Course Outline

		Lessons:	**Assignments:**
1.	Introduction:	Outline / The Biblical Basis of Research	
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3.		Researching the Harvest Field	
4.		Understanding the Harvest Field	
5.		Researching the Harvest Force	
6.		Looking as Through the Eyes of Jesus	
7.		A Biblical Approach to Research	
8.	Practical:	Getting ready to do Research	
9.		General Guidelines for Gathering Info.	
10.		Using the Engel Scale in Research	
11.	Sp. Mapping:	Spiritual Mapping	
12.		Sp. Mapping and Breaking the Strongholds	
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14.	UUPGs:	Unreached and Unengaged People Groups	
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Appendix:	
A few of India's UUPGs	Understanding the Local Churches Status
Gathering Harvest Force Information	Demographic and Ethnic Research
Understanding the Status of Harvest Force	Doing Demographics/Ethnics Research
Tips for Better Understanding H.F. Status	

Research: Seeking, gathering and organizing information for strategic purposes
What is research? Simply defined, research is the gathering of information.

1. As Great Commission workers and churches become more intentional about fulfilling the Great Commission, research can help us become more focused in our ministry.
2. Specifically, research helps Christian workers understand the big picture of what God is doing in their region and nation, and to see what people groups yet need to be reached. It helps us stay focused on the task, and ensures that our strategies remain effective.
3. Often when God calls people to new ministries, He first leads them to research and evaluate the needs and situation around them. We believe this is the case in church planting.

The Biblical Basis for Research: In each of the biblical cases described below, research was part of God's plan to do His work at a specific time:

1. Before possessing the land of Canaan, God required the people of Israel to count the available soldiers in preparation for battle (Numbers 1:1-46).
2. God instructed Moses to send spies to collect firsthand information on the land of Canaan Numbers 13:1- 26).
3. Jesus traveled among the people and saw their needs before sending His disciples out to work among them (Matthew 9:35-10:1).
4. As the Lord added to their numbers, the early church kept track of the numerical growth of the churches and reported it (Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 5:14; 9:31).

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The Biblical Basis of Research and Evaluation

Introduction: In the last lesson we saw four biblical examples of God's children doing research:

Biblical Example:	Implications:
Before possessing the land of Canaan, God required the people of Israel to count the available soldiers in preparation for battle (Numbers 1:1-46).	Information obtained from research can help reveal those people who are available to help with church planting (the "harvest force").
God instructed Moses to send spies to collect firsthand information on the land of Canaan (Numbers 13:1- 26).	Research provides the information necessary to plan correct strategies for reaching the "harvest field," the people living in your target area.
Jesus traveled among the people and saw their needs before sending His disciples out to work among them (Matthew 9:35-10:1). As He saw the overwhelming needs firsthand, He felt a deep compassion for the lost. His observations also motivated Him to mobilize people for prayer and then to send His disciples.	Firsthand research generates compassion, mobilizes prayer, and focuses ministry for evangelism, church planting and discipleship.
As the Lord added to their numbers, the early church kept track of the numerical growth of the churches and reported it (Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 5:14; 9:31).	This kind of information helps us understand how and where God is working in the lives of the people in a given region.

The Need for good Research:
When the men who were sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan returned and reported, ten of the twelve gave inaccurate information, causing the Israelites to rebel against Moses and God (Numbers 13:27 – 14:38).

1. Sometimes the Church labors under false suppositions, with outdated forms and erroneous data. Times change; yesterday's truths easily become today's fictions. When this occurs, the kingdom of darkness has an advantage.
2. Church growth will tend to stagnate without the right information. For the Kingdom of Light (Colossians 1:13- 14) to win the battle, we need to illuminate the facts. Truth -- facts, reality, and light -- is necessary for dispelling darkness. Jesus said, "The truth shall set you free."
3. Success in ministry requires the right information, in the right form, in the right hands, at the right time. Why do some churches in an area grow and others stagnate or decline? Careful investigation often reveals a lack of awareness of the social and cultural differences. Research can reveal these differences and lead to growth.
4. Research helps us determine what needs to be done in ministry, and gives us insight into what is working or not working (especially in terms of evangelism). Research can help us see what God is already doing in the lives of people, so that we can join with Him.

Two basic kinds of research: There are basically two kinds of research that we need in church planting ministry. The first is called the "harvest field" and the second is the "harvest force."

