, one should ask the indigenous leaders, "What must a follower of Christ do because of this story?" This question leads to an understanding of how discipleship should apply Scripture to life. There are three implications from this question: 1) A change in belief, 2) A change in action, and 3) A change in heart.

A change in belief relates to changing one's worldview to match that of Christ. Correct belief leads directly to action. For example, in the indigenous world, Brujaria (witchcraft) controls much of the thoughts and actions of the people. When confronted with the power of God as found in Scripture, the indigenous leader must decide to reject the power of the Bruja and believe in Jesus Christ. The change in belief leads to a change in action.

A change in action has both positive and negative aspects. Positive action is to begin something new—following a new command. As the indigenous leader hears God's Story, he or she will begin to obey the commands of Scripture. This means loving one's neighbor. Evangelism becomes the natural result of a positive change in action. The negative sense is to stop doing a wrong or sinful act. This change effects what the indigenous leader does and what

he refrains from doing. With respect to cultural norms, this poses a great challenge. As mentioned, brujaria is integrated into most every area of indigenous life. As the indigenous leader begins to change his actions, he will no longer consult with the Bruja when his children are sick. Instead, he will pray and seek medical help as needed. When this type change occurs, Christian maturity is approaching.

A change in heart moves the indigenous leader closer in relationship to God. As impacted by God's Story, the indigenous leader faces the sinful and fallen nature of one's heart. A change in heart is repentance and confession. This change is personal and the most intimate in nature, as this change brings growth and maturity in Christ. As the indigenous leaders grow in relationship with God, others will clearly see their change in heart.

Modeling

Modeling takes place when the missionary walks side-by-side with the indigenous leader. In order for the indigenous to grow and mature in Christ, missionaries must lead by example. The key factor in modeling is spending time with the indigenous leaders. As the missionary leads by example, the indigenous leader learns lifestyle evangelism, prayer, and spiritual discipline for maintaining a vibrant relationship with Christ. In order to model this type of life, the missionary must be open and transparent with the people.

In modeling, time is enjoyed living in and among the indigenous people. Concerning the mentoring relationship, Borek, Lovett, and Towns share, "Mentoring new leaders can be a discouraging process, especially when leaders expect rapid results on the part of their leadership trainees."³⁵ Training leaders takes time. Missionaries must give time in ministry to train indigenous leaders. Telling others what to do or how to live is never enough. Barna writes,

35. Borek, Lovett, and Towns, *The Good Book on Leadership*, 220.

“Followers of Jesus Christ are not given the option of telling people, ‘Do as I say, not as I do.’ Our lives must reflect the ways of God. But even more than that, we are to be God’s ambassadors in the world. We are not called to retreat or to live in isolation, but to be light in darkness.”³⁶ As the missionary visits the sick and needy, the indigenous leader goes along. As the missionary shares God’s Story with others in the village, the indigenous leader is there to hear and learn. Modeling should occur as a natural part of life. Yet, the missionary must be intentional in taking others along as he or she lives and ministers in community.

Accountability

Accountability provides the atmosphere to grow effective indigenous leaders. In order to ensure that God’s Word takes root in the lives of indigenous leaders, the missionary must hold them accountable. The challenges of the Christian life necessitate living in community, where brothers and sisters work together, loving and supporting one another. The application of Scripture to life in the training of indigenous leaders requires accountability. George Barna writes, “True growth demands accountability. However, few churches have systems by which they measure what is happening in the lives of their people. Few believers have lined up a trustworthy and competent partner who will hold them accountable to specific and measurable goals. The result is that we operate on the basis of feelings, assumptions, and hopes rather than tangible, measurable realities.”³⁷ In order to provide indigenous leaders with structured accountability, a process is needed. Appendix H provides a sample form to use as a guide for accountability. This form may be used according to the literacy level of the indigenous leaders. If the indigenous have a low level of literacy, it is recommended to use the form as a guide to question indigenous leaders orally concerning their spiritual life and work in ministry. This form

36. Barna, *Growing True Disciples*, 22.

37. *Ibid.*, 92.

asks questions concerning time with God, work, ministry, personal time, and needs. Also, this form allows the missionary to hold indigenous leaders accountable to learning and telling God's Story to others. Applying God's Word to life requires accountability of one's actions

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The need for indigenous leadership in Latin America requires a new perspective in missions and in training methods. Current methods depend on literacy and focus on the educated minority. Therefore, the indigenous populations live unreached with the Gospel. The writer of Acts reminds of Christ's command to the Church: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."¹ Being faithful to the commands found in Scripture requires expanding the Gospel witness into the indigenous people groups. In order to affect change in UUPGS and UPGS, an oral strategy to train indigenous leaders is needed.

A successful missionary endeavor results in the effective training of indigenous leaders. This project proposes an oral strategy to train indigenous leaders. Oral methods of communicating Scripture afford the indigenous opportunities to learn and understand God's Word in a natural manner. Understanding the preferred communication style of most indigenous leaders requires the missionary to teach, utilizing oral methods. Literate forms of teaching and communication provide little benefit to indigenous societies.

