

## Course Syllabus

### THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATION OF THE GREAT COMMISSION

The divine offer of eternal life, the Gospel which we preach, is examined in detail, not only to assure each student a solid theological base for evangelism and church planting, but also so that the student will overflow and be awed by the message in such a way that he (or she) will want to go everywhere and tell all men the best news that has ever been revealed to the world.

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## God's Missionary Heart

**Introduction:** God loves mankind and has been trying to make a way for friendship and fellowship with him ever since Adam and Eve broke that fellowship in the Garden of Eden. Throughout human history God has reached out to mankind with a missionary's heart, loving sinful men and trying to make a way for us to become holy again so that we might enter His presence. God, who is the true Light of the world, continually seeks to provide a way to redeem men to Himself.

### I. God has a missionary program.

Rom. 9-11

- A. God created the world, the universe and everything therein, and sought daily fellowship and friendship with His creation, Adam and Eve. Gen. 1:1-31
  - 1. No people or culture has been found that does not have religious beliefs and/or superstitions. This is the inevitable reflection of the fact that this world and the whole universe were created by God.
  - 2. His existence is obvious to any who seek Him. Rom. 1:19, 20
- B. But Adam and Eve sinned against God, making it impossible for them to have fellowship and continued friendship with God. Gn. 3, Rom. 3:23, Rom. 6:26
  - 1. Because of Adam and Eve's sin, death entered the world. Rom. 5:12
  - 2. God gave up the nations, allowing them to live in darkness. Rom. 1:24, 26, 28
- C. God came to Earth to redeem His creation. In Gen. 3:15 we see the following truths:
  - 1. Salvation is initiated by God. ("I will put enmity ...")
  - 2. Salvation will destroy Satan. ("he [Jesus] will crush your [the devil's] head ...")
  - 3. Salvation will affect mankind as a whole.
  - 4. Salvation will come through a Mediator (Jesus) related to mankind.
  - 5. Salvation will require the suffering of the Mediator.
  - 6. Salvation will be experienced in history, just as the fall was a part of history.
- D. God continues to seek after man's heart, reaching out to us with a missionary heart to win his creation back into fellowship and friendship with Him. Rom. 8:39, Eph. 2:4

### II. God is Three-in-One (the Triune God). Because He is three "persons" (the Trinity) He lives in relationship, and seeks relationship with humans, His greatest creation, whom He loves with a supernatural love.

Jn. 3:16-17

### III. God is the light of the world.

Jn. 8:12

- A. He is consuming fire. (He is unapproachable, infinite, unchangeable, and holy.) Dt. 4:24, Heb. 12:29
- B. Darkness cannot hide God, for His light is penetrating, searching, quickening and enlivening. He overcomes all darkness. Jn. 1:5
- C. God destroys the work of the evil one. 1 Jn. 3:8
- D. God's light in His children is to shine for others to see. Mt. 5:14  
Our light is to shine from blameless lives. Phil. 2:15

### IV. God desires and is worthy of our worship and praise.

- A. He seeks and accepts our worship when it is offered in spirit and in truth, because this is the most appropriate manner for us to fellowship with Him—the most appropriate attitude for us to approach Him. Rev. 5:7-13
- B. The worship of any other gods is forbidden. Dt. 4:39, Ex. 20:2-6

### Conclusion

- A. God is a living, personal god. Is. 43:3-15
- B. God is a god of relationships. 1 Jn. 4:8
- C. God came to Earth to bring salvation to His creation. Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8
- D. God continues to seek to save men and women to His salvation and love. Lk. 19:10
- E. God wants us, His children, to be His ambassadors to the world, to announce His love and salvation to the lost, and to win souls to Him. 2 Cor. 5:20, Prov. 11:30

## God's Missionary Son - 1

**Introduction:** God sent His Son to be the Savior of the world (1 Jn. 4:14).

- I. Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sins.** Jn. 3:16, Jn. 10:17-18
- A. It was a voluntary act. 2 Co. 8:9
  - B. It was a humble act. Ph. 2:6-8
  - C. It was a divine act. Rom. 5:8
- II. Jesus Christ offers us the free gift of salvation.** 1 Jn. 3:5, 1 Tim. 1:15
- A. God's salvation is divine.
    - 1. It was God who took the initiative to save man. Rom. 5:8
    - 2. God sent a Redeemer, His Son Jesus Christ. Jn. 1:10-11
  - B. God's salvation is available in Jesus Christ alone. Acts, 4:12, Jn. 1:12
    - 1. All who receive Christ's salvation become God's children. 1 Jn. 5:12
    - 2. Through God's gift, we have everything we need in Jesus Christ. Ro. 8:32
  - C. God's salvation is directly related to the cross and Christ's resurrection.
    - 1. The cross is a reality; it really happened in history. 1 Pet. 1:20, Ep. 1:4, 3:11
    - 2. The cross is the basis of God's dealings with sinful man. Ro. 3:25
    - 3. The death of Christ is mentioned over 175 times in the N.T. Torrey
    - 4. The cross was the purpose of the incarnation. Mk. 10:45
    - 5. All the N.T. writers speak of the cross (except James, but he builds on it [Ja. 5:7-11]).
  - D. God's salvation originates in His grace. Eph. 2:7
    - 1. Man is totally depraved, enslaved, lost, and guilty from conception. Rom. 3:23
    - 2. Salvation, from start to finish, is from God. Eph. 2:8-9
  - E. God's salvation is an instantaneous experience.
    - 1. He bestows all His fullness on the believer the instant we believe and confess Him as our Savior.
    - 2. In Christ we receive righteousness, redemption and sanctification.
    - 3. Our salvation is complete in the Lord Jesus Christ when we receive Him.
    - 4. Once we are saved, however, there is a progression as the Christian matures in grace and in faith. 2 Pet. 1:5-7
  - F. Man has a choice; God's salvation is to be received, but it can also be rejected. Heb. 2:8
    - 1. Salvation is not forced on man. Man can thus voluntarily respond to the grace of God.
    - 2. God deals with man as a responsible, moral agent.
    - 3. Man has a free choice; he consciously and voluntarily responds to God's offer of salvation.
    - 4. The grace of God is received by faith. Rom. 1:17
      - a) *It transforms and revitalizes man's moral nature.*
      - b) *It gives him a moral purpose, the purpose of God.*

## God's Missionary Son - 2

(This lesson is a continuation of the last lesson.)

- G. God's salvation is received by putting one's faith in Jesus.
1. When we put our faith in Christ He saves us by His grace. Eph. 2:8, Heb. 11:1
  2. Faith is more than simply understanding God's grace; it is a personal response of accepting God's grace. Rom. 10:17  
*a) Faith is not mental assent (human will). Ja. 2:19*  
*b) Faith is not mere conformity (on the outside). Rom. 12:1*  
*c) Faith is more than simply being sincere. Jn. 14:6*
  3. God divides all of mankind into two distinct groups, believers (those who have faith) and unbelievers (those who do not have faith).

### III. Sin entered creation through Adam and Eve's rebellion. Gn. 3:1-24

- A. The consequence of sin is eternal death and separation from God.
1. All have sinned and fall short of God's standard. Rom. 3:23
  2. The result of sin: All die because they are sinners. Rom. 6:23
  3. Man's fall affected all of creation. Paul says that all creation lost its original glory, goal, and purpose because of sin. Creation is in a state of imperfection and incompleteness. Rom. 8:22
- B. Christ's salvation provides for our redemption from the consequences of sin. 1 Jn. 1:7
1. Jesus took upon Himself all the sin of all mankind (Is. 53:6) and overcame its death penalty. Rom. 5:18
  2. God did more than just atone for the guilt of our sins; He dealt effectively with the very root of sin when the sinless One (Jesus) was made sin. 2 Cor. 5:21
  3. Jesus died to destroy the works of the devil 1 Jn. 3:8
  4. Jesus' death will ultimately result in the death of the devil himself. Heb. 2:14

### IV. Jesus became the Lamb of God to pay the sacrifice for our sins. Jn. 1:29

- A. Jesus our High Priest provided the sacrifice, Himself. Rev. 21:22
- B. A divine and infinite sacrifice provides divine and infinite salvation. Col. 1:9, 20
- C. This salvation is infinite in quality, duration, and potential. Rom. 8:19-21
- D. Salvation is eternal redemption and inheritance. Heb. 9:12-15
- E. God's grace overcomes the curse of sin. Rom. 5:12-21, especially 18
- F. The Sacrifice of Jesus is final and absolute for our salvation. Heb. 7:27; 9:12

### V. All of creation will be redeemed.

- A. Isaiah anticipated "new heavens and a new earth." Is. 65:17
- B. John saw the completion of the new heavens, earth and new Jerusalem. Rev. 21-22
- C. At the center of restored heaven and earth is the Lamb: mentioned 28 times in Revelation.
- D. The Lamb of God bears the sin of the world: reconciliation of all creation.
- E. This comprehensive salvation does not include Satan, his angels, his disciples. They will perish in the lake of fire with unbelievers. Rev. 9:20
- F. Eventually, salvation will be victorious. 1 Co. 15:24, 28

## God's Missionary Spirit - 1

**Introduction:** God loves mankind, and continually reaches out to redeem us from the death and destruction of our sinful natures. God comes to earth as the Holy Spirit to convict the world of sin, to draw all men to Himself and to equip and empower Christians.

**I. Jesus promised that the Father would send the Holy Spirit.**

- A. The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Triune Godhead. Mt. 28:19
- B. The Father sent the Holy Spirit to draw mankind to Himself. Jn. 14:26

**II. One of the primary roles of the Holy Spirit is evident in His title: the divine "Paraclete."**

- A. Paraclete is the word (in Greek) that Jesus used to speak of the Holy Spirit in Jn. 14:16 and 26, Jn. 15:26 and in Jn. 16:7.
  - 1. The word refers to someone who comes alongside, to advocate for us or to comfort us. In English Bibles the word is usually translated as "Comforter," "Counselor" or "Advocate."
  - 2. God comes alongside us by His Holy Spirit, to teach us all things and to remind us of everything Christ had said to His disciples. Jn. 14:26
- B. As our Advocate, He is the Counsel for our defense against our accuser (Satan).
- C. The Paraclete will abide with us forever. Jn. 14:16

**III. The Holy Spirit testifies about Jesus.**

Jn. 15:26

- A. The Holy Spirit of God is that still, small voice which we sometimes hear deep in our hearts, telling us that Christ is the way, the truth and the life. Jn. 14:6
- B. It is the Holy Spirit of God Who gives dreams and visions about Jesus to non-believers today.

**IV. The Holy Spirit draws all man toward salvation and convicts man of guilt.**

Jn. 16:8

- A. The Holy Spirit convicts us when we are doing wrong or when our motives and thoughts are displeasing to God.

## God's Missionary Spirit – 2

(This lesson is a continuation of the last lesson.)

- V. **The Holy Spirit came upon the Church in fullness on the Day of Pentecost.** Acts 2:1-13
- A. Pentecost is a unique event in world history; no other religion suggests that God seeks after man. They all teach that man must strive after God.
1. Only Christianity can claim an event similar to the Day of Pentecost, the invasion of the divine in space and time.
  2. Only Christianity can claim a God who loves us so much that He:
    - a) *came to earth, born in a manger (His incarnation)*
    - b) *lived a perfectly sinless life (making Him the perfect sacrifice to pay the penalty for our sins),*
    - c) *was crucified (the atonement), and*
    - d) *rose from the dead (thereby providing for us who believe triumph of life over death).*
- B. The Holy Spirit came in fullness upon the Church to empower God's children to be His "witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8
- C. The Holy Spirit came to give spiritual gifts (charismata) to His children for ministering to each other within the Body of Christ.
1. The Spirit gives different gifts to God's children. Heb. 2:4
  2. These gifts are given "for the common good," in other words, to build up one-another in the Body of Christ. I Cor. 12:7
  3. We are to eagerly desire the greater gifts (I Cor. 12:31), but never at the risk of neglecting the "more excellent way" of faith, hope and love, of which love is the greatest. I Cor. 13:13
- D. The Holy Spirit gives divine fruit to those in whom He dwells. Gal. 5:22-23
1. Notice that "fruit" in this passage is singular, indicating that the listed qualities constitute a unity, all of which should be found in the life of a believer controlled by the power of the Holy Spirit.
  2. "The first three virtues listed, love, joy and peace, are habits of mind that find their source in God." (The Bible Knowledge Commentary)
  3. The second three, patience, kindness and goodness, reach out to others, fortified by the first three.
  4. The last three, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, guide the general conduct of the believer who is led by the Spirit, who is the source of these graces.