1. The harvest field is the immediate context in which the Church ministers. The phrase "harvest field" is drawn from John 4:35, where Jesus commanded His disciples to "look on the fields" that were ready for harvest.
2. The harvest force includes believers, churches, denominations, and parachurch groups such as training ministries, mission agencies, and Christian media in your region.

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Researching the Harvest Field

In John 4:35 Jesus commanded His disciples to "look on the fields" that were ready for harvest. The words "look" and "field" are insightful.

1. "Look" means "to study, or to examine, with a view of interpreting an object." This speaks of research.
2. The word "field" refers to people. Jesus called the disciples to look at the people coming out toward them, who had likely heard from the Samaritan woman about Jesus and His Gospel (see John 4:27-38). Jesus was speaking of a harvest of souls (See also Luke 10, Matthew 9).

When considering how to reach a target area, church planters should know the social, cultural, and religious distinctives of the area.

1. For example, the changing times we live in often create a variance between the Church and younger generations. Often new methods are needed for evangelism, training, and church planting.
2. "Ministry as usual" will reap "results as usual." We must understand the worldview and mindset of the unchurched people whom God is calling us to reach.

The following research questions give a better understand of the targeted harvest field:

1. What is the total population of the target region?
2. What are the social and economic realities of the target area?
3. What percentage of the pupation are men, women, youth and children?
4. What is the number of working adults?
5. What are the main occupations? What kind of income do the people receive?
6. Describe the ethnic and cultural makeup of the target area.
7. What ethnic minorities exist in the target region? Do they live in a particular region?
8. What languages do they speak?
9. Describe the political, cultural and spiritual history. What non-biblical religious ideas are commonly held in the target region?
10. Identify the major areas of societal pain and suffering.
11. What physical elements divide and/or connect the region (rivers, railroads, roads, etc)? How do these dividers impact travel patterns, education opportunities, the economy, etc?
12. If the target area is a city or town, are there designated industrial and residential areas? Where do people shop?
13. Do people live near work or have to commute long distances? What are the modes of transportation? Do most people travel by bicycle, car, bus, subway?
14. Where do people go for leisure and recreation? Do they stay in the city and go to parks?
15. Do they spend most weekends in the city or out in the countryside?

Where can harvest field information be found?

1. Harvest field information can be gathered through personal interviews and surveys.
2. Some foundational harvest field data can be obtained in community centers, libraries, government offices and on the internet. However, when these sources are used, personal contact will be necessary to fill in the gaps and to update and validate information.
3. Personal interviews are normally the best way to determine the physical, emotional and spiritual needs. It can be valuable to interview local government officials regarding how they perceive the needs -- and always ask people how you can pray for them!

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Understanding the Harvest Field

Understanding the spiritual climate of your field:

1. What major religion(s) have an impact in your target area? Is their influence in the area growing or losing strength?
2. What percentage of the population belongs to the major religion(s)? Are they growing in number or losing members, and why?
3. What other religions or cults exist in your area and how successful are they in winning followers?

Understanding the People's Worldview

1. By learning about peoples' worldview and their felt needs, we can gain insight into the ways in which they can be meaningfully shown the love of Jesus Christ.
2. The best way to learn about people is to ask them questions and observe their behavior.
3. Go out into your target area—to the markets or any other places where people can be approached—and talk with at least 15-20 people.

Ask people in the target area about the following:

1. Their spiritual beliefs: Do they believe in God? If so, what do they believe about God? What do they know of Jesus, the Bible, heaven or hell? Do they believe in the existence of angels, demons or Satan? What do they believe sin is?
2. When they are sick, where do they turn for help?
3. What are their beliefs and practices when there is death?
4. Do they believe in fate (or luck)?
5. How often, if at all, do they attend church? If not, why do they not attend church?
6. What are the major celebrations or holidays in this area? How do they celebrate them?
7. What do they like best about their life? What one thing would they change?
8. What do they see as one or two major social problems in their community (alcoholism, drugs, lack of adequate medical care, elderly without care, inadequate education opportunities, orphan children, etc.)?
9. What are three of their favorite proverbs? (Through proverbs it is often possible to discover ideals and values they hold, as well as their outlook on life.)
10. Who are the recognized leaders in the community? Why are they seen as leaders?
11. Who do the people consider to be their heroes?
12. List five things people value in others (honesty, industry, cleverness, generosity, etc.).