Biblical models of communication support orality in evangelism and discipleship. Jesus most often taught using oral methods. Jesus' stories were captivating and spoke to the hearts of people. The Apostle Peter and Steven provide examples of sharing Scripture in story form. Their sermons serve as an effective model for training indigenous leaders orally through Storying. God's Story, when properly communicated, reaches the heart of humanity. Language is the

1. Acts 1:8.

primary means of communication. Reaching indigenous leaders requires teaching and sharing in their heart language. David Garrison writes, “Effective communication requires understanding the language and worldview of the people you are trying to reach.”² Working in the national language or trade language of the indigenous rarely reaches into their culture and seldom touches their worldview, as most indigenous leaders primarily communicate in their native language. Their feelings and emotions are best expressed in heart language. As God created the languages of the world, language should never prohibit the understanding of God’s Story. Biblical missiology requires sharing Scripture in the language of the people.

When understood, Scripture brings positive change. This change is a natural part of the discipleship process. Training indigenous leaders requires the missionary to use the Bible as the primary agent to reveal God’s Story for humanity. Worldview and culture are key factors in the communication of God’s Word. Ralph Winter writes, “No Christian witness can hope to communicate the gospel if he or she ignores the cultural factor. This is particularly true in the case of missionaries. For they are themselves the product of one culture and go to people who are the products of another.”³ Giving attention to culture and worldview allows indigenous leaders to grow in faith and practice. Willis and Snowden write, “The disciple-making process is essentially helping someone replace the nonbiblical portions of his or her worldview with a biblical worldview.”⁴ Leaders are formed as missionaries share God’s Story. The missionary more efficiently facilitates discipleship by allowing indigenous leaders to process their concerns through God’s Story. As the indigenous leaders interact with Scripture, culture and worldview issues are resolved biblically.

2. David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*, (Midlothian, VA: WIGTake Resources, 2004), 179.

3. Winter, *Perspectives*, 516.

4. Willis and Snowden, *Truth that Sticks*, 152.

Evangelism and discipleship are the primary concerns in training indigenous leaders. Evangelism in the indigenous context is best understood as a process, rather than a one-time event or one time presentation. David Garrison writes, “If quantity of gospel proclamation is of paramount importance, quality of communication can’t be far behind. In its simplest form, evangelism means gospel proclamation, telling the Good News about the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. If it were this simple, though, we could simply translate John 3:16 into every language of the world and drop it from airplanes.”⁵ As evangelism begins, the Word of God is central. Storying God’s Word effectively communicates the gospel to indigenous communities. Training leaders to evangelize their own communities is also basic to discipleship. An effective strategy for training indigenous leaders incorporates evangelism and discipleship into a single process. The development of indigenous leaders is discipleship in the context of missions. Following a model of discipleship based on 2 Tim. 2:2 provides missionaries a biblical pattern for training leaders that is culturally appropriate and reproducible. This model of discipleship is composed of five parts: Relationship, Message, Entrust, Faithful, and Reproducible. All training and discipleship take place as part of a relationship. Oscar Thompson shares, “The key to a fulfilled life is relationships. Things do not satisfy – relationships do. The most important word in the English language is relationship. The first relationship is with the Father. When he becomes Lord of our lives, we forfeit forever the right to choose whom we well love. When he becomes Lord, he releases his love in us to build right relationships.”⁶ This approach follows sound missiological principles and moves indigenous leaders forward in ministry.

In training indigenous leaders, strategy is based on communication, evangelism, and discipleship, as affected by culture and worldview. The example story set provided in this project

5. Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*, 179.

6. Thompson, *Concentric Circles of Concern*, 99.

demonstrates a culturally specific means to train indigenous leaders in Southern Mexico. The worldview issues addressed are specific to the Aztec Indians. This set meets the cultural demands for evangelism among the Aztec people. Also, the story set provides a basic overview of the Bible for discipleship.

Following the calendar, Appendix G, gives the missionary an expected schedule to follow. This schedule provides content without overload. Also, at the end of one year, indigenous leaders are equipped to share the Gospel with their people. This schedule provides numerous opportunities for the indigenous leaders to gain experience telling God's Story to others. The model story set and calendar require indigenous leaders to begin working and serving others in ministry.

Accountability provides the necessary component to this strategy to ensure the effective training of indigenous leaders. David Garrison writes, "Build into your team a system of accountability that will ensure that everyone continues to multiply out evangelism, discipleship, church planting, and training."⁷ Indigenous leaders grow and progress in life and ministry, as they are held accountable for growing in faith and duty to Christ. Appendix H provides a basic series of questions to help missionaries hold indigenous leaders accountable for their work and ministry.

Lessons Learned

In evaluating the different aspects of this work much is learned. Applying this information to ministry helps missionaries better train indigenous leaders. Several missiological principles are gleaned from this project. These principles serve missionaries working with indigenous people groups. This project provides the following lessons in the training of

7. Garrison, *Church Planting Movements*, 292.

indigenous leaders:

1. Missionaries must work according to needs and social preferences of the indigenous.
2. Missionaries must use oral methods of communication.
3. Missionaries must work in the heart language of their people.
4. Missionaries must view evangelism as a process rather than a one-time event or presentation.
5. Missionaries must disciple indigenous leaders in the context of a relationship.
6. Missionaries must adapt strategy based on the culture and worldview of their people.
7. Missionaries must make a long-term commitment to training indigenous leaders.