**Conclusion:** God loves us so much that He sends the Holy Spirit to convict us of sin, to bear witness of Jesus, to be our Paraclete (our Advocate, Comforter and Counselor), to give us wonderful gifts (so that we can serve others in the Church) and to give us the fruit of His Spirit (that we might reflect and communicate God's saving grace and mercy to the needy world around us).

## God's Missionary People

**Introduction:** Down through the ages, God has sought loving relationship with mankind, first with Adam and Eve, then with the Patriarchs, then with the whole nation of Israel, and today with Christians in all nations around the world. God's ultimate desire is for His glory to be known among all nations so that "none should perish but have eternal life" with him in heaven. Jn. 3:16

### I. God first tried to establish relationship with mankind through His chosen people.

- A. Adam and Eve enjoyed wonderful harmony with God and with each other before they sinned against God.
  - 1. God's first created people, Adam and Eve, enjoyed wonderful relationship together (they "were both naked, and they felt no shame." [Gn. 2:25]) and with God. (They walked with Him "in the garden in the cool of the day." [Gn. 3:8-9])
  - 2. But when they rebelled against God, sin broke their unity with God. Ever since, mankind has been out of harmony with God.
- B. God promised to bless Abraham and his family (Isaac, Jacob and Esau, the twelve sons of Jacob, etc.), telling him "...all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." Gen. 12: 1-3
- C. God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, which gave the people of Israel ten simple guidelines for healthy relationship with Him and with others. Ex. 20:1-10

### II. Israel, the Chosen People of God

- A. The covenant between God and Israel had a missionary goal. Ex. 19:5-6
- B. God made Israel an example of how He would deal with other nations. Is. 37:20
- C. The people of Israel (the Jews) often chose to ignore God's plan that they be a missionary nation. Instead, Israel turned from God as a result of their contact with people of neighboring nations.
- D. God called prophets to warn Israel to repent and turn back to Him, but the Jews only occasionally listened.
- E. The prophets proclaimed the Jews would eventually repent and respond to God's offer of salvation. Ez. 36:26-27

### III. God offered His salvation to all peoples.

- A. The prophets foretold great blessings for all peoples. Is. 25:6-8
- B. They foretold of a time when the "earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD." Ha. 2:14
- C. God's mission is focused beyond Israel, to all nations, that His glory will be known throughout the whole world. Is 66:18-19
- D. God's desire is that all the nations see His glory. Ez. 36:22-23

### Summary of God's missionary people:

- A. Individuals – When Adam and Eve sinned, breaking mankind's harmonious relationship with God, God tried to re-establish relationship through Abraham, Moses, and others.
- B. Israel – God tried to re-establish relationship with mankind through His special relationship with Israel, so that His glory would be known among all nations.
- C. The nations – Today, God's Spirit is at work throughout the world, calling people to Himself from every people, tongue and nation.

## God's Kingdom

- I. Jesus' central message was that men should prepare to receive the kingdom of heaven.** Mt. 4:17
- A. Jesus began His ministry with this message (Mark 1:14-15) and ended his ministry with this message (Acts 1:3).
  - B. The terms "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven" were used interchangeably in Jewish culture.
  - C. The term "kingdom of God" was understood in Jesus' day as "the rule of God," not necessarily as a geographical area belonging to God.
  - D. The word "kingdom" is used 119 times in the four Gospels:
    - 1. In Matthew 52 times
    - 2. In Mark 19 times
    - 3. In Luke 44 times
    - 4. In John 4 times
- II. When Jesus spoke of the kingdom of God (or of the kingdom of heaven, which is the same thing) He had a fuller meaning than what was understood by people of that day from the Old Testament usage of the term.**
- A. In the Old Testament, it was understood that God was the King of Israel and the King of all creation.
  - B. But Jesus built on this understanding to explain that:
    - 1. God's rule is also to extend into our hearts, that God is to be King of our inner man. Mt. 6:33
    - 2. God reigns not only over the whole universe, He also deserves to reign over every detail of our heart, mind and body. Rom. 12:1-2
- III. The kingdom of God exists already, but it also has a future aspect.**
- A. Jesus established the kingdom of God when He came to earth. Mt. 9:35
    - 1. One enters the kingdom by being born spiritually. Jn. 3:3
    - 2. Joining this kingdom requires a radical, inner change. Mk. 1:15
    - 3. Its coming was the realization of a Jewish expectation. Lk. 23:50-51
  - B. The kingdom has a future aspect. Mt. 25:34
    - 1. It will begin with Christ's return. Lk. 13:28
    - 2. It will bring about an end to Satan's reign.
    - 3. It will result in the new heavens and a new earth.
    - 4. It will not be of this world. Jn. 18:33-34
- IV. There are many signs of the kingdom.**
- A. Proclamation is a sign. Mt. 4:18, 19
  - B. Miracles are a sign.
    - 1. Healing Mt. 4:23
    - 2. Casting out of demons Mt. 12:28
    - 3. Resurrection from the dead Mt. 10:8

**Conclusion:** We enjoy God's kingdom today, but we have a great hope of that wonderful day when His kingdom will come in all its splendor, when we will finally see His radiant glory. Meanwhile, we must prepare for His coming!

## God's Missionary Church

**Introduction:** The true, biblical meaning of “church” is very different from the world’s understanding today of what the church is. This lesson will help us understand the biblical meaning of the word “church.”

- I. **The world’s current (incorrect) definition of the Church:**
  - A. The world thinks of “church” as a building, a place dedicated to the worship of the Christian religion, in which there are religious meetings with a priest or pastor who works exclusively in church matters.
  - B. In this incorrect understanding of what a church is, members profess faith in Jesus Christ but most remain inactive outside the building.
- II. **The New Testament Definition of Church:**
  - A. According to the New Testament, the Church is the people of God, believers who profess faith in Jesus Christ.
  - B. They meet in His name for baptism and Holy Communion, for worship, for prayer, for praising God, for fellowship, for witness, for participation in the ministry of the Word, and for growth.
- III. **Meaning of the word “ekklesia,” (often interpreted as “church” in the NT):**
  - A. The Greek word, “**ekklesia**,” means “assembly, the called out ones.”
  - B. The following two uses are biblical.
    1. The Universal Church - all Christians at any time make up the universal Church. Mt. 16:18
    2. The local church - all Christians in a particular area.(i.e. the “ekklesia” in Antioch) Acts 13:1
- IV. **There are two words used in the original Greek New Testament to describe the people of God: “koinonia” and “laos.”**
  - A. “**Koinonia**,” means “(spiritual) communion.”
  - B. “**Laos**” means people (of God).
  - C. “**Laos**” (the people) glorify God in “**koinonia**” (communion/togetherness) by:
    1. Adoration and praise
    2. Biblical preaching and teaching
    3. Individual and corporal witnessing
    4. Fellowship
    5. Observation of the sacraments - baptism and communion
- V. **The Church’s primary mission is to make disciples (Mt. 28:19-20) through:**
  - A. Evangelism - presence, proclamation, persuasion, propagation
  - B. Establishment – strengthening the believers
  - C. Equipping – perfecting the saint. Eph. 4:12
  - D. Expanding – propagation of His truth
- VI. **Factors that help the Church to grow:**
  - A. Direct proclamation of the Gospel
  - B. Multiplication of believers and congregations
  - C. Edification of the Christian community
  - D. Exercise of spiritual gifts
- VII. **Steps we can take to recover the true meaning of what it means to be the true “Church:”**
  - A. Every believer is to walk in close fellowship with God and be a disciple of His Word. Mt. 16:18
  - B. Every believer is to love others with the love of God. Jn. 8:31
  - C. Every believer is to bear fruit for the kingdom of God. Jn. 13:35
  - D. Every believer is to fulfill God’s commands. Jn. 15:1-4
  - E. Every church leader is to teach others to teach others. Jn. 15:14  
2 Tim. 2:2

## God's Missionary Church Member

**Introduction:** Every Christian is an ambassador of God's kingdom. When we give our hearts to Jesus, we are reborn into His chosen race and become royal priests with the mission to take the good news of His kingdom to others.

- I. We are a chosen people.** Ep. 1:4-5
- A. "Chosen" – Every Christian is chosen by God before the foundation of the world to be holy. Ep. I: 4  
"People" – We were born for adoption. 1 Pet. 2:9-10, Jn. 1:12
- II. We are a royal priesthood.** 1 Pet. 1:3-4
- A. "Royal" - We inherit the priesthood and receive our ordination from the Most-Royal King.  
"Priesthood" – As priests we are called to be intercessors. 1 Peter 1:4
- III. We are called to be holy people.** Col. 1:21-22
- IV. The people of God are a redeemed people.** To be redeemed means to be repurchased. For example, those whom God has redeemed are like a slave who is repurchased by his previous owner and adopted as a son, even to receive the family inheritance.
- V. We are to be ambassadors of God's kingdom to the lost of this world.** 2 Co. 5:20
- VI. We are to shine God's light for the world.** Matt. 5:14
- VII. There developed a misunderstanding of true biblical roles in the early Church:**
- A. The first Christians were often persecuted. Because of this persecution the Church remained pure and strong and grew rapidly throughout the Roman world and beyond, spreading as far as Spain in the west and India in the East.
- B. But soon after the days of the Apostles the Church became politically powerful, and its leaders became increasingly motivated by political and economic (ungodly) ambitions.
1. This increasing quest for worldly power by the clergy resulted in the establishment of a professional (a paid) clergy.
  2. As the Church grew richer, influence and power in the Church was increasingly monopolized by the salaried clergy, to the point that Christians not employed by the Church lost their spiritual influence and even their initiative.
  3. Sadly, the doctrine of the royal priesthood of the believer was all but lost by the fourth century.
- VIII. A Biblical solution:**
- The Church must rid itself of practices and structures which:
    - compromise spiritual growth with political (worldly) concerns.
    - overload the responsibilities, controls and activities of its leaders, and allows passivity of its lay members.
  - Meanwhile, the Church must find ever-increasing ways to involve the laity in fruitful ministry and discipleship.
  - Every believer must reclaim their authority as royal priests, appointed as ambassadors to God's kingdom by the God and King of the whole universe.

## God's Great Commission

**Introduction:** God's intention for us, His children, can be found in five Great Commission passages:

1. That we make disciples Mt. 28:19,20
2. That we preach faith and repentance Mk. 16:15-16
3. That we preach repentance and forgiveness Lk. 24:47-48
4. That we be sent by divine authority Jn. 20:21
5. That we witness in the power of the Holy Spirit Ac. 1:8

**I. Evangelism** is an important ingredient of the Great Commission. It is the presentation of the good news of Jesus' love and salvation. There are three facets in evangelism:

A. Presence is non-verbal.

1. Some view evangelism only as being present with non-believers and doing good works among them.
2. They place a priority on the social mandate. Gn. 1:28; Mt. 22:39
3. They view evangelism as doing good works (such as rural development,) and promoting peace efforts and social renewal.