Understanding the strength of God's presence and witness in your field:

1. If there are some believers already in the region, or at least those who consider themselves to be Christians, you should study how Christianity came to the region. This can give insight into how people receive Christianity or why they would be resistant to it.
   - When did Christianity first come to the area and how was it brought? Was it forced upon the people, or did they receive the Gospel voluntarily?
   - Research the history of each denomination's entry into the area.
   - How does this history affect your church planting strategy?
2. This information about any existing believers already in the "field" will help you begin to understand the "harvest force" in the targeted region. In the following lesson we will learn much more about this "harvest force."

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Researching the Harvest Force

What is the harvest force?

1. The harvest force includes believers, churches, denominations, and parachurch groups such as training ministries, mission agencies, and Christian media in or near the targeted area.
2. To understand the harvest force in your target area, you need to know the number of churches, their identity, the organizational association(s), and the size and distribution by area and by people group of the church(es).
3. It is important to map out where the churches are, and to note which churches are growing and which are not, and why.
4. You need to learn which societal groups are in the churches, which aren't, and why.
5. Lastly, it is important to discover who is carrying forth successful methods of evangelism, discipleship training, mercy ministries, and church planting.

Obtaining (and maintaining) an accurate, up-to-date picture of what the "harvest force" has done, is doing, and has yet to do, requires careful planning, research and analysis. The following will help you understand the harvest force in your target area:

1. Indicate on a map where churches are located, and where they are no churches.
2. Indicate the approximate size and the year each church was planted.
3. Determine the people group each church is reaching (e.g. certain ethnic group, gypsies, youth, children, elderly, internationals, etc.). How successful have they been in their efforts?
4. Identify which churches are growing and/or not growing.
5. List all mission and parachurch groups active in the target area. Briefly describe the ministry each has (literature, prison, minority ministry, youth, etc.)
6. Determine the current degree of impact and influence of the Church on the various elements of society.
7. Describe the task remaining to reach various geographic and cultural groups.

Using Information Gained from Research

1. After information has been gathered, it can be used to motivate and challenge God's people to action.
2. Research can inspire godly men and women to be committed to the fulfillment of God's plan for His people, to be diligent in using their gifts and abilities towards this end, and to sacrifice whatever is necessary in order that others might live.
3. Sharing research results with the leadership in a region can be eye-opening. It helps them see how their ministries fit in the overall picture. As they see the task remaining, they become aware of the implications for completing the task, both for themselves and collectively with others.
4. This information, combined with prayer and God's revealed purpose, provides a "call to action" to the Church to guide it through the process of saturating it's region with new groups and churches.

What is research for a state or area church-planting strategy?

1. It is the fact-finding process to monitor and measure the task and to establish goals, plans and priorities for completing the Great Commission in a larger targeted area.
2. It is the careful, patient, systematic, diligent study of the harvest force and harvest field, to provide accurate and up-to-date information about the targeted area and the people therein.

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Looking as Through the Eyes of Jesus

Read and consider the summary of Jesus' ministry given in Matthew 9:35-38.

1. Jesus visited small, obscure villages as well as larger towns -- *"Jesus went through all the towns and villages ...;"*
2. He ministered in word and deed -- *"...teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness;"*
3. He took notice of the multitudes and understood their deep spiritual needs -- *"When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd;"*
4. He recognized the vastness of the harvest field and the insufficiency of the harvest force -- "*The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few;"*
5. He called his true disciples to intercession -- *"Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."*

We might paraphrase this account as follows:

1. "Jesus was in the habit of visiting every place where people could be found.
2. "No matter where He went, He felt with his heart what He saw with His eyes: multitudes of people living in despair for lack of direction and hope.
3. "So, He gave them direction by what He taught; He offered them hope by what He preached; He showed them compassion by healing all their diseases.
4. "The gross imbalance between the harvest field and the harvest force caused him to call his most faithful followers to cry out for the Master to multiply the workforce."

Why did Jesus make an effort to visit all the towns and villages?

1. How did He discover the needs of people?
2. What moved Him to compassion?
3. What motivated and guided Him to preach, teach and heal?

Answer: **He SAW the multitudes as they really were.**

1. This was no mere casual glance, nor was it strictly a careful observation.
2. Glancing at the multitudes would have overlooked their condition. Detailed observation would have merely satisfied His curiosity.
3. This was insightful perception—systematic, careful, all-encompassing vision mixed with godly wisdom, understanding and discernment.

Jesus shows us through His example how vital it is to keep an accurate, up-to-date picture of the harvest field and the harvest force.