Each principle moves the missionary closer to a personal strategy for training indigenous leaders.

As parents are exhorted to “train up a child in the way he should go,”⁸ the missionary must also train indigenous leaders in the way they should go. The emphasis is on the needs of the indigenous rather than the desires of the missionary. Considering the preferences of the people within a particular culture demonstrates Christ’s love to the indigenous leader. By taking the principles learned in this project and applying them to individual UUPGS and UPGS, missionaries realize the transformation of the indigenous people groups.

Application of Strategy

The creation of multiple people groups, languages, and cultures exemplifies the majesty and diversity of God. Scripture commands God’s people to share His Story with all of creation. The indigenous people groups of Southern Mexico wait to know and understand the beauty of their Creator. In order to help fulfill the mandate of the Great Commission, this strategy provides missionaries a resource for training indigenous leaders. By applying the principles of this work,

8. Prov. 22:6.

indigenous leaders receive culturally appropriate training that is sensitive to the indigenous worldview. This strategy is offered as a guide for training indigenous leaders. The following suggestions provide a four-part guide for using this strategy: 1) Choose Leaders. 2) Choose a Story Set. 3) Choose a Schedule. 4) Choose Accountability.

Choose Leaders

The essential task of any strategy for training leaders is choosing leaders. As outlined in Chapter Three, the imperative in choosing leaders is finding the faithful. The temptation for missionaries is to invest in the known. Too often time is spent on persons with whom the missionary has familiarity or a cordial relationship. The task of choosing leaders requires much time in prayer. Missionaries must invest time in those willing to give themselves to Christ.

A potential disciple is not just a person with some interest in spiritual things. Further, a potential disciple is never just a warm body. A potential leader must exhibit the qualities found in 2 Tim. 2:2. George Barna makes this point clear: “An individual who does not reproduce himself in Christ is not truly a disciple since he does not exhibit the selfless love of the Master.”⁹ Choosing leaders wisely is crucial to training indigenous leaders.

Choose a Story Set

The example story set presented in Chapter Four serves as an example for training indigenous leaders. This set, available for free download at https://www.sugarsync.com/pf/D6181831_9818175_6519599, covers the needed elements for evangelism based on the culture and worldview of the Aztec Indians in Southern Mexico. The selected stories provide an overview of God’s Story. This set begins in Genesis and ends with the birth of the church. By learning these stories, indigenous leaders are given an overview of the

9. Barna, *Growing True Disciples*, 23.

Bible and a foundation for ministry.

When working in a people group closely related to the Aztec Indians of Southern Mexico, this set serves as a working model for training indigenous leaders. Missionaries serving in other people groups should only use this set as a guide. Story sets must be adapted and adjusted for specific cultural and worldview issues. Within the example set is the underlying theme of a shepherd. As the Aztec Indians in Southern Mexico are largely farmers and shepherds, they relate readily to these stories. This storyline resonates as a natural part of life for the target audience. Also, the overarching theme of this set is hope. The impoverished Aztec Indians are marginalized and discarded by mainline society. Therefore hope speaks to the heart of the people.

The selection of stories should fit the needs and felt needs of each particular people group. Knowledge of language, culture and worldview are necessary for training indigenous leaders. Hiebert and Meneses write, “Most tribal churches are planted when missionaries settle among the people, learn their language and culture, and present the gospel in ways that people understand.”¹⁰ As the missionary interacts with the indigenous people, selection of stories becomes more natural. Understanding needs specific to culture and worldview provides the basis for choosing a story set.¹¹

Choose a Schedule

A schedule provides the missionary with a plan of action. The concept of time is seen

10. Hiebert and Meneses, *Incarnational Ministry*, 143-144.

11. The example set serves as a test for missionaries working in closely related Aztec groups. If the missionary does not understand the overall meaning and content of the set, then the missionary lacks sufficient language skills to proceed in the training of indigenous leaders. Those missionaries working in other language groups should have a level of fluency where they can craft and tell a basic story in the language of their people. Without this level of language learning, the missionary is encouraged to resume full-time language study.

differently based upon culture and worldview. For the missionary, flexibility is necessary. Imposing western ideas of time and schedules is futile. Yet, planning schedules in advance allows both the missionary and indigenous leader to prepare for Storying sessions. Within the schedule it is recommend that the missionary, in agreement with the indigenous leaders, choose a specific day each week to meet. The example calendar provides insight into the important holidays and dates in Mexico. Observing and following a Mexican calendar, rather than a United States calendar, helps ensure the availability of indigenous leaders. Also, this observance demonstrates a love and respect for their culture.