B. Proclamation is announcing God's truth.

1. Some view evangelism only as proclaiming the good news.
2. They place a priority on the evangelistic mandate. Gn. 3:9; Rom. 10:13-14
3. Evangelism means to announce. 1 Co.15:1-4
4. "Evangel" appears 76 times in the N.T.; "evangelize" appears 51 times; "evangelist" appears three times.
5. Preaching is another form of proclamation. 1 Co.2:4

C. Persuasion is calling for a response, giving an invitation to salvation in Christ.

1. The word for "witness" in Acts 1:8 means "martyr." In other words, we are willing to die to persuade people to be saved. Ac. 1:8
2. We must be ready to justify and defend the Gospel, but not impose it. 1 Pe. 3:15
3. We are to entreat (beseech, beg) others to receive the Gospel. 2 Co. 5:20
4. Paul almost persuaded King Agrippa to accept Christ. Ac. 26:28
5. Evangelism is proclaiming the Gospel so that a person has a valid opportunity to receive the Lord.

**II. Edification** is the second important ingredient of the Great Commission. It means building up and strengthening the new believer. There are several important elements in edification.

A. Perfecting is the building up of disciples to full maturity.

1. Baptism - Acts 2:41; 9:18; 33-34; 18:8; 19:4-5
2. Teaching - Ac. 2:41-42
3. Prayer Ac. 1:14; 3:1
4. Fellowship Acts 2:47
5. Communion (Lord's Supper - Breaking of bread) Lk. 22:19
6. Giving

**Conclusion:** Each generation is responsible to fulfill the Great Commission. The Great Commission is to make disciples, not only to share the good news. The process does not stop at the new birth; rather, it continues on until "we present everyone perfect in Christ." Col. 1:26

## The Great Commission as Given in Matthew 28:19-20

**Introduction:** Jesus' parting commandment to His followers was that they make disciples, not simply to make converts. Just as human parents don't abandon their babies, but raise them until they grow to independence, our responsibility as Christians is to bring new souls to salvation in Christ and to nurture them into full spiritual maturity, until they also are bearing spiritual fruit.

**III. In the original Greek, there is only one command in Matthew 28:19-20; it is the command to make disciples.**

**IV. There are three other verbs subordinate to this primary command:**

- A. Christ was telling us how to make disciples. We are to make disciples:
  1. as we are **going**,
  2. as we are **baptizing**, and
  3. as we are **teaching**.
- B. **GOING:** As we go about our daily lives, wherever we are, whatever we are doing, we represent the good news of the kingdom of God, both through our loving attitudes and actions (presence evangelism) and through verbal witness (proclamation evangelism).
  1. When Jesus told us to make disciples "as we are going," we can understand this element of the Great Commission to be speaking of EVANGELISM.
  2. Biblical, balanced evangelism implies that one is physically **present** with those in need, **proclaiming** the truth in love, with an ardent desire to **persuade** them to be reconciled with God.
  3. Evangelism is presenting the gospel in such a way that a person has a valid opportunity to receive Christ.
- C. **BAPTIZING:** Baptism is the sacrament by which the believer affirms that he or she belongs to Christ.
  1. In the Great Commission it's clear that we are to baptize first, then teach the new believers.
  2. In the eight passages in the book of Acts which mention baptism, the baptisms all occurred very quickly after belief was demonstrated. For example,
    - a) *Acts 2:41 states that they believed and were baptized.*
    - b) *In many cases, people were baptized the same day they believed (Acts 8:38 and Acts 9:18).*
    - c) *Acts 10:47 states that in Caesarea, Peter baptized the Roman citizens who had already received the Holy Spirit.*
    - d) *In Acts 18:8, Crispus and all his household first believed and then, they were baptized.*
  3. The pattern seems to be as follows: belief came first, then came baptism, and then the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, however, after belief the Holy Spirit was given, and then came baptism.
- D. **TEACHING** – Paul makes it clear that teaching serves two purposes: that of **establishing** the new believer in the faith, and once he is established, that of **equipping** the saint for service.
  1. The baby in Christ cannot grow until he is properly fed on the Word of God and weaned from the milk of elementary teachings. He must learn to chew and digest the meat of the Word. 1 Cor. 3:1-3
  2. The author of the book of Hebrews makes this abundantly clear in Heb. 5:12 - 6:4, where the believers were continually rehashing repentance and trying to be saved over and over again.
  3. Once a child is born again, he need not be born again! He must be established to "eat solid food" (spiritually speaking – 1 Cor. 3:1-3), and as a mature disciple, be equipped in a service (ministry) in which his spiritual gifts are utilized to bear fruit.
  4. Teaching and learning (establishing and equipping) never end in the life of the believer. As disciples, we are always to be involved in leadership training. 2 Tim. 2:2
  5. The goal of a discipler is to see his disciple produce responsible, reproducing disciples of his own.
  6. The church is fulfilling its mission when it is propagating and producing responsible and reproducing congregations of its own, churches which are self-financing, self-governing, and self-expanding.
  7. Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Mark, Thomas and Timothy were all church planters; in 30 to 40 years, there was a church in every major urban center of Asia Minor and as far away as India.
  8. Even Jesus Himself concentrated on discipling only a few, twelve laymen, notably the three, while winning hundreds more to the kingdom cause in His three years of ministry.

**Conclusion:** We, who are mature in Christ, having been **evangelized, established and equipped** for service, are to be **fruitful**, by propagating our inheritance and planting new churches, as Paul exemplifies so well.

## The Biblical Basis for Church Planting

**Introduction:** *The New Testament gives some clear instructions for how the Holy Spirit guides and blesses the planting of churches.*

- I. There are four phases in Church planting.** Matthew 13:1-9
- A. Tilling – preparing the ground in the hearts of the people 1 Cor. 3:6
1. Illustration: the field is selected and the ground is broken.
  2. Explanation: a people group in a specific area is targeted (based on research results) and a good church planting team is recruited from among the believers.
  3. Emphasis: The church states the team's responsibility to disciple.
- B. Sowing the seed – presenting the good news of God's salvation Matthew 13:3
1. Illustration: the seed of the Word is planted.
  2. Explanation: The team communicates well with the non-believers.
  3. Emphasis: The team proclaims the truth of the Gospel.
- C. Harvesting – bringing in the sheaves Matthew 13:8
1. Illustration: the new fruit is reaped.
  2. Explanation: The team appeals to the will of those who are receptive to the Gospel.
  3. Emphasis: The Holy Spirit convinces receptive souls to decide to follow Christ.
- D. Storing – incorporating new believers into the Church and preparing them for ministry 2 Tim. 2:2
1. Illustration: The new harvest is put in the storehouse for future service.
  2. Explanation: The team speaks of the collective needs of the believers: community.
  3. Emphasis: The team incorporates the new believers into a local church.
- II. There are two biblical models of church planting.** Acts 13-14
- A. First model: The local church (Jerusalem) plants new churches in the surrounding areas (Judea, Galilee and Samaria). Acts 9:31
- B. Second model: A team of church planters
1. The team is set apart Acts 13:1-4
  2. The team establishes contact Acts 13:14-16
  3. The team proclaims the good news Acts 13:17
  4. The team sees fruit Acts 13:43, 48
  5. The team assembles the new believers Acts 13:43-44
  6. The team strengthens the disciples Acts 14:21-22
  7. The team elects leaders Acts 14:23a
  8. The team encourages new converts Acts 14:23b
  9. The team reports to the mother church Acts 14:27
  10. The team revisits (constant discipleship) Acts 15:36

## God's Plan - That the Church Should Grow

(This lesson is a continuation of the previous one.)

**Introduction:** Now that we understand God's primary purpose (to take His kingdom to all peoples and to make disciples), and have learned the best way to accomplish this (by planting churches), what should the churches look like?

### III. The first century Church grew in number (numerical growth).

- A. Acts 1:15 tells us there were 120 followers of Jesus following His death and resurrection and before the Day of Pentecost. Acts 1:15
- B. Following Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit, the group of believers grew to 3,000 (Acts 2:41) and then to 5,000 (Acts 4:4).
- C. "More and more" (according to Acts 5:14) were reported to believe, and the number continued to increase. Acts 6:1, 7

### IV. The Church also grew in grace (spiritual maturity).

- A. The Word was preached. Acts 2:16-36; 3:13-26; 5:42; 6:4; 7:1-53
- B. Many were baptized. Acts 2:41, 46
- C. The believers broke bread together. Acts 2:42, 46
- D. There was much teaching and fellowship. Acts 2:42
- E. They prayed much. Acts 2:42; 3:1; 4:24; 12:5-17
- F. There were miracles. Acts 2:43; 5:12-16
- G. They shared their material possessions. Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35
- H. They enjoyed unity and daily meetings. Acts 2:46
- I. There was evangelism and witnessing. Acts 2:47; 3:12; 4:5; 4:33; 5:42

### V. The Church grew because it was centered on Christ and in the Holy Spirit.

- A. The spiritual dimension is its base: Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
  - 1. Power of the Holy Spirit. Acts 4:19-21, 33
  - 2. Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:1-4
  - 3. Leadership of the Holy Spirit. Acts 4:19; 5:4; 6:5
- B. The church was the focal point of the believers' lives.
  - 1. There was firm discipline among the members. Acts 5:4
  - 2. There was continual discipling. Acts 2:42
  - 3. There was reciprocal love one for another. Acts 4:32
- C. Witnessing involved the usage of natural points of contact. Acts 2:7-12; 10:1-2
- D. The leadership was shared equitably. Acts 6:1-7
- E. The content was based on the Scriptures and centered on Jesus. Acts 2:14-36; 4:13; 6:15
- F. The delivery of the Gospel was flexible - adapted to the audience. Acts 2:37-40; 3:12-26
- G. There was courageous, dynamic leadership. Acts 4:19; 5:5; 6:5
- H. There was obedience to the Great Commission. Acts 1:1-2:13
- I. There was dedication to prayer, praise and Scripture. Acts 4:23-31
- J. There was holiness of life. Acts 5:1-11; 8:18-24

### VI. The Church's ministry was holistic (material as well as spiritual).

- A. The believers shared with each other so that none would be without. Acts 2:44-45
- B. Peter offered God's healing to the cripple at the temple gate. Acts 3:1-8
- C. The believers cared for the widows among them. Acts 6:1
- D. Just as the first-generation believers responded to the material and physical needs of those about them, we also must do everything possible to respond to the material and physical needs of those around us.

### VII. The Church grew in the midst of great persecution.

Acts 8:1-4

**Conclusion:** The following lesson will address this important principle more fully.

## God's Mission – That All Should Be Saved

- I. God wants all lost people to be saved.** 1 Tim. 2:4-5  
A. God came to the garden looking for Adam and Eve. Gn. 3:9  
B. God constantly sought after the nation of Israel.
- II. Jesus also wants all lost people to be saved.** Luke 19:10  
A. Jesus came to save sinners. 1 Tim. 1:15  
B. Quote: "God had only one Son, and He made that Son a missionary." David Livingstone
- III. Parables illustrate the fact that God seeking lost people.**  
A. The lost sheep Mt. 18:12  
B. The lost coin Luke 15:8-10  
C. The lost son Luke 15:11-32
- IV. God's plan is for believers to take His Good News to lost people.**  
A. God has given us the resources we need. Rom. 10:12  
B. God saves all who call on His name. Rom. 10:13  
C. God's people must take the Good News to lost people. Rom. 10:14  
D. Some must preach; others must send the preachers. Rom. 10:15  
E. It is a beautiful thing to preach the Good News to the lost. Rom. 10:15
- V. God wants a good return on His investment.** Mt. 25:14-30  
A. God wants ripe harvests to be reaped. Mt. 9:36-38  
B. God expects a response to His proclamation. Mt. 10:14  
C. God expects sowers to reap. Mt. 13:3-9  
D. God expects lost sheep to be brought into the fold. Mt. 18:11-14  
E. Jesus expects fishermen to catch many fish. Luke 5:4-11  
F. Jesus expects a fig tree to bear fruit. Luke 13:6-9  
G. God expects guests to come to His banquet table. Luke 14:15-23  
H. God expects a lost coin to be found. Luke 15:8-10
- VI. God keeps, purifies, and unites the Church for a harvest.**  
A. Jesus prays for the protection, unity, joy and purity of the believers. Jn. 17: 11-17  
B. The purpose of our unity is that the world may know Him. Jn. 17:20- 23
- VII. Workers are needed for sowing.** Mt. 13:3-9; 18-23; Luke 8:4-15  
A. The sower's job is to plant the seeds. Mt. 13:3  
B. The sower sows with tears and reaps with joy. Ps. 126:6  
C. The sower may lose his harvest (due to birds, hard soil, etc.) Mt. 13:4,6, 7
- VIII. More workers are needed to bring in the harvest.**  
A. We must go where there is fruit: receptivity.  
B. The harvest is ready; we must gather the fruit while it is ripe. Mk. 4:29; Jn. 4:35  
C. There are not enough workers for the harvest. Mt. 9:37; Luke 10:2  
D. We must not give up the harvest despite the difficulty. Gal. 6:8-9  
E. The wages will be paid with fruit for eternal life. Jn. 4:36

## The Apostle Paul's Missionary Methods and Strategies

*This lesson is based on materials developed by Dr. S. D. Ponraj.*

**Introduction:** Paul was a great missionary. What were his methods and strategies as he preached and introduced the good news where it had never been before? Understanding his methods can help us establish the same fruitful ministries in our own mission.