1. His ministry teaches us that research, compassion, prayer and all other ministry are inseparable elements of an effective strategy.
2. Just as Jesus saw the people and their needs, we must carefully and lovingly look on those around us in order to:
   - Discover relevant information and facts about the people who live in the targeted area;
   - Develop an accurate and current understanding of the people based on this new information; and
   - Find new, practical ways to apply our information, knowledge and understanding.

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A Biblical Approach to Research

Introduction: In Lesson 2 we saw that God told Moses to send 12 men into Canaan to spy out the land, and that in the same way we need to be well-informed about a targeted people group before trying to engage them with the Gospel.

In Numbers 13:1—14:38 we read about the spies who were sent to obtain information about the people and the land they were to conquer. This report illustrates harvest field research for a mission or church-planting project.

The Information Needed and the Questionnaire Design: They were sent out with a detailed list of information to be gathered. Their survey questionnaire could have looked something like this.

1. What is the land like? [ ] good or [ ] bad
2. What are the people like? [ ] strong or [ ] weak; [ ] many or [ ] few
3. What are the towns like? [ ] fortified or [ ] un-walled
4. What is the soil like? [ ] fertile or [ ] poor; [ ] trees or [ ] no trees
5. What kind of fruit is there? _____

Lessons in Research from the Old Testament: The Old Testament records numerous accounts of how God's servants sought and applied knowledge (information) to the tasks God had assigned them.

1. Numbers 1:1-46 – Moses was commanded to measure the strength and resources of the Israelite battle force (see also Numbers 26:2; Joshua 7:13-15; Judges 7:2-6).
2. Joshua 2:1-11 – Joshua sent out two men to learn about the condition and responsiveness of the people.
3. Joshua 13:1-7 – God gave Joshua an evaluation of what had been done and what was yet to be done in conquering the land.
4. Nehemiah 1:3-4; 2:1-6 – Nehemiah was moved by information to intercede on behalf of God's people and to stand up for what was right.
5. Nehemiah 2:7-18 – Nehemiah carefully studied the wall to discover what needed to be done to rebuild it; he used this information to mobilize people into orderly action.
6. 1 Chronicles 12:32 – David's army included strategists who understood the times and could instruct Israel in what it should do.
7. Consider these questions as you study the Old Testament stories:
   - Were the people who did research commanded to do it or did they do it on their own?
   - What information did they gather?
   - Who gathered the information and how did they gather it?
   - Why did they need information?
   - How could this kind or research and information be helpful to the Church in discipling a whole nation?

Lessons from the New Testament: The New Testament Church was not commanded to do research. However, there are situations where research was implied that we can learn from.

1. Matthew 9:35-38 – Jesus recognized the state of the harvest field and the harvest force (see also Luke 10:1-11).
2. John 4:27-42 – Jesus recognized when the harvest field was ripe for the harvest.
3. Luke 15:1-10 – finding the lost requires diligent, systematic research (see also Luke 14:1-24).
4. 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 – Paul became all things to all men by understanding cultural differences.
5. The New Testament Church apparently kept an account of significant events (see Luke 1:1-4; Acts 1:1).
6. They also took notice of how many people were being saved. (See Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:1, 7; 9:31, 42; and 13:48-49)

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Getting ready to do Research

Research is a continuous search for open doors for ministry as well as for God's provision, leading and solutions for completing the Great Commission.

1. Research for completing the Great Commission is a way of life. It involves the daily discipline of comparing people's needs with God's resources.
2. It requires understanding human situations with spiritual discernment. It prompts us to continually shape and adjust our ministry in light of new information.

Research is both a technical science and a spiritual discipline.

1. Technically, it involves the following tools:
   - Mathematics and statistics:
   - Sociology and demographics; and
   - Ethnology and linguistics.
2. Spiritually, it involves prayerfully examining the harvest force and harvest field in light of the following guidelines and tools:
   - The Great Commission;
   - A biblical view of man's emotional, physical, moral and spiritual needs; and
   - The spiritual gifts of discernment and intercession.

The Power of Information

When all the work of research is completed -- that is, all the surveying, interviewing, recording, calculating, analyzing and writing -- few people, if any, will have been brought to "the knowledge of the TRUTH" and into responsible membership in His Church. Research is not normally an evangelistic activity that directly leads people to faith in Jesus.

Yet research and information are of great value to carrying out the Great Commission. A true picture of the vast harvest fields of the world is often the tool God uses to burden his people for the lost. Adequate, accurate and up-to-date information, when interpreted correctly, can motivate the Church to effective evangelism and church planting.