Within the proposed schedule, indigenous leaders are given time to learn stories, review stories, and to teach stories. By following this outline, the indigenous are constantly learning; yet, they are not overwhelmed with too much information. The goal of this training cycle is that at the end of one year, the indigenous leaders will know a complete story set. This schedule gives both the missionary and the indigenous leader time to learn and grow without feeling rushed. Choosing a schedule aids in providing a plan of action, and this begins the accountability process.

Choose Accountability

In order to effectively train indigenous leaders, missionaries must hold students accountable. Appendix H provides a sample accountability form to use with indigenous leaders. As literacy poses a challenge to many indigenous leaders, the form should be used as a guide for the missionary. This form's intended use is for a one-on-one session with the missionary and the indigenous leader.

As part of this strategy indigenous leaders are responsible for telling others the stories as they learn them. Accountability ensures the learning process. Paul Koehler writes,

“Accountability is an essential part of training – if no one checks up on assigned tasks, people tend to conclude they are unimportant.”¹² It is suggested that the missionary meet once a week with each leader that he is training. This form serves as a guide to question the indigenous leader concerning both personal and ministerial duties. Accountability works best in the context of a relationship. This time together allows for the development of a true relationship between the missionary and indigenous leader.

This time also provides an opportunity for evaluation. The indigenous leader receives input concerning progress in ministry. In turn, the missionary receives input from the indigenous leaders. This aspect of accountability is necessary for a successful strategy for training indigenous leaders. Dayton and Fraser explain, “Evaluation looks at whether we reached our goals, whether the way we went about them was appropriate, whether we still believe our goals are appropriate.”¹³ In order to successfully train indigenous leaders, missionaries must choose accountability.

Conclusion

The indigenous people groups in Southern Mexico live void of a true gospel presence. In order to effectively reach these UUPGS and UPGS, an effective strategy to train indigenous leaders is needed. By respecting the cultural norms and worldview issues, this oral strategy provides the needed approach to train indigenous leaders. Effective training expands God’s Story into the indigenous communities. As God’s Word is communicated, lives are transformed.

By communicating Scripture using oral methods, the indigenous leader learns more successfully. Literate means of teaching fail to communicate to the indigenous. Bypassing the

12. Koehler, *Telling God’s Stories with Power*, 101.

13. Dayton and Fraser, *Planning Strategies for World Evangelization*, 320.

need for literacy advances the Gospel more rapidly in most UUPGS and UPGS. Leadership training becomes accessible to the indigenous as missionaries begin to communicate and teach utilizing an oral methodology.

Understanding evangelism and discipleship, as affected by the culture and worldview of indigenous communities, frees the missionary to successfully train leaders. Storying God's Word allows indigenous leaders to experience Scripture in a culturally appropriate way. Storying provides training in evangelism and discipleship simultaneously. As the indigenous leaders absorb God's Story, discipleship takes place. This strategy allows the indigenous to take Scripture and incorporate it into life in a reproducible manner.

The oral strategy to train indigenous leaders stems from the information gleaned in Chapters Two and Three. This strategy provides missionaries with a yearlong training guide. Implementing this strategy prepares indigenous leaders to effectively evangelize their communities. The discipleship aspect creates a reproducible, self-sustainable means to continue the advancement of the Gospel into the UUPGS and UPGS of Southern Mexico.

APPENDIX A

Dear Missionary,

I need your assistance in completing my final Doctor of Ministry project. Would you please help me with this project?

If you are interested and available to participate, please help by completing a short multiple-choice survey about working with indigenous people groups.

All personal information is confidential and used for the specific purpose of gathering research statistics. It should take no more than ten minutes to complete the survey.

Please try to complete the survey by August 17, 2012, but the sooner, the better.

Please access the survey at the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9X3JS5N>

If you have any questions call me at: 238-100-10-11 or email me at aandmconner@gmail.com.

Thank you very much for your help.

Sincerely,

Anthony Conner

APPENDIX B

Survey for Missionaries

Discipleship

What qualifications do you view as necessary for a disciple of Christ? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Ability to read
- ☐ Personal Call
- ☐ Teachable Spirit
- ☐ Leadership skills
- ☐ Other

How have you been trained to work with an Indigenous people group?

- ☐ Class/Course
- ☐ Training by a Mission Board
- ☐ Independent Study
- ☐ Mentored by other
- ☐ Little to no training

Would you consider investing time in training someone who is illiterate or with minimal reading and writing skills?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If so, how have you been prepared to work with this type person?

- ☐ Class/Course
- ☐ Training by a Mission Board
- ☐ Independent Study
- ☐ Mentored by other
- ☐ Little to no training

What version of the Bible do you use in Evangelism and discipleship?

- ☐ Spanish Bible Translation
- ☐ Indigenous Translation

Do you have a Bible or portions of the Bible in the heart language of the people you serve?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, can you read it?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, can the majority of your people read it?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Do you use printed material other than the Bible in discipleship?