- 1) His mission was focused on one people, the Gentiles:** Paul went primarily to the Gentiles (Acts 22:21; 26:16-18). He was an Apostle to the Gentiles. He focused his activities on one people group.
- 2) He pioneered the Gospel in the unreached areas:** Paul was a pioneer in every respect and he was also an adventurer in pioneering evangelism. Paul followed the geographic approach of reaching out to the unreached areas of his time. Rom. 15:20
- 3) He contextualized the Gospel:** Paul made the gospel relevant to each of the people and their culture. Not only the message but he made himself relevant to the people with whom he communicated the gospel. 1 Cor. 9:22-23
- 4) Paul focused his mission on certain geographical areas:** Paul was committed to reach certain cities and also several different regions (Asia Minor, etc.). This was his lifetime goal. Acts 16:6-10
- 5) He concentrated on urban mission:** Paul concentrated his mission efforts on the cities. He believed that the cities exercised most influence on the culture and habits of the people. These cities (Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, Antioch, etc.) were the key points of contact with the rest of the people in the provinces.
- 6) He planted house churches:** Paul regarded every home as a church and every house as a church building. He wrote, "the church that meets..." We read in the Book of Acts that there were many house churches that Paul established. Acts 16: 14,15, 40; 17:5-7; 18:7
- 7) He had a balance between expansion and consolidation:** While always going into new places and planting new churches, Paul never failed to teach the existing Christians. His goal was to, "... proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ" (Col.1:28, 29).
- 8) He established indigenous churches:** Paul was committed to indigenization of the churches as much as the contextualization. We have to examine the churches that Paul established with the three self principles that we know: 1) Self-support, 2) Self-governance, 3) Self-expansion. All the churches that Paul established pass the test of these principles.
- 9) He had a commitment to teach and develop local leaders:** We read, "Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust" (Acts 14:23). Paul also wrote the "Pastoral Epistles" for the purpose of teaching young leaders who were also pastors like Timothy, Titus and others.
- 10) He worked with a team:** Paul was not a lone player. He always worked with a team. For example, his first missionary journey was started with a senior person, Barnabas, as his leader. Later Paul graciously accepted the leadership of the team when it was offered to him by Barnabas. He also had John Mark, Luke, Timothy, Titus and others part of his ministry team. He also raised a good team of benefactors who supported his ministry with prayers and funds.

## Persecution and the Great Commission - 1

The material in this and the next two lessons is excerpted from Chapter 14 of Dr. S. D. Ponraj's book, Strategies for Church Planting Movement. It is condensed somewhat into three lessons.

**Introduction:** *Persecution and suffering for one's faith in the true and living God is not new to Christians. The Bible is full of stories of men and women who were persecuted for their faith. Opposition to the Gospel and the persecution continue today, making it vital that we understand it and the reasons for it, so that we might know how to respond to it.*

### The Bible teaches that God's children will be persecuted:

- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| 1. Many in the Old Testament suffered and were persecuted because of their faith. | Heb. 11                 |
| 2. Persecution is part of our calling to be a disciple of the Lord.               | Luke 9:23-24            |
| 3. Persecution is part of our calling to be a Christian worker.                   | Jn. 21:18,19            |
| 4. Before Paul's conversion, there was the martyrdom of Stephen.                  | Acts 7:54-60            |
| 5. The Apostle Paul experienced persecution and suffering.                        | 2 Cor. 11:23-26         |
| 6. Paul taught that Christ's followers were being and would be persecuted.        | 1 Cor. 4:11-13          |
| 7. Jesus taught that we would be persecuted. Matt. 5:10-12,                       | Luke 23:27-31           |
| 8. Even Jesus Himself was persecuted.   | Heb. 12:1-3, Is. 53:3-6 |

### Why are Christians persecuted?

- 1. Because there is a conflict of values between Christians and non-Christians.** The Christians' public stance that salvation comes only from Christ is an offense to non-Christians and a threat to their values and beliefs.
- 2. Because of socio-cultural and economic reasons.** People in power, whether political, economic or cultural, usually do not want to lose their power. Christians have toiled to educate and enlighten the poor and marginalized so that they will be uplifted, thus enhancing their socioeconomic development. Those in power don't want to see them freed by the redeeming grace of Christ from under their control and domination. The very nature of the Gospel has an element of development. When a person is transformed within, he also lives out a life of transformation, often resulting in socioeconomic development. This has angered the landlords and those in control who have been oppressing the poor over the centuries.
- 3. Because of political power games played by Hindu Fundamentalists.** In the 1990s, when L.K. Advani started his political propaganda using the Hindutva ideology, the Hindu majority population was misguided and supported him. In this political power game many innocent Christians were persecuted. However, the promised golden age of "Ram Raj" was full of bloodshed of innocent lives, and the public defeated the Hindutva party in 2004.
- 4. Because Christians provide soft targets when compared to Muslims or Sikhs.** It's a well-known fact that the Muslims and Sikhs have repeatedly retaliated when attacked. For example, the Hindus paid a great price for the demolition of the mosque in Ayothia.
- 5. Because of rapid Church growth across the nation.** The organizations involved in attacks on Christians are well aware of the growth of the Christian Church in India. The Hindu militants know that the Christian faith is very appealing to the common popular Hindus and that the tribals and the Harijans are fast moving to the Christian faith. They fear that Hinduism will become a minority religion.

## **Persecution and the Great Commission - 2**

### **Two false justifications given for persecution:**

1. Some militants have claimed that they oppose and persecute Christians because they are against the evangelism and church planting of Christians. In recent persecution in Orissa and in Karnataka, however, several Catholic institutions were attacked even though they aren't involved in direct evangelism and church planting.
2. Some Christian workers have been criticized for their so-called militant language or evangelistic methods, with accusations that the Christians provoked the persecution. This is not a valid criticism, however; phrases such as "winning people to Christ," "Gospel Crusade," or an organizational name like "Every Home Crusade" are not the reason for the attack. These phrases and names have been used for decades and nothing happened. But the militants now use these phrases and names to give excuses for their attacks.

In this charged context, Christian evangelists should be careful of the language they use in their evangelistic activities. In recent years, some overseas missions have changed their names. For example, Every Creature Crusade became Every Community for Christ. But even if we use better language, we must be ready to face opposition and persecution.

### **Methods of persecution used by the Hindu Militants:**

1. **They instigate the local people to oppose and attack the Christians.** It is not the local common people who attack Christians but the organized militant groups. Therefore, we should understand and identify the enemy. We shouldn't fight the wrong enemy.
2. **They give false complaints (FIR) at the local police station.** This is one way of harassing Christian workers. Because of this, at the time of attack we must go first and lodge the complaint to the nearest police station. We should persist in lodging the complaint even when the police refuse to accept it.
3. **They try to bring fear in the minds of the new believers by attacking a few.** The main purpose is not to attack and kill, but to bring fear in the minds of the new believers so that they will depart from their faith. Therefore, pastors and missionaries should give protection and encouragement to new believers.
4. **They try to demoralize the Christian workers by attacking or killing a few.** We should make a temporary slowdown of our work during opposition so as to avoid confrontation. After the persecution ceases, we should go in full strength. This might be a temporary setback, but the final victory will be ours.

### **The Results of Persecution:**

1. Unity has developed among various denominations and missions, both locally and nationally, because of persecution.
2. The Catholics and Protestants are now able to come together and understand better how to face the militants and the government's direct or indirect support.
3. Greater interest is being generated among ordinary Christians and church members for missionary work. Persecution has awakened the sleeping churches.
4. More zeal is now seen among the field workers. Most of the evangelists and missionaries have taken the persecution as a challenge.
5. The Christian religion has been recognized as one of the major established religions of India. It is no longer a foreign religion.
6. Common people in India are now interested to know more about the Christian faith as they hear about persecution.

## Persecution and the Great Commission - 3

### How to face and respond to persecution:

1. Teach the new believers about Christian suffering. Prepare the Christians to face persecution. Let them know that they must face suffering for their faith. Their call to follow Jesus is to “take up their cross and follow Him” (Luke 9:23).
2. Be willing to suffer with the new believers. As Christian workers, we must suffer with the people. We should not try to run away at the time of persecution. We should set the example. Sometimes, for security reasons the missionary leader or pastor must move into a safe place, but always keep connected to the persecuted people with constant encouragement and needed help.
3. Be sensitive to the cultural and religious feelings of the public. While preaching the gospel, we should not invite opposition and persecution by using insensitive language that would hurt the religious feelings of the public. Even in telling the truth, we must be wise and tactful and speak in love. However, we cannot compromise the uniqueness of Christ and the gospel.
4. Be wise and avoid confrontation. When there is opposition and persecution, we should not go for confrontation. Christians are a minority, and therefore we must be extremely careful. We cannot afford to fight against the majority people nor with the Hindu officials. It is better to go slow while there is persecution. Let us be humble and wait for our God to take the vengeance and do the justice.
5. Follow the law of the land. We must file a FIR (First Information Report) with the local police station as soon as an attack has happened. We should cooperate with the police and government officials in their investigation. When they refuse to book an FIR, insist on it and try to bring pressure on the police officer to get the FIR booked.
6. Get the support of the public. Try to get the support of the common people, like the provision store worker, milkman, bank officer, post man, and school teachers. At times of persecution these people, because of friendship, will support us. It's good to have some political friends and some non-Christian friends, particularly among the Muslims.
7. Strive for and be willing to suffer for the protection of the new believers. Protecting the new believers should be the top priority. The Christian workers should fight for their rights. In return, the new believers will protect the Christian worker. They need each other in the field while they undergo persecution.
8. Pray and mobilize prayer support. We need the prayer support of Christians locally, nationally, and internationally. We should commit ourselves and the believers to the care of the Lord. We should pray and believe that the Lord will fight for us. As the Lord promised to Moses, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again” (Exodus 14:13).

## The Mark of Christ's Disciple - 1

**Introduction:** Jesus' disciples are to bear a distinguishing characteristic – that we love one another.

Jn. 13:34-35

1. What is the mark of a true disciple? It is love.
2. What is the result of our love? All men will know that we are God's disciples.