Understanding the harvest force and harvest field requires answers to the questions:

1. How many are they?
2. Where are they?
3. Who are they?
4. What are they like?

Some sample research questions to help us assess how close we are to completing the task in Matthew 24: 18-24:

1. How many villages (or neighborhoods, if in a city) in the targeted area have no church?
2. How many people live in those villages / neighborhoods?
3. Do we really need to plant more churches?
4. Is there a better way to plant churches here?
5. What do we need to do to finish the task?
6. What would an evangelized or discipled state, district or city look like?
7. How do we measure the progress of discipling a whole state, district or city?
8. What communities or groups of people still have not heard the Gospel?
9. What is the best way to do evangelism and discipleship training among each group?
10. How many churches are needed to reach the goal of a church within walking distance of every person in our target community?
11. Where and among whom are new churches needed?
12. What are the best methods for starting new churches in each community?

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General Guidelines for Gathering Information

Before you begin gathering information:

1. Make sure you have the support of the right Church leaders in the concerned area.
2. Make sure you have informed the right people about what you are doing.
3. Have your research plan worked out.
4. Know what information you will need and why.

Begin your survey by gathering information that is already known about the harvest force and harvest field. Do any necessary library research before attempting any field research.

1. In some cases, you will find that library or secondary information is an estimate or outdated and inaccurate. Yet this information will give you a valuable beginning point when you interview pastors and Church leaders.
2. Having some information when going into an interview is always better than having no information at all.
3. However, be careful not to allow this information to cause you to draw premature conclusions about the particular denomination or church you are studying.

Tips on where to find information for doing library research:

1. National and local libraries;
2. Government census bureaus, departments of statistics, urban or city councils, and city planning departments;
3. Public and private university libraries;
4. Health, education and social service agencies and organizations.

As you gather information:

1. Modify your research plan to include considerations you had not anticipated.
2. Modify your questionnaires if you find they are not understandable or if you left out an important question.
3. Stick to your objectives. Do not be distracted into other areas of study that do not fit the purpose of your survey.
4. Process all information as you go along. This will help you identify weaknesses in the survey, and aspects of your plan that need to be modified. It will also help you begin to form an impression as to why the Church is growing or not growing.

Recruiting a Research Team:

1. The impact of the local church survey is often greater when pastors, church leaders and laymen from the communities do the survey. Reporting actually begins through the "word of mouth" testimonies of those who participated in the research.
2. In countries or regions where multiple languages are spoken, it is necessary to recruit people who can speak each primary language. In many situations it will be possible to find researchers who are fluent in several languages.
3. Researchers should be familiar with the geography, climate and conditions of the areas to be surveyed.
4. Regional committees and/or pastors' fellowships must commit themselves to be actively involved in the survey.
5. The researchers may be part-time (Bible school students doing research during holidays, etc.) or full- time. Rural areas may require full-time researchers.

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Using the Engel Scale in Research

Introduction: The Engel Scale is an aid to help us assess the degree of spiritual understanding and receptiveness of a person, or of a people group as a whole. As we begin researching the spiritual status of a population group the Engel Scale can help us identify where the people are in their understanding of and receptivity to the Gospel.

There are two central thoughts behind the Engel Scale. The first is that people with no understanding of the Gospel rarely come to faith in Christ without progressing through a process of gradual steps toward faith in God. The second thought is that everyone falls somewhere on the "scale" below in their understanding of God's Truth and in their relationship with God.

The goal of the Christian worker, therefore, is to help individuals (or villages and people groups) continually progress up the ladder below. For those in spiritual darkness, we must work to raise their spiritual understanding toward the point of repentance and new birth. And for those who have come to faith in Christ, we must encourage their growth in Christ up the rungs of the ladder (Phil. 3:8-14).

Score:	Engel Scale
+5	Stewardship
+4	Communion with God
+3	Conceptual and behavioral growth
+2	Incorporation into Christian body
+1	Post-decision evaluation
	New birth – Regeneration
-1	Repentance and faith in Christ
-2	Decision to act
-3	Personal problem recognition
-4	Positive attitude towards Gospel
-5	Grasp implications of the Gospel
-6	Awareness of fundamentals of the Gospel
-7	Initial awareness of the Gospel
-8	Awareness of supreme being, no knowledge of the Gospel

(There are numerous variations of the Engel Scale. The one presented above is similar to Engel's original model, but with some differences. A second model for identifying the spiritual receptivity status is the Gray Matrix. It can be found on the internet.)