- ☐ Yes. In what language is this material? _____
What material do you use? _____

- ☐ No

What program(s) would you recommend to train illiterate persons or people with minimal reading skills? _____

Is this program available in the heart language of your target group?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Are your leaders able to reproduce/train others in the way you have trained them?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Evangelism

Do you feel adequately prepared to evangelize your people group?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

How do you share the Gospel message? (Check all that Apply)

- ☐ Standard Bible Presentation (Romans Roads, etc.)
☐ Printed Tracts
☐ Personal Testimony
☐ Other _____

Is there a need to earn the trust of your People group before you share the Gospel?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Language

In what language do you normally share/communicate with your People group?

- ☐ Spanish
☐ Indigenous Language

In what language do your People group communicate while in the home?

- ☐ Spanish
☐ Indigenous Language

In what language do the women communicate while alone or separated from the men?

- ☐ Spanish
☐ Indigenous Language

APPENDIX C

Consent Form

An Oral Strategy to Train Indigenous Leaders
Anthony Conner
Liberty University
Seminary

You are invited to be in a research study of discipleship as affected by orality and literacy. You were selected as a possible participant because of your work and experience working with indigenous people groups. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Anthony Conner, Liberty University Baptist Theological Seminary

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to understand the preferred learning style of indigenous leaders.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:
Please, read the survey and mark your response as appropriate. After you have completed the survey please place it in the folder provided. The survey should take about ten minutes to complete.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study:

The risks of the study are no more than what you would encounter in daily life.

The benefits to participation are that the indigenous leaders will receive better instruction in God's Word.

Compensation:

You not will receive payment for participation in this survey.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

All information will be entered into a computer. The information will be password protected. All paper copies will be destroyed.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or with the ministry of Anthony Conner. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Anthony Conner. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at San Andres Arralco 3426

75760 Tehuacan PUEBLA, 238-100-10-11, aandmconner@gmail.com. Also, you may contact researcher's faculty mentor Dr. Charlie Davidson, at 434-592-4241.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

IRB Code Numbers: 1372.073112

IRB Expiration Date: July 30, 2013

Formulario de Consentimiento

Una estrategia para el oral de capacitación de líderes indígenas
Anthony Conner
Liberty University
Seminary

Usted está invitado a participar en un estudio de investigación de discipulado como afectados por la oralidad y la alfabetización. Usted ha sido seleccionado como posible participante a causa de su trabajo y experiencia de trabajo con grupos indígenas. Le pido que lea este formulario y haga cualquier pregunta que usted pueda tener antes de aceptar participar en el estudio.

Este estudio está siendo realizado por: Anthony Conner, Liberty University Baptist Theological Seminary

Antecedentes: El propósito de este estudio es comprender el estilo de aprendizaje preferido de los dirigentes indígenas.

Procedimiento: Si usted acepta participar en este estudio, se le pedirá que haga las siguientes cosas:

Lea los papeles y maca los repuestos. Esa va a tardar no mas o menos diez minutos.

Riesgos y beneficios de estar en el estudio:

Los riesgos del estudio no son más que lo que se encontraría en la vida cotidiana.

Los beneficios para participar son que los líderes indígenas reciban una mejor instrucción en la Palabra de Dios.

Compensación: Usted no recibirá pago por la participación en esta encuesta.

Confidencialidad: Los registros de este estudio se mantendrá en privado. En cualquier tipo de informe que pueda publicar, que no incluirá ninguna información que permita identificar a un sujeto. Los registros de la investigación serán almacenados de forma segura y sólo los investigadores tendrán acceso a los registros.

Toda la información será ingresada en una computadora. La información será protegida por contraseña. Todas las copias de papel será destruido.

La naturaleza voluntaria del estudio:

La participación en este estudio es voluntaria. Su decisión de si debe o no participar no afectará sus relaciones presentes o futuras con la Universidad de la Libertad o con el ministerio de Anthony Conner. Si usted decide participar, usted es libre de no responder a ninguna pregunta o retirarse en cualquier momento sin afectar a esas relaciones.

Contactos y preguntas:

El investigador a cargo este estudio es Anthony Conner. Puede hacer cualquier pregunta que usted tenga ahora. Si usted tiene preguntas después, se le anima a contactarse con él en San Andrés Arralco 3426 75760 Tehuacan Puebla, 238-100-10-11, aandmconner@gmail.com. También, usted puede ponerse en contacto con el investigador de la facultad mentor el Dr. Carlos Davidson, en el 434-592-4241.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta o inquietud con respecto a este estudio y me gustaría hablar con alguien que no sea el investigador (s), se le anima a ponerse en contacto con la Junta de Revisión Institucional, el Dr. Fernando Garzón, presidente, 1971 University Blvd., Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 o al correo electrónico fgarzon@liberty.edu.

Declaración de Consentimiento:

He leído y entendido la información anterior. Me han hecho preguntas y han recibido respuestas. Doy mi consentimiento para participar en el estudio.

IRB Code Numbers: 1372.073112

IRB Expiration Date: July 30, 2013

APPENDIX D

Survey for Mestizo Pastors

Discipleship

What qualifications do you view as necessary for a disciple of Christ? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Ability to read
- ☐ Personal Call
- ☐ Teachable Spirit
- ☐ Leadership skills
- ☐ Other

How have you been trained to work with an Indigenous people group?