### I. Christ's disciples are commanded to love all people.

- A. It is a global concern. 1 Thess. 3:12
- B. We are created in the image of God, who loves all mankind. Gn. 1:26
- C. Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan teaches us to love others. Luke 10:30-37
- D. We are to love all Christians - We are to "do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of God." 1 Jn. 3:11, Galatians 6:10

### II. God is the source of our love.

- A. God is love. 1 Jn. 4:8
- B. God loves us in spite of our sinfulness. Rom. 5:8-10
- C. We should love others because God first loved us. 1 Jn. 4:19
- D. Love found its supreme expression in Jesus' self-sacrifice on the cross. 1 Jn. 4:10
- E. Because God is love, love is the essence of being a Christian. Mt. 22:37-39
- F. Love is the fulfillment of the law. Rom. 13:8-10
- G. By God's Spirit living in us we can experience God's love in our hearts, along with all the virtues associated with His love. 1 Cor. 13:4-7
- H. Because God loves us He will occasionally disciplines us. Heb. 12:6-11
- I. Nothing can separate us from God's love. Rom. 8:31-39

### III. Some misconceptions about love and Christian unity:

- A. Organizational oneness has often been mistaken for spiritual unity. Some are united organizationally but not spiritually.
- B. Separatist purity has often been mistaken for spiritual unity.
  1. Just as organizational unity is not necessarily spiritual unity, organizational division is not necessarily spiritual division.
  2. In spite of denominational differences we should have unity based on our love from God.
  3. Denominationalism: Christians in some denominations are very close to one another, but they fail to love those outside their denomination.
  4. Cults: There are cult groups who claim to have God's love, but their love is faulty because their doctrine is erroneous.

### IV. True spiritual unity and love result in a united, pure, loving Church.

1. Such a church will be an orderly church Col. 2:5
2. Such a church will enjoy sincere joy and warm community. Rom. 12:9-16
3. Such a church will exemplify acts of service to others. Galatians 5:13
4. Francis Schaeffer said "Truth without love is not truth. And love without truth is not love."

## The Mark of Christ's Disciple – 2

*(This lesson is a continuation of the previous one.)*

### V. How to build good relationships based on God's love:

- A. We should ask for forgiveness without delay for any wrongs we commit. James 5:16
1. Doctrinal problems don't divide; love problems do.
  2. Avoid bitter criticism of others: your spouse, friends, fellow workers, and believers. Phil. 4:8
- B. Forgive one another. 2 Cor. 2:7
1. Christ forgave and justified us. Rom. 5:9
  2. As Christ forgave us, we are to forgive others. Col. 3:13
- C. We are to demonstrate forgiveness in disagreements. Mt. 5:25-26, 1 Cor. 6:1-8
1. Believers should seek to be at peace with others. 1 Cor. 16:11
  2. People of the world are willing to profit at the expense of others; this should not be true of believers.
- D. There is a place for loving confrontation.
1. We are to speak the truth of God in love. Eph. 4:12
  2. The Apostle Paul told the believers in Corinth to confront a sinner in their group with his sin. We are not to compromise God's holiness. 1 Cor. 5:1-5
  3. After correcting a believer, we are to forgive him and to reaffirm our love for him. 2 Cor. 2:5-8
  4. Christian correction is an opportunity for restoring a sinner back into fellowship with the body of Christ.

### Conclusion: What is the mark of the disciple?

Luke 15

1. It is God's love in us, observable by our acts of service and in the unity of the believers.
2. The result of this love is that the world will believe in Christ.
3. We are to be a loving Church in an unloving world.

## The true Disciple of Jesus Christ - 1

**Introduction:** Jesus taught and preached to great crowds of people. But he devoted most of His time on earth teaching a small, select group of disciples. What are the characteristics of a true disciple of Jesus Christ?

1. The crowd followed Jesus for bread, miracles, healing, and deliverance.  
Were all the people in the crowd true disciples? Jn. 6:24-27, Jn. 6:66-68
2. There were many witnesses of the resurrected Jesus, including "more than 500 of the brothers at the same time." Were all of these true disciples? 1 Cor. 15:4
3. There were twelve who traveled with Jesus for three years.
4. Three of the twelve were especially close to Jesus. Mt. 17:1
5. There was one disciple especially close to Jesus who later took care of Jesus' mother. Jn. 21:7, 21-22

- I. True disciples love Jesus above anyone or anything else.** Luke 14:26
  - A. Jesus emphasizes this theme with a strong comparison. Mt. 10:37
    1. In comparison with love for Jesus, other loves are like hate.
    2. Jesus is saying that the disciple values his family less than he does Jesus.
    3. We must take care of our family or we are denying our faith. 1 Tim. 5:8
  - B. No other love must rival that of our love for Jesus. Luke 14:20
    1. We must make Christ the priority of our lives. Phil. 3:7-8
    2. The disciples gave up their personal lives to follow Him. Lk. 5:11
  - C. Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac is an example of such love. Gen. 22:9-12
  - D. We will be rewarded if we have our priorities in place. Mk. 10:28-30
- II. The disciple denies self and takes up the cross.** Luke 14:27
  - A. In times past, the cross meant the death of self but today many interpret taking up the cross as a means of self advancement. Mt. 10:38-39, 16:24; Mk. 8:34
  - B. Your burden leads you to the death of your ego. Mk. 8:34-35
  - C. You take up your cross each day. Luke 9:23
  - D. The world considers the cross foolishness and is an enemy of the cross. 1 Cor. 1:18, Phil. 3:18
- III. The disciple renounces all that he possesses.** Luke 14:33 (Mk. 10:21)
  - A. We are not owners of our bodies and our possessions; we are stewards of them. Rom. 12:1-2, Lk. 18:29-30
  - B. The young rich man lacked one thing. (His material possessions were more important to him than his love for God.) Mk. 10:21
  - C. Jesus exhorts us to seek first the kingdom of God. Mt. 6:33
  - D. Paul renounces everything which is in conflict with Jesus. Phil. 2:8-10

## The True Disciple of Jesus Christ – 2

(This lesson is a continuation of the previous one).

- IV. The disciple remains in the Word.** Jn. 8:31
- A. Remain implies perseverance, like we should have in marriage. Gal. 5:1
  - B. He who begins (only) will not be saved; it is he who finishes who will be saved. Heb. 12:1-3
  - C. The disciple stands firm, even when the master is away. Phil. 1:27
  - D. The disciple is not frightened by those who oppose him. Phil. 1:28
- V. The disciple shows his love for God by loving others.**
- A. Love was the mark of the Christians. I Jn. 4:7-8
  - B. There are three Greek words for the word, “love:” “eros,” “philio,” and “agape.” Jn. 13:35
    - 1. Agape: selfless love
    - 2. Philio: brotherly love
    - 3. Eros: physical love
  - C. God’s love in us produces in us love for others. Gal. 5:13-14
- VI. The disciple bears much fruit.** Jn. 15:8
- A. The disciple must be pruned to bear more fruit. Jn. 15:2
  - B. He who bears no fruit will be condemned. Jn. 15:6
  - C. We should produce fruit that lasts. Jn. 15:16
  - D. The fruit of the Spirit is evident in our transformed lives. Gal. 5:22-25; 6:1-5
- VII. The disciple runs with perseverance the race which God has set before him.** Heb. 12:1
- A. The disciple finds strength and courage from the Lord. Joshua 1:9
  - B. We fight the good fight; we finish the race, we keep the faith. I Tim. 6:12
  - C. The disciple walks as Christ walked. I Jn. 2:6
- Conclusion:** The paradox is that disciples die to self to live for Christ.
- 1. He who seeks to keep his life will lose it. Mt.10:39
  - 2. He who loses his life for Jesus will find it. Mk. 8:35
  - 3. He who follows must weigh the cost. Lu. 14:28
  - 4. Illustration: The seed that falls into the ground. Jn. 12:24

## Strategic Prayer and Intercession - 1

### Binding the Strongman and Demolishing the Strongholds

*The following three lessons are excerpted from Chapter 1 of Dr. S. D. Ponraj's book, "Strategies for Church Planting Movement," with some editing for the sake of condensing the information. While Dr. Ponraj was writing about prayer as relating specifically to Church Planting Movements (CPM), everything he presents is valuably applicable as well to all Great Commission ministry.*

**Introduction:** CPM starts and is sustained by strategic prayer and intercession. Nothing can take the place of prayer and intercession in CPM. CPM should be saturated in prayer.

#### Twofold Command: To Intercede and to Disciple

The Lord Jesus has commanded us, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matt. 9:37, 38). The second command is what we call the Great Commission, where Jesus commanded us, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19). To my understanding, both are part of the Great Commission.

We must note here the priority that is set. Intercession and proclamation go together, but first comes intercession for the people and then the proclamation of the gospel and making disciples. This priority should be kept if we want to be effective in CPM. Unless we pray for the place where we are sent and the people to whom we are sent, we cannot see a breakthrough. Unless we are faithful to intercede for a particular people group or a particular geographical location, we have no right to proclaim the gospel.

#### Prayer as Mission Strategy

"Prayer releases God's power for mission to the unreached," says John Robb, a prayer mobilization around the world.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, he writes, "Prayer, at its very heart, is a linking activity. First, prayer links us with God to receive His power and direction as we pray for the world and carry out our own ministries. Second, as we pray for the unreached world, it links us with particular unreached people groups and the Christian workers laboring among them. It links our efforts and their efforts to God in His omnipotence, without whose help all such efforts ultimately are in vain."<sup>2</sup> Such an understanding of prayer will revolutionize our mission strategy.

Dawson Trotman, the founder of the Navigators, said it best: "Prayer is not *preparation* for the great work; it *is* the great work." To belittle the importance of prayer and all that it entails (that is, commitment, repentance, waiting on God, seeking his will, and offering supplications and intercessions) is to fail to recognize our total dependence on God for His mission.

In the midst of all our busy planning, there is the danger of missing the vital link of prayer between God and the people with whom we are working. Such a danger should be carefully avoided as otherwise the movement will be arrested.

#### Prayer as a Strategic Spiritual Resource

Prayer should be considered as a strategic spiritual resource for CPM. It is unfortunate that often prayer is concerned only with "domestic problems" and "shopping lists." Thus, our church and house prayer meetings follow an agenda with problems and needs of individuals and families rather than the mission fields and unreached peoples. Praying for the sick and the needy is needed, but we should give priority to the Lord's command "to pray for workers to be sent to the harvest field."

The Apostle Paul considered prayer as a strategic spiritual resource in his missionary work. While instructing the Ephesians to put on the whole armor of God, he concluded by exhorting them to pray (Eph. 6:10, 11, 18, 19).

Paul had included prayer as a spiritual weapon in spiritual warfare. Thus, prayer should be considered as a spiritual resource for breaking the strongholds of the evil powers to deliver people from the hold of evil and then form them into a church.

## Strategic Prayer and Intercession - 2

### Biblical Models for Strategic Intercession

All great men and women of the Bible were great intercessors. They not only prayed for themselves but also for others. Their prayers were strategic and well focused on the challenges that they faced and persisted in their prayers till they achieved their mission. Here are some models from the Bible.

*Abraham interceded for Sodom and Gomorrah.* God answered his prayers and delivered Lot and his family. For this reason Abraham was called a “friend of God” (Gen. 18:16-33). Today we need many “friends of God” to intercede for the cities and villages of India and around the world, so that God will restrain from destroying them.

*Moses interceded for the people of Israel.* Moses stood between God and the people of Israel, so that He would not destroy them (see Exodus 32). The Lord relented and did not destroy the people of Israel.

*King Jehoshaphat's intercessory prayer.* Jehoshaphat was in a desperate predicament. Vast armies of two enemy nations, Moab and Ammon, came to fight. Judah was a small nation with a small army. Jehoshaphat was not ready for the war. In this context, we see that “Jehoshaphat resolved to seek the Lord” (2 Chron. 20:3, 4). He called an assembly of people for a time of united prayer. He declared fasting and prayer. He used prayer and intercession as a strategic weapon instead of fighting a war. It was against his helplessness and hopelessness that he prayed, “For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you” (2 Chron. 20:12).

King Jehoshaphat's prayer was focused on God and not on the armies of Ammon and Moab. It was God-centered and God-focused prayer. Often we become weak in prayer because we focus our prayers on problems and needs, and not on God who is able to solve the problems and provide for our needs.

*Nehemiah was a great intercessor.* He started his mission on his knees. He not only prayed for himself but also for his people (Nehemiah 1:6).