- ☐ Class/Course
- ☐ Training by a Mission Board
- ☐ Independent Study
- ☐ Mentored by other
- ☐ Little to no training

Would you consider investing time in training someone who is illiterate or with minimal reading and writing skills?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If so, how have you been prepared to work with this type person?

- ☐ Class/Course
- ☐ Training by a Mission Board
- ☐ Independent Study
- ☐ Mentored by other
- ☐ Little to no training

What version of the Bible do you use in Evangelism and discipleship?

- ☐ Spanish Bible Translation
- ☐ Indigenous Translation

Do you have a Bible or portions of the Bible in the indigenous language of the people you serve?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, can you read it?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

If yes, can the majority your people read it?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Do you use printed material other than the Bible in discipleship?

- ☐ Yes. In what language is this material? _____
 What material do you use? _____

- ☐ No

What program(s) would you recommend to train illiterate persons or people with minimal reading skills?

Is this program available in the indigenous language of your target group?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Are your indigenous leaders able to reproduce/train others in the way you have trained them?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Evangelism

Do you feel adequately prepared to evangelize indigenous people group?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

How do you share the Gospel message? (Check all that Apply)

- ☐ Standard Bible Presentation (Romans Roads, etc.)
☐ Printed Tracts
☐ Personal Testimony
☐ Other _____

Is there a need to earn the trust of indigenous groups before you share the Gospel?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Language

In what language do you normally share/communicate with indigenous People?

- ☐ Spanish
☐ Indigenous Language

In what language do your People group communicate while in the home?

- ☐ Spanish
☐ Indigenous Language

In what language do the women communicate while alone or separated from the men?

- ☐ Spanish
☐ Indigenous Language

Encuesta para Pastores

Discipulado

¿Qué calificaciones consideran necesarios para un discípulo de Cristo? (Marque todas las que apliquen)

- ☐ Capacidad de leer
- ☐ Su llamada personal
- ☐ Enseñable
- ☐ Las habilidades de liderazgo
- ☐ Otros

¿Cómo ha sido entrenado para trabajar con un grupo de pueblos indígenas?

- ☐ clase / curso
- ☐ Formación a cargo de una Junta de Misiones
- ☐ Estudio Independiente
- ☐ tutelado por otra
- ☐ poca o ninguna formación

¿Usted consideraría invertir tiempo en entrenar a alguien que es analfabeto o con un mínimo de lectura y escritura?

- ☐ Sí
- ☐ No

Si es así, ¿cómo ha sido preparado para trabajar con este tipo persona?

- ☐ clase / curso
- ☐ Formación a cargo de una Junta de Misiones
- ☐ Estudio Independiente
- ☐ tutelado por otra
- ☐ poca o ninguna formación

¿Qué versión de la Biblia se utiliza en la evangelización y el discipulado?

- ☐ Traducción Español de la Biblia
- ☐ Traducción Indígena

¿Tiene usted una Biblia o porciones de la Biblia en la lengua indígena de las personas a las que sirven?

- ☐ Sí
☐ No

En caso afirmativo, ¿puede usted leer?

- ☐ Sí
☐ No

En caso afirmativo, ¿puede la mayoría de las personas que lo lean?

- ☐ Sí
☐ No

¿Utiliza el material impreso que no sea la Biblia en el discipulado?

- ☐ Sí. ¿En qué idioma es ese material? _____
¿Qué material se utiliza? _____

- ☐ No

¿Qué programa(s) me recomiendan para entrenar a los analfabetos o personas con habilidades de lectura mínimas?

¿Es este programa disponible en el idioma indígena de su grupo objetivo?

- ☐ Sí
☐ No

¿Son sus líderes indígenas capaces de reproducir / entrenar a otros en la forma en que los han entrenado?

- ☐ Sí
☐ No

Evangelización

¿Te sientes preparado adecuadamente para evangelizar a las personas del grupo indígena?

- ☐ Sí
☐ No

¿Cómo compartir el mensaje del Evangelio? (Marque todas las que apliquen)

- ☐ La Biblia de Presentación (camino Romanos, etc)
☐ Folleto
☐ Testimonio personal
☐ Otro _____

¿Hay una necesidad de ganarse la confianza de los grupos indígenas antes de compartir el Evangelio?

- ☐ Sí
☐ No

Lengua

¿En qué idioma que normalmente compartes / comunicarse con los pueblos indígenas?

- ☐ Español
☐ Lenguas Indígenas

¿En qué idioma su grupo de personas se comunican, mientras que en el hogar?

- ☐ Español
☐ Lenguas Indígenas

¿En qué idioma se comunican mientras las mujeres solas o separadas de los hombres?

- ☐ Español
☐ Lenguas Indígenas

APPENDIX E

Consent to Participate in Research

An Oral Strategy to Train Indigenous Leaders
 Anthony Conner
 Liberty University
 Seminary

You are being asked to participate in a research study.

Before you agree, the investigator must tell you about the purposes, procedures, and duration of the research and how confidentiality will be maintained.

You may contact Anthony Conner at 52-238-100-10-11 any time you have questions about the research. The researcher's faculty mentor is Dr. Charlie Davidson, and you may contact him at 434-592-4241.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

Your participation in this research is voluntary, and you will not be penalized or lose benefits if you refuse to participate or decide to stop.

Signing this document means that the research study, including the above information, has been described to you orally, and that you voluntarily agree to participate.

Signature

Date

Signature of Witness

Date

Consentimiento de Participar en Investigación

Una estrategia oral a la formación de líderes indígenas
Anthony Conner
Liberty University
Seminary

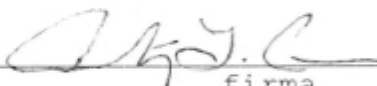

Le piden participar en un estudio de investigación.
Antes de que usted esté de acuerdo, el investigador debe decirle los objetivos, procedimientos, y duración de la investigación como la confidencialidad será mantenida.

Usted puede ponerse en contacto a Anthony Conner, 238-238-10-11 cualquier tiempo usted tiene preguntas sobre la investigación. El consejero de facultad del investigador está el nombre de Dr. Charlie Davidson y usted puede ponerse en contacto con él en el número de teléfono del 434-592-4241.

Si usted tiene alguna pregunta o preocupaciones en cuanto a este estudio y le gustara dirigirse a alguien además del investigador, usted es animado a ponerse en contacto con el Comité Examinador Institucional, Dr. Fernando Garzon, 1971 Bulevar de Universidad, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24515 o correo electrónico en fgarzon@liberty.edu.

Su participación en esta investigación es voluntaria, y usted no será castigado o perder beneficios si usted rechaza participar o decidir pararse.

La firma de este documento significa que el estudio de investigación, incluso la información abriba, le ha sido descrito oralmente, y que usted voluntariamente consiente en participar.

 _____ firma	<u>18 Aug 12</u> _____ fecha
 _____ firma de testigo	<u>18 Aug 12</u> _____ fecha

APPENDIX F

Survey for Indigenous Leaders

Education

What is your educational level?

- ☐ Primary
☐ Secondary
☐ High school

- ☐ College
☐ Seminary
☐ Other

Language

What language do you normally speak?

- ☐ Spanish
☐ Indigenous Language

What language do you normally speak at home or with your family?

- ☐ Spanish
☐ Indigenous Language

Which language do you normally use to preach or teach?

- ☐ Spanish
☐ Indigenous Language

Leadership

How prepared do you feel to lead others?

- ☐ Very Prepared
☐ Prepared
- ☐ Somewhat Prepared
☐ Not prepared

Have you received any training to serve as a pastor/leader?

- ☐ Yes, What training have you received? _____
☐ No

Do you feel prepared to train future leaders?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No

Encuesta para Lideres

Educación

¿Cuál es su nivel educativo?

- ☐ Primaria
☐ Secundaria
☐ Preparatoria

- ☐ Universidad
☐ Seminario
☐ Otros

Lengua

¿Qué idioma habla normalmente?

☐ Español

☐ Lenguas Indígenas

¿Qué idioma habla normalmente en el hogar o con tu familia?

☐ Español

☐ Lenguas Indígenas

¿En qué idioma que normalmente usa para predicar o enseñar?

☐ Español

☐ Lenguas Indígenas

Liderazgo

¿Cómo te sientes preparado para dirigir a otros?

- ☐ muy preparado
☐ Preparado

- ☐ Mas o menos preparado
☐ No preparado

¿Ha recibido algún entrenamiento para servir como pastor / líder?

- ☐ Sí, ¿Qué capacitación ha recibido? _____
☐ No

¿Te sientes preparado para entrenar a los futuros líderes?

- ☐ Sí
☐ No

¿Prefieres estudiar la Biblia en español o en la lengua indígena.

☐ Español

☐ Lenguas Indígenas

APPENDIX G

Sample Calendar

January	Week 1	National Holiday
	Week 2	National Holiday
	Week 3	<i>Cuando Totatadios Okicriaro Nochi</i> (When God Created the World)
	Week 4	<i>Kualetlakatl iwan Amokualetlakatl</i> (Angels and Demons)
February	Week 1	<i>Cuando Amo Otlaneltokake</i> (Disobedience)
	Week 2	Review Stories 1-3
	Week 3	Indigenous Leader Session (Teach one of the first 3 stories)
	Week 4	<i>Tlamanale</i> (The Offering)
March	Week 1	<i>Cuando Okiauke Chikactick</i> (The Great Flood)
	Week 2	<i>Se Trato de Esperanza</i> (The Covenant of Hope)
	Week 3	Review Stories 4-6
	Week 4	Indigenous Leader Session (Teach one of the first 6 stories)
April	Week 1	Easter Break
	Week 2	<i>David Nomi Omochi Rey</i> (David is Chosen as King)
	Week 3	<i>Dios Okimak se Promesa a David</i> (God's Promise to David)
	Week 4	<i>Cuando Otlalatke Jesus</i> (The Birth of Jesus)
May	Week 1	National Holiday
	Week 2	Review Stories 7-9
	Week 3	Indigenous Leader Session (Teach one of the stories 4-9)
	Week 4	<i>Bautismo de Jesús</i> (The Baptism of Jesus)