*Jesus Christ—the greatest intercessor.* Our Lord Jesus Christ set the example when he prayed and interceded for His disciples. We read in the passage that we generally call “the high priestly prayer:” “My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. Sanctify them by the truth” (Jn. 17:15-19). At the Garden of Gethsemane He prayed with sweat that was like drops of blood. (Luke 22:44)

### Prayer Brings Breakthroughs among the Unreached Peoples

When prayer is used as a spiritual resource and a spiritual weapon, we experience a breakthrough among the unreached people groups. That is the way the Church Planting Movement is developed. The breakthrough that we have seen in Bihar is a good model for this. For several decades, the state was closed to the gospel. In mission history, Bihar was known as the graveyard of missions and missionaries. It was basically, as the Apostle Paul wrote, “the powers of darkness blinding the eyes of the people so they cannot see the light of the gospel.”

This was explained by Rev. D. Samraj, a senior missionary, who worked in Bihar for 17 years:

*“We often felt and experienced the powers of darkness that had engulfed Bihar and we also felt the presence of the demonic forces the moment we entered the state. Many Christian leaders and prayer warriors who came to Bihar for ministry and prayers also had the same experience. It was very difficult even to pray some times. Spiritually, Bihar was considered one of the darkest places in India.”<sup>4</sup>*

For several decades, God's people around the world had been praying for a breakthrough in Bihar. Some of them had never visited the state, and others had worked there but had not seen any tangible results, but they kept the intercession going for many years. Finally, their prayers were answered and tears were accepted and a breakthrough was seen. In 1990, the door for the Gospel was opened and people responded to the Gospel. Today Bihar is wide open for the Gospel, and several Church Planting Movements are taking place among the most unreached people groups. Thus our prayers are never wasted. God might delay but never denies, and He will answer.

## Strategic Prayer and Intercession - 3

### Spiritual Mapping for Strategic Intercession

Spiritual Mapping is the process of discerning strongholds or diagnosing the root cause of any situation, but usually problematic conditions with spiritual sensitivity for the purpose of demolishing and destroying satanic or demonic strongholds and deploying God's strongholds to deliver souls for the fulfillment of their redemptive purpose.

Spiritual mapping is the most powerful and effective tool in CPM and community transformation. It empowers an entire community to look at and understand the spiritual dynamics in the area, the effect they have on the residents, and what must be done to reverse them. Such a spiritual activity will open the door for evangelism and church planting. Thus, the purpose of spiritual mapping is to develop a Church Planting Movement among the resistant and unreached people groups.

A spiritual mapping campaign starts with a team. By their field research, they will be able to provide the information for the intercessors. Such information helps the intercessors to do prayer walks around the strongholds of evil powers and to do strategic intercession.

### Keeping Balance between Strategic Intercession and Effective Evangelism

The greatest challenge is how to maintain a balance between strategic intercession and effective evangelism, because we need both for an effective Church Planting Movement to develop. There is a danger of overemphasizing one over the other. While some are called specifically for intercession and others for church planting, it is important that the church planters also should be intercessors. I believe that we should follow what Leonard Ravenhill, the British revivalist, had said: "Pray as if you don't believe in work and work as if you don't believe in prayer."

We see a good biblical model in Moses, who stood on the mountain, lifted his hand up, and interceded for the people to win the war against the Amalekites (Exodus 17:9-13). Another good model is found in Nehemiah, who set people on the wall, as one worked and one held the sword (Neh. 4:16-18). In the New Testament, the Apostles set their priority right when they decided "we will devote ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word" (Acts 6:4).

Keeping a balance between intercession and proclamation is important for starting and sustaining a CPM. It might take a team of workers who can share themselves between prayer and church planting. But the person who leads the Movement should be a person of strategic prayer and intercession.

### Some Cautions for the Intercessors

Steve Cochrane, a top leader of Youth With a Mission who served in India for several years, gives the following cautions to the intercessors. They are worth considering.<sup>5</sup>

- 1) We should never see strategic intercession as a substitute to daily, faithful evangelism and Christian service. With all the emphasis on doing strategic-level intercession, there can almost be a feeling that this is all we need to do.
- 2) We should avoid an arrogant attitude in our spirit. We need to guard against it. When we are in our prayer closets and prayer conferences, we rightly feel "spiritually 10 feet tall" in terms of our authority in Christ in warfare, but we must balance this with the "humility of Christ" also received in intercession.
- 3) As we wage spiritual warfare, we need to be careful not to miss the very real needs of people in their context. Effective prayer should enable us to see strongholds broken, but it never releases us from a compassion and heartfelt brokenness for the people around us.

### End Notes

<sup>1</sup> John D. Robb, *Focus! The Power of People Group Thinking*, Mission Educational Books, 1994. p.100,101.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp.98,99.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp.100,101.

<sup>4</sup> Samuel Devavaram Samraj, *The Transformation in Bihar State: My Reflections on the Present Move of the Holy Spirit in Bihar State*. (Unpublished Materials)

<sup>5</sup> S.D. Ponraj and John D. Robb, *Transform Your World Through Prayer*, Mission Educational Books, 1999.

## God's Equipping for the Mission: His Gifts to the Saints

**Introduction:** God gives His children special talents and abilities to serve Him and others and to complete His kingdom work. The Bible refers to these abilities as gifts of the Spirit.

### I. The Spirit of God reveals Himself differently in the Old Testament than in the New Testament:

IN THE OLD TESTAMENT	IN THE NEW TESTAMENT
The Spirit takes hold of a man temporarily.	The Spirit takes hold of a man permanently.
The work of the Spirit is partial.	The work of the Spirit is total.
Priests, judges, prophets, and kings are the mediators between God and men.	Jesus is now our Mediator, He who is our Judge and Eternal King.

### II. The first and greatest gift of God is salvation. Rom. 6:23, 8:9-11

### III. There are four lists in the New Testament of the gifts of the Spirit given by God to believers.

Rom. 12:4-8	1 Cor. 12:4-31; 13:3; 14:26	Ephesians 4:4-16	1 Peter 4:10-11
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(In the table below, the "R" stands for the Romans list, the "C" for the 1 Cor. list, and so forth.)

1. Prophet (Exhortation)	RCEP	10. Healing	C
2. Teacher (Knowledge) (Wisdom)	RCE	11. Discernment of spirits	C
3. Helps (Service)	RC	12. Tongues	C
4. Liberality (Generosity)	RC	13. Interpretation of tongues	C
5. Administration	RC	14. Song	C
6. Apostle (Missionary)	CE	15. Revelation	C
7. Mercy	R	16. Martyr	C
8. Faith	C	17. Pastor (Shepherd)	E
9. Miracles	C	18. Evangelist	E

### IV. Analysis of the four lists of the gifts of the Holy Spirit:

#### A. 1 Cor. 12:4-11: "Wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, tongues, interpretation"

- In Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, he was addressing (and trying to correct) a spiritual carnality with an excessive emphasis on the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 3:3).
- This is the longest of the four lists of gifts. (The list is repeated in a modified form in Rom. 12:28.)
- Paul states that the most valuable of the gifts is prophecy 1 Cor. 14:1
- But even greater than prophecy is love. 1 Cor. 13:1 & 1 Cor. 13:13

#### B. Rom. 12:6-8: "Prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, generosity, directorship, mercy."

- In this letter, Paul is addressing a solid church, well founded on faith, and well organized.
- He is not correcting here; he is giving direction.
- He writes that the gifts are given according to God's grace given to each of us.

#### C. Eph. 4:11-12: "Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers"

- In Ephesians, Paul is talking about ministries of the Spirit.
- As with the Roman believers, Paul's goal is to edify, not to correct.
- They are to equip the saints for building up the body of Christ (the believers). Eph. 4:12

#### D. 1 Peter 4:7-11: "Speaking, serving"

- He makes a distinction between gifts of the word and gifts of service.
- Some feel that Peter is including hospitality (in vs. 9) as a spiritual gift.
- Gifts are for serving others to the glory of God. 1 Peter 4:11

### V. Some general observations about spiritual gifts:

- The gifts of the Spirit are an important subject: there are over 100 Bible verses about them.
- With some gifts there is a danger of pride, but we must remember that the gifts are a grace.
- The gifts are to be used for the edification of other believers and are useful for all.
- God distributes the gifts as He wishes.
- No believer has all the gifts, but each believer has at least one.
- There are more than twenty gifts listed. The Church is not lacking in any. 1 Cor. 1:7
- There is diversity of gifts and functions, but the unity of the body is emphasized.
- All the gifts are to be used in the context of love.
- The four lists of gifts are not meant to be exhaustive. Each is different from the others. The conclusion we can draw from this diversity is that these are just some—but not all—of the gifts of the Spirit.

**Conclusion:** The Holy Spirit has given special abilities to His children to enable them to edify one another and to do His kingdom work. God gives us these special gifts to help us complete His Great Commission.

## Contextualizing the Gospel Message

*This lesson is excerpted and condensed from Strategies for Church Planting Movement by Dr. S. D. Ponraj. Further teaching on Contextualization is presented in the "Principles of the Great Commission" course.*

**Introduction:** Contextualization of the Gospel is the communication of God's truth in such a way that people will understand it in their context, no matter what their context is. Contextualization is making concepts or ideals relevant in a given situation. In reference to Christian practices, it is an effort to express the never changing Word of God in ever changing modes of relevance.

1. The Need for Contextualization: Contextualization involves a meaningful and relevant communicating of the Gospel to meet the needs of the whole man and his society. In other words, the Gospel has to be made relevant to the people's context in which they live.
2. A meaningful contextualization of the Gospel should cover at least three areas of Christian mission:
  - a. What is the central message of the Bible and what is peripheral to that centre?
  - b. The interpretation of the theology of the Gospel,
  - c. The expression of the content of the gospel, and (3) the realization of the response to the Gospel.

### Jesus' Example of Communication in Context

1. Jesus was an effective communicator. He was able to communicate to different kinds of people the same simple message of the Kingdom of God.
2. He did not change the content of the message but the forms of communication.
  - a. With Jewish religions leaders, His approach was more reasoning and logical. Jesus talked about re-birth and said, 'you must be born again.' It was an effective dialogue method.
  - b. With the Samaritan Woman Jesus' approach was simple and related to her daily need for water. From this context Jesus helped her to realize her spiritual need for "the living water." Thus Jesus communicated to her felt need. It was effective and she responded.
  - c. To the fishermen Jesus said "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." With farmers He spoke about soil quality, sowing seed and harvesting. Each group understood His contextualized message and was able to respond to Him.

### Paul's Example of Communication in Context

1. The Apostle Paul was a good communicator, and even though he was not as eloquent as his co-worker Apollos yet he was able to identify himself with his hearers (2 Cor. 10:10; I Cor. 2:1-5). He says: "To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews... to those outside the law I became as one outside the law... that I might win those outside the law... I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (I Cor. 9:20-22).
2. Paul used different patterns of approach to communicate the Gospel to different people. Let us notice some of these patterns.
  - a. First, the pattern of using the Old Testament Scripture: Paul went to synagogues to reach the Jewish people. His approach to the Synagogue community was in their own context. He used the Old Testament Scriptures because the Jews were familiar with the law and the prophecy of the Old Testament (Acts 13:16-43, Acts 28:23).
  - b. Secondly, the pattern of using the local religious culture: Paul approached the gentiles or the Greeks from the point of the Greek culture. For example, at Athens Paul interpreted the Gospel using quotations from Greek philosophers (Acts 17). Paul was able to appreciate their religiosity and thus identified with their belief and practices and communicated the gospel in their context. Thus Paul became "as one without the law" to reach the Greeks and the Romans.
  - c. Third, the pattern of using a spiritual power encounter: In Acts 19 we read about Paul approaching a different group of Gentiles. They were animists or popular religious people at Ephesus. They believed in supernatural powers, such as magic. Therefore Paul approached them with the demonstration of power (Acts 19:11, 12).
3. The Apostle Paul in the above three examples identified with the needs of his hearers.

**Conclusion:** Whether we are ministering among elite businessmen in Mumbai or with uneducated villagers in the jungle we must continually seek God's help for communicating the Gospel in the language and cultural terms (the context) that will be understood by the local people.