June	Week 1	<i>Jesus Okimachti Nicodemo</i> (Jesus Teaches Nicodemus)
	Week 2	<i>Jesus Okimititi de Kekipia Poder Sobre Nochi Cosa</i> (Jesus Has Power Over All Things)
	Week 2	Review Stories 10-12
	Week 4	Indigenous Leader Session (Teach one of the stories 7-12)
July	Week 1	<i>Se Tormenta de atl iwan Ejecatl</i> (Jesus Calms the Storm)
	Week 2	<i>Cuando Jesús Okipajti se Endemoniado</i> (Jesus Heals a Demon Possessed Man)
	Week 3	<i>Jesus Okintlakualti a Cinco Mil Tlaka</i> (Jesus feeds the Five Thousand)
	Week 4	Holiday
August	Week 1	Review Stories 13-15
	Week 2	Indigenous Leader Session (Teach one of the stories 10-15)
	Week 3	<i>Se Kuale Tlajpikxe</i> (The Good Shepherd)
	Week 4	<i>El Amor de Un Padre</i> (The Love of the Father)
September <i>Naciome</i>	Week 1	<i>Ycome de Totatadios Witz para Kijusgaros Nochte</i> (When the Lord Comes to Judge the Nations)
	Week 2	Review Stories 16-18
	Week 3	National Holiday
	Week 4	Indigenous Leader Session (Teach one of the stories 12-18)
October	Week 1	<i>Se Siuatl Okitekili Perfume Ipan Ikxiwa de Jesús</i> (A Woman Anoints Jesus' Feet With Oil)
	Week 2	<i>Okitraisonaro</i> (The Betrayal)
	Week 3	<i>Jesus Okicrusificarojke</i> (The Crucifixion of Jesus)
	Week 4	Review Stories 19-21
November	Week 1	National Holiday
	Week 2	Indigenous Leader Session (Teach one of the stories 15-21)
	Week 3	<i>Jesus Viviroa</i> , (Jesus Lives)

	Week 4	<i>Jesus Okinnawati Idisipulowa</i> (Jesus Sends Out His Disciples)
December	Week 1	<i>Witz del Espíritu Santo</i> (The Coming of the Holy Spirit)
	Week 2	Review Stories 22-24
	Week 3	Review Story Set
	Week 4	National Holiday

APPENDIX H

Accountability Form

Date _____
Name _____

1. Did you have time in prayer each day this week? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, Why? _____

2. Did you have time with Scripture each day this week? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If not, Why? _____

3. How many days did you work this week? _____

4. How many days did you work in ministry? _____

5. How was your day of rest? _____

What did you do? _____

6. How many people did you visit this week? _____

How many people did you visit for the first time? _____

7. How many stories did you tell this week? _____

8. How many people heard the stories? _____

9. What events do you have planned for this month? _____

10. What needs do you have? _____

Tu Semana

Fecha: _____

Nombre: _____

1. ¿Tuviste tiempo en oración cada día esta semana? ☐ Si ☐ No
¿Por qué no? _____

2. ¿Tuviste tiempo con la Biblia cada día esta semana? ☐ Si ☐ No
¿Por qué no? _____

3. ¿Cuántos días estabas trabajando secular? _____
4. ¿Cuántos días estabas trabajando en misiones? _____
5. ¿Cómo estaba tu día de descansar? _____
¿Qué hiciste? _____

6. ¿Cuántas personas visitabas esta semana? _____
¿Cuántas por la primera vez? _____
7. ¿Cuántas historias contaste esta semana? _____
8. ¿Cuántas personas escuchaba las historias? _____
9. ¿Qué eventos tienes para este mes? _____
10. ¿Qué necesidades tienes? _____

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VITA

Anthony L. Conner

PERSONAL

Born: November 13, 1969

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EDUCATION

B.A. North Carolina State University, 1993.

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Ordination: May 4, 1997, Kings Creek Baptist Church, Lenoir, North Carolina

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Pastoral Ministries:

Pastor, Little River Baptist Church, Bumpass, Virginia, 1999-2005

Associate Pastor, FBC Callaway, Callaway, Florida, 1998-1999

Youth and Senior Adult Pastor, Enterprise Baptist Church, Littleton,
North Carolina, 1996-1998

Youth Minister, Enterprise Baptist Church, Littleton, North Carolina, 1995-1996

Chaplaincy

Chaplain, U.S. Army Reserve, 1997-2000

Chaplain Assistant, U.S. Army Reserve, 1991-1995



The Graduate School at Liberty University

July 31, 2012

Anthony Conner

IRB Approval 1372.073112: An Oral Strategy to Train Indigenous Leaders

Dear Anthony,

We are pleased to inform you that your above study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "F. Garzon".

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
Professor, IRB Chair
Counseling

(434) 592-4054



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