## Indigenous Leadership Development

*This lesson and the next are excerpted and condensed from Strategies for Church Planting Movement by Dr. S. D. Ponraj. Further teaching on Indigenous Leadership Training is presented in the "Principles of the Great Commission" course.*

**Introduction:** One of the most important elements for the completion of the Great Commission is the training and equipping of indigenous leaders. The Bible has much to say about this essential ministry.

### 1. The Importance of Training Local Leadership

- a. A church planter should carefully resist the temptation to bring outside leadership to newly-formed congregations. Instead, he should concentrate on developing local leadership.
- b. The missionary should be constantly on the alert to discover the potentialities of his new believers, select the future leaders carefully, and give them sustained systematic training.
- c. There are at least two kinds of leadership to be trained and developed in each local congregation. The first is that of elders and deacons and they are the voluntary leaders.
- d. The second kind of leadership is that of the evangelists and pastors, the supported leaders. As the work develops and more congregations are established there may be a need for more advanced and experienced leaders, e.g. superintendent or bishop; such leadership needs can be met utilizing the existing leadership if and when the need arises.
- e. Continuous and constant training must be given from the beginning of the formation of the new congregation. Also from time to time advanced training should be arranged for senior leaders. Although the preliminary training should be given to all interested people in the congregation, advanced and special training should be given for specific ministries, e.g. children's work, youth work, women's work, pastoral work and evangelism. Serious thought should be given to the type of training needed and to the method(s) that will be followed in the training program.

**2. The Importance of Lay Leadership:** In the Context of evangelism and church planting lay men, women and lay leaders play a very important part.

**3. The Importance of Training Ordained People:** All branches of the Church practice some form of ordination or recognition of leaders for fulfilling certain leadership responsibilities in the local church. Recognized or "commended" leaders are needed for proper function of the local church.

### 4. The Apostle Paul's Model of Indigenous Leadership Development

- a. Paul was always on the lookout for those who could assume responsibility in the local church among those he saw turning to Christ as a result of his ministry. Acts 14:23
- b. Often he stayed only a short time, but when he left a congregation he was able to commend the new believers to the care of its local leaders. He did not have any paid agents or workers but rather depended on unpaid local leaders.
- c. Baptism, instruction of new believers, and discipline in the church became the responsibility of the newly appointed elders and deacons who were taught to rely on the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Acts 20:32
- d. The basic text for training leadership is 2 Timothy 2:2, when Paul instructs young Timothy: "And what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to reach others also." Here Paul instructs Timothy to train men who will in turn train others, i.e., to train "reproducing leaders."
- e. Paul not only instructs others but also sets forth an example in his training of young men like Timothy, Titus and others. These trained men trained other local church elders. We read of Titus appointing elders in every church (Titus 1:5).

## Leadership Qualifications and Development

**Introduction:** Jeff Reed (of BILD) gives the qualifications of the Apostle Paul and then his training methods in developing leaders for the newly formed churches. Every senior pastor and missionary should be qualified as the Apostle Paul and must follow his methods in training their "Timothys," i.e. their junior / emerging leaders.

### 1. Apostle Paul's Leadership Qualifications

- a. Age – Paul was a mature adult, at least middle aged, when he began his apostolic leadership.
- b. Experience – Age and experience go together. Paul was a scholar of the Law in his early years. After his conversion he was a disciple in the church at Jerusalem then was three years in Arabia. Later he was discipled by Barnabas and was part of the Antioch ministry team.
- c. Study in terms of mastery of Scriptures – He mastered the Old Testament and the teachings of Christ. He was a great theologian of his time. He was able to interpret the Old Testament Scriptures meaningful to the context (Acts 22:3).
- d. Life's achievement: In 15 to 20 years, Paul was able to evangelize the then known world of Europe and Asia Minor. Though he planted only a few churches, his church planting was in very strategic locations. Paul's writings were also a great life achievement.
- e. Effective ministry: The Apostle Paul was an effective missionary, church planter, pastor, Bible teacher and writer. That God had anointed his ministry was evident as people responded to his preaching, teaching and writing.
- f. Good testimony: Paul writes, "It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ is not known, so that I would not be building on someone else' foundation" (Rom. 15:20). Paul asked people to imitate him (1 Cor. 4:15, 16).
- g. Model family life: We do not know much about his family but he was able to give effective teaching on the Christian family – to husbands and wives (Eph. 5:22, 25) and to children (Eph. 6:1). Paul had a high standard for Christian family life.
- h. Good character: Paul's writings reveal that he was gentle, kind-hearted and loving to his colleagues (fellow workers) and with the people who came to faith through his ministry.
- i. Integrity: Paul was a man of integrity as he testified before the Sanhedrin: "My brothers, I have fulfilled my duty to God in all good conscience to this day" (Acts 23:1). To the Ephesian elders, Paul testified of his innocence before all men (Acts 20:26, 27).
- j. Good stewardship: The Apostle Paul practiced good stewardship of his life – his time, talents, gifts and all the resources. He realized that everything in life is given by God by His grace and that he should be a good steward of it all (1 Cor. 15:9-11).
- k. Willingness to sacrifice: Paul understood his call to mission as a call to suffering (Acts 9:15, 16; 2 Cor. 6:4-7).

### 2. Leadership Development for fulfilling the Great Commission (italics are by Jeff Reid)

- a. *Leadership training is primarily a deposit to faithful men, not an academic achievement accomplished by young men who are only marginally involved in ministry.* It means we don't judge the leadership in terms of certificates or degree but by one's character. Training should only be given to those whose life is a model which younger generations can emulate.
- b. *Leadership Training takes place over a long period of time.* Paul trained Timothy over 15 to 20 long years of association. Leadership development takes time and there is no short-cut.
- c. *Leadership training should take place within the context of ministry.* We should not send our future leaders to years of theological training outside India. All training programs should take place within the context of the ministry in on-site training.
- d. *Leadership Training is both ecclesiological and missiological in nature, and should never take place outside of the agenda of establishing and multiplying local churches.* Leaders should be trained and developed within the church context and by the church and for the church but also for the purpose of evangelism and church planting and mission work.
- e. *Leadership training should be a balance of ministry experience, personal progress in the faith, and a mastery of the Scriptures.* All these three aspects are important for developing leaders for the local churches and should each receive equal importance.
- f. *Leadership training is a responsibility of local churches.* We can train leaders in the Bible Seminary but always in close relationship with the local church. We should not dislocate the leader from his church. He is accountable to his church and not to the Bible School.
- g. *Leadership training's assessment and recognition forms must center on faithfulness and progress in one's life and ministry, not primarily in academic accomplishments.* We can allow a leader to fail in his or her academics but not in his or her faithfulness and progress in life and ministry. The assessment criteria should be one's character and not a certificate.

## God's Promises to His Disciples: Ephesians 1 and 2

1. **God chose us to be adopted as His sons.** Eph. 1:4-5  
  - a. He calls us to live holy lives. I Thess. 4:7
  - b. He predestined us to be in His likeness. Rom. 8:29-30
  - c. He chose us to be His sons and heirs. Rom. 8:15-17
2. **God promises redemption to His disciples.** Eph. 1:7-8  
  - a. Man can choose which master he will serve, either sin or obedience. Rom. 6:16
  - b. Some choose to be slaves to sin. 2 Pet. 2:19
  - c. Man is unable to redeem himself or another. Ps. 49:7-9
  - d. Jesus sets us free. Jn. 8:36
  - e. We can be redeemed from our sin by God's grace. Rom. 3:23
  - f. God redeems us from the devil. 2 Tim. 2:25-26
  - g. His salvation is totally undeserved, yet He redeems us by His mercy. Titus 3:5
3. **We have God's seal of the Holy Spirit.** Eph. 1:13  
  - a. As God's children, and out of our deep gratitude and love for God, we can offer to give Him our lives as a voluntary slave. Dt. 15:16-17
  - b. To those who overcome He will give us some of the hidden manna, and also a white stone with a new name written on it. Rev. 2:17
  - c. In God we are spiritually "circumcised." (God's Holy Spirit puts His seal on our hearts, similar to the physical circumcision that marks some humans.) Col. 2:11
4. **We have the promise of God's inheritance.** Eph. 1:14  
  - a. We inherit from God the riches of His great grace. Eph. 1:18
  - b. We are God's sons and heirs through Jesus Christ. Gal. 4:7
  - c. Those who love God are heirs of His kingdom. James 2:5
  - d. Through our inheritance we are made better than the angels. Heb. 1:4
5. **We have the promise of God's strength.** Eph. 1:19-20  
  - a. To resist sin Psalm 119:11
  - b. To recognize and declare sin Micah 3:8
  - c. To be God's witness Ac. 1:8
  - d. To be righteous Is. 41:10
  - e. To manifest His power in our weakness 2 Cor. 12:9-10
6. **We have the promise of good works for God.** Eph. 2:10  
  - a. Christ gave His life for us, that we might do good works to bring Him glory. Titus 2:14
  - b. We are to let the light of our good works shine before men. Matt. 5:16
  - c. We can spur other disciples on to good works. Heb. 10:24
7. **We have the promise of being drawn near to God.** Eph. 2:13  
  - a. We can approach the throne of grace with confidence. Heb. 4:15-16
  - b. As we draw near to God, He draws near to us. James 4:8
8. **We have the promise of being part of God's building.** Eph. 2:21-22  
  - a. God makes us to be as "living stones" in His spiritual house. 1 Pe. 2:5
  - b. Christ is the corner stone of this house. Eph. 2:20
9. **We have the promise of being God's dwelling place.** Eph. 2:22  
  - a. We are the "temple" of the Spirit of God. 1 Cor. 3:16
  - b. Our physical body is the temple of God. 1 Cor. 6:19-20
  - c. God lives with us and walks among us. 2 Cor. 6:16

## The Holiness of the Believer: God's Inheritance - 1

### Introduction:

Eph. 4:21-24

1. The word "holiness" is ambiguous (unclear / having more than one meaning) in the Christian setting.
2. There are many misunderstandings about holiness: Calvinists and Wesleyans, for example, disagree about its true essence.
3. Note the active verbs in the passage: (There are also verbs in the passive voice.)
  - To "put off" your old self
  - To "put on" the new self
  - To "bear"

### I. Attributes of holiness

- A. Holiness is the result of salvation Acts 15:11
  1. It is not a condition of salvation; we can come to God just as we are.
  2. It is the fruit of God's presence, a product, a result
- B. Holiness is the motive behind righteousness. I Tim. 6:11
  1. It is eternal - not temporary
  2. The world calls them virtues: Self-respect, Maturity, Discipline, Appreciation
- C. Holiness is the way to be like God> (It is good to want to be like God.) Eph. 5:1
  1. Some improper desires to be like God.
    - a) Adam and Eve sinned out of a selfish desire to be like God. Gen. 3:6
    - b) Many seek to live in sin and to escape punishment.
    - c) Many seek independence from God.
  2. Seeking holiness is to seek being like God. Gal. 2:20
    - a) Jesus came so that men could be selflessly (holy) like God.
    - b) Jesus provided a glorious deliverance from the hands of the enemy.
    - c) Holiness leads to a willful dependence on God.
      - (1) There is a manifestation of voluntary submission.
      - (2) There is a manifestation of voluntary service to God in righteousness and holiness.

### II. The measurement and composition of holiness

- A. The measuring sticks for holiness:
  1. Revelation:
    - a) Jesus Christ - the character of God Jn. 1:14
    - b) The Bible - the account of God Ps. 119:9
    - c) Conscience - God's law written on our hearts II Cor. 1:12
  2. Communion: the nearness of man to God
    - a) Vertical: Man with God - in a personal relationship I Jn. 1:3
    - b) Horizontal: Man with man - with mutual concern I Jn. 1:7
  3. Collaboration: the working relationship between man and God
    - a) Vertical: Man with God - in his divine plan Eph. 2:21-22
    - b) Horizontal: Man with man - in his human condition Acts 1:14, II Tim. 1:8
- B. Two ingredients of holiness (love in action)
  1. Grace - Love is the inspiration behind grace. I Jn. 4:8-10
  2. Truth - Action must be controlled by truth; God governs by truth. Ps. 26:3

## The Holiness of the Believer: God's Inheritance - 2

### III. Misunderstandings about the word, Holiness

- A. Holiness is not deliverance from all our sins, or even from the power of sin.
1. What holiness is not: Being holy (having holiness) doesn't mean we are "without sin."
  2. What holiness is:
    - a) *Being holy means sin no longer has control over us.*
    - b) *When we are holy we no longer need to sin; we have the will to do good.*
      - (1) We have Obedience - if we submit to Christ
      - (2) We have the Will - if we desire to do good
    - c) *When we choose to not be holy it is either: Rebellion (we do not submit to Christ) or Apathy (we do not desire to do good).*
- B. Holiness is not the deliverance from errors of judgment; it is the deliverance from the need to exercise judgment.
1. Having holiness does not mean we'll never again make mistakes.
  2. When we are holy Christ's character in us fills us with His grace toward others.
- C. Holiness is not deliverance from temptation, but from paralysis of failure.
1. It doesn't mean we will no longer be tempted.
  2. It does mean we will not be defeated by temptation.
- D. Holiness is not the deliverance from sickness and body weaknesses; it is freedom from sicknesses that might otherwise have come from lives of sin and disobedience.
1. Sickness is not necessarily the consequence of personal sin (though it can be).
  2. When we are holy we may still become sick, maybe even invalid, but God's grace in us will give us spiritual victory over the discouragement of sickness.
- E. Holiness is not deliverance from combat; it is deliverance from spiritual defeat.
- F. Holiness is not deliverance from the possibility of falling; it is deliverance from the inevitability of falling.
1. Being holy doesn't mean we will always choose the right and good.
  2. When we are holy we still have our free will, with the capacity to choose a path of sin and to fall into temptation. However, we now have the recourse to His power to keep us from falling.
- G. Holiness is not a "final destination" from which we can experience no further personal growth; it provides God's power for personal growth.
1. Having God's holiness doesn't mean we have reached a place from which we cannot grow further.
  2. Having God's holiness leads to self-discipline and healthy habits, which in turn lead to good health and growth.
- H. Holiness is not an arrival at the summit; it is a progressive descent.
1. Holiness is not a summit from which we can proudly claim to have "attained" or "arrived," with no higher path to pursue.
  2. Having God's holiness leads to a total and complete godly humility.
    - a) *It produces awareness that we are unworthy of His purity in us.*
    - b) *In God's holiness we become ashamed of the sinfulness of our hearts as compared with the light of His glorious holiness.*
    - c) *In God's holiness we recognize our depravity and our complete dependency on Him to produce any good fruit.*
    - d) *Instead of asking how we can reach the summit of holiness, we ought to ask how we can submit to Christ so that He can be lifted up through our lives.*

### Conclusion

1. Holiness is inherited from God; but this does not mean we are passive about being holy.
2. We are to claim God's holiness; we are to appropriate it through an exercise of our will. Phil. 3:12-14
3. He who called us is holy and says, "Be holy as I am holy." 1 Peter 1:15,16
4. We are a holy priesthood ... a holy nation. I Peter 2:5,9  
We are to "live holy and godly lives," as we "look forward to the day of God  
**and speed its coming.**" 2 Pet. 3:11-12

## The Holiness of the Believer: God's Offer

### Introduction

1. The theme of this study concerns God's offer of holiness in this present life.
2. Some religious groups teach that a life of holiness is reserved for an elite group.
  - Catholics teach that only those who have died can be declared saints.
  - Many Protestants deny the possibility of holiness while we live on this earth. They believe that Christ did not provide us with the capacity to be holy on the earth.
3. But the Bible says that we are to be: "blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation" Phil. 2:15

### I. Holiness of character is possible. Rom. 8:29

- A. It is the will of God that His children be transformed into the likeness of His son. Rom. 12:1-2
- B. Justification is a beginning, not an end.

### II. Christ came to the world to make holiness possible. Jn. 1:29

- A. It is the will of God that His people be freed from the power of sin. 2 Cor. 5:21
- B. By His death and resurrection He broke the power of sin. Rom. 6:2, 11, 14, 23; Heb. 9:26
- C. Thru Christ we can have righteousness, holiness and redemption. 1 Cor. 1:30

### III. The Spirit of God empowers the believer to overcome the law of sin and death. Rom. 8:1-3

- A. There are two biblical meanings for the word "law."
  1. The law of the Spirit – The essential principle that defines what is righteous and what isn't.
  2. The Mosaic Law – the legalistic code given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai.
- B. The law of the Spirit sets me free from the law of sin and death.

### IV. All spiritual forces against holiness were defeated. Col. 1:12-14

- A. When we are yielded to Jesus, we struggle against a defeated enemy.
- B. We follow Christ, our Lord, who has never lost a battle.
- C. When we fall, we know that it is because we did not follow His orders.
- D. I can still sin, but I am no longer a slave to sin nor under its bondage.

### V. Each believer has the potential for holiness. 1 Cor. 3:1-3

- A. The same "saints" were carnal. 1 Cor. 6:11
- B. When a person receives Christ and keeps his eyes on Him, he is "sanctified."
- C. But the "saint" can fall.
- D. Everything that is necessary for holiness is ours in Christ Jesus.

### VI. We are God's temple, filled with the Holy Spirit and holy (sanctified). 1 Cor. 3:16-17

- A. This is a present reality, not merely a future hope. 2 Cor. 6:16
- B. He who has the Spirit of God belongs to God; he who does not have the Spirit belongs to the world. Rom. 8:9
- C. We who are the temple of God are to be separate in our lifestyles from the people of this world who live in sin. 2 Cor. 6:17

### VII. The resources at the believer's disposition are unlimited. Col. 2:8-9

- A. In Christ we are free from the hollow and deceptive philosophies of this world.
- B. In Christ we have full power and authority over the old, sinful nature.

### Conclusion

1. The N.T. never teaches that we will be "without defect" on the earth, but it teaches us that we can be "blameless."
2. "Blameless" does not mean "without a defect."
3. Illustration: A young child wrote a letter to his father.
  - The letter was full of spelling and grammatical mistakes, poor handwriting, etc. In that technical sense it was defective, just as we can be spiritually defective by occasionally falling to temptation.
  - But the motive behind the letter was pure, and the love the child expressed was genuine. In that sense, the letter was blameless, just as we become blameless through Christ's forgiveness.
4. We become holy in living as a small child who depends on the Father, following Christ according to the Holy Spirit's direction.

## Holiness: God's Call

### Introduction:

Heb. 5:11 - 6:8

1. *We must make a distinction between justification and sanctification.*
2. *Justification: His gift, His sacrifice, His reconciliation, His washing*
3. *Sanctification: My offering, my sacrifice, my reconciliation, my washing*
4. *Too many believers are claiming the blessings of justification without living the holy life.*

### I. God calls His children to spiritual maturity.

Heb. 5:11-14

- A. Immature Christians are compared to children who can only drink milk.
  1. Some Christians never grow in their faith and in holiness of living.
  2. Just as little children are weak and dependent on others and are unable to stand against difficulties, some Christians remain spiritually weak; they never grow into spiritual maturity.
- B. Mature Christians are compared to adults who eat solid food.
  1. Mature Christians are able to "digest" spiritual solid food: the live in righteousness and holiness, and they are able to minister to other, weaker brothers.
  2. Mature Christians are able to stand in the face of temptation and of the devil's attacks.

### II. God calls His children to spiritual growth.

Heb. 6:1-3

- A. We are to forsake elementary teachings.
  1. There are good reasons not to dwell on the "elementary teachings."
  2. Foundational truths are only the beginning, the foundation. Once the foundation is laid we can progress to building the walls of a well-constructed spiritual house.
- B. We are to "go on to maturity."
  1. We are to grow spiritually and progress to what is perfect, to what is received
    - a) *Joy of new life*
    - b) *Acts that lead to life*
    - c) *The gift of selflessness*
    - d) *The life of purity*
    - e) *The ministry of healing*
    - f) *Reaching out to the condemned*
  2. When we have laid the foundation (with all its blessings), we can move on to the crucified life.

### III. God calls His children to faithfulness.

Heb. 6:4-8

- A. The sin of falling back into the old life has serious consequences.
- B. When one falls away from faith then returns to Christ, he is in essence crucifying Jesus all over again.
- C. Only the thirsty land which produces a crop useful to God will be blessed.

### Conclusion:

1. He who called you is holy and says, "Be holy as I am holy." 1 Peter 1:15,16
2. You are a holy priesthood ... a holy nation. 2:5,9
3. You ought to live holy and godly lives. 2 Peter 3:11

## The Great Commission and Christ's Return

Matthew 24:14

**Introduction:** *When will the Great Commission, given by Jesus to His disciples, be completed? In Matthew 24:14 Jesus tells us that "when this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come."*

- 1. Jesus said that we are to preach the good news of the kingdom in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, then the end will come.** Matt. 24:14
  - a. God's children have a glorious promise of eternal life in heaven with Jesus. Rev. 21:1-4
  - b. But before we go to our final reward, God has given us an assignment, to take His love and salvation to every people, tribe and nation. Matt. 28:19-20
- 2. How many nations (people groups) yet remain to receive a witness of God's kingdom?**
  - a. According to the Joshua Project ([www.joshuaproject.org](http://www.joshuaproject.org)) there are approximately 7,000 unreached people groups in the world today. Those groups make up approximately one-third of all the people in the world.
  - b. According to the Joshua Project there are 2,605 people groups in India today, of which 2,338 remain unreached. ("Unreached" means that fewer than 2% of the group are evangelical Christians.)
  - c. India has more unreached people groups than any other country in the world today.
- 3. The good news is that with God's help we are making great progress in our efforts to reach the world with the good news.**
  - a. 1,000 years ago, there were 270 unbelievers in the world for every Christian in the world.
  - b. 500 years ago, there were 85 unbelievers in the world for every Christian.
  - c. 100 years ago, there were 21 unbelievers in the world for every Christian.
  - d. Forty years ago, there were 13 unbelievers in the world for every Christian.
  - e. In 2010 there were only 7.3 unbelievers in the world for every Christian.
- 4. But there are still many who have not heard the good news of Jesus' love and salvation.**
  - a. There are 3,300 unreached Muslim people groups around the world, with 1.26 billion individuals.
  - b. There are 2,400 unreached Hindu people groups, mostly in India, with 865 individuals.
  - c. There are also 1,200 Ethno-Religious people groups around the world (with 166 million individuals), 700 Buddhist groups (with 276 million individuals) and approximately 400 other groups (with 155 million individuals).
- 5. One problem that is slowing Great Commission progress is that too many Christian workers minister in areas and to people groups that are already evangelized.**
  - a. It is often said that nine-tenths of the world's Christian workers (pastors, missionaries, etc.) minister among one-tenth of the world's population but that only one-tenth of Christian workers work among nine-tenths of the world's population. More workers need to leave the already-evangelized one-tenth of the world's population and reach out to the less-evangelized nine-tenths.
  - b. South India and several states of Northeast India are well evangelized, but many areas of North India have few Christians. There are some Indian Christians ministering in North India but reinforcements are needed.
  - c. Who will take God's message of salvation to the 2,605 un-evangelized people groups of India? Who will live among these unreached people groups
- 6. The Bible says "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."** Jn. 9:4
  - a. God has given us, His children, a task to fulfill – the Great Commission, to take His love and salvation to every people, language, tribe and nation. Luke 24:47, Rev. 5:9
  - b. But our work will not be completed – and Christ will not return – until all nations have heard the wonderful news of His Gospel. Mark 13:10
- 7. We have a glorious day to look forward to, when Jesus Christ will return to take His Bride (the Church – all His children) up to heaven with Him to live eternally in His radiant presence. On that day we will worship the Lamb with others from every nation, tribe, people and language. HALLELUJAH!!!** Rev. 7:9