A majority of Indians today would score a "- 8" on the Engel Scale. The same can be said of many Indian villages and people groups. In other words, a majority of Indians today have an awareness of a supreme being but they have no knowledge of the Gospel.

It must be our ambition to help these living in spiritual darkness to progress up the Scale through an initial awareness of the Gospel (# -7) to an awareness of the fundamentals of the Gospel (# -6) to a point where they grasp the implications of the Gospel (# -5).

But this is only the beginning. We must bring them to a positive attitude towards the Gospel (# -4) to the point where they recognize that they personally fall short of God's standards (# -3) and must make a decision for or against receiving God into their heart (# -2). When they finally take that step of faith and repent of their sins (# -1), they are regenerated into a new spiritual life. From this point our responsibility is to disciple them (help them grow) in their faith into the likeness of Christ.

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Spiritual Mapping

Biblical examples of spiritual mapping:

1. We see it in the example of the spies going into the land (Numbers 13:1-2, 17-20). They came back with details about the location and strength of the people, etc. (Numbers 13:29);
2. Paul in Athens took time to see the city before making an entry to it (Acts 17:16, 22-23).

What is Spiritual Mapping and what is its purpose?

1. Spiritual mapping is an attempt to see a region as it really is spiritually, not simply as it appears physically (Mk. 4:22).
2. It is the use of diagnostic tools (prayer, revelation and research) to discover the inroads that Satan has made that block the spread of the Gospel, and in particular the historic bondages that resist the presence of Christ (Eph. 6:12).
3. It is to intercessors what an X-ray is to a physician (2 Cor. 4:18).
4. The map we develop is a tool to help us see the region from God's perspective.
5. The main purpose is to give information that helps mobilize fervent intercession and pave the way for effective evangelism. George Otis Jr. calls this "informed intercession".
6. It wants to see the people of the area released from the strongholds of the enemy—enabling evangelism to be effective by first binding the strongman in prayer (Matthew 12:28-29).
7. It wants to see the area or region transformed by the power of God (2 Samuel 24:25), and God's Kingdom come in a greater way to the area.
8. It's purpose is to see nations, regions, and communities released from their bondage to the enemy (Isaiah 58:6).

What spiritual mapping is not:

1. Spiritual Mapping is not an end in itself – it is a means to an end. Jesus, in giving the Great Commission, did not say to go into all the world and spiritually map. Mapping is a tool to help us accomplish God's desire: the transformation of lives and hearts.
2. It is not a one-person task, but requires teamwork.
3. It is not merely the accumulation of information; it is the discovery of the supernatural dynamics of a region so that God's people might respond appropriately.
4. It is not spiritual warfare, but a *preparation* for spiritual warfare.

What do we try to map? On a geographical map of the targeted area indicate (draw) the locations of any and all of the following:

1. Spiritual 'camps': places and activities that promote bondage and are harmful to individuals and the community, such as:
   - Places of false religions, cults and occult centers, such as temples and shrines, etc.
   - Centers of metaphysical healing, reincarnation, past-life therapy, astrology, chakra and I Chang. (Some retailers might offer related products without understanding the strong demonic influence of such materials.)
   - Places where pornography and other sex materials are sold, and where prostitution and other sexual perversions are practiced
   - Places where life is taken, such as abortion clinics.
2. Monuments that may invoke a power over the city (war memorials, obelisks, etc.) or where historic destructive events (such as massacres, broken treaties or some other major traumas to the people and the land) occurred or are commemorated
3. Areas of persistent crimes such as drug dealing, gambling and other illegal practices
4. Graves and cemeteries (especially if used for ritual worship) and places of frequent mortal accidents
5. Finally, places of Christian presence: churches, outreach centers, etc.

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Breaking the Strongholds

Introduction: Research and spiritual mapping can help reveal hidden spiritual strongholds so that they can be confronted and demolished through the overcoming power of God. It can also reveal elements that are under the control of the "strong man" (Satan and his minions) in our area.

What is a Spiritual Stronghold?

1. A spiritual stronghold is often a belief contrary to the Word of God that is held to be true, or a practice that is contrary to the ways and will of God.
2. A stronghold may also refer to a physical place or effect which is the product of beliefs and/or practices contrary to God's truth. It is an area (either physical or ideological) that Satan has established and fortified in order to oppose and combat the plans and purposes of God. Such strongholds bring results contrary to God's will, or hinder God's purposes until they are uncovered and overcome.

These strongholds are to demolished—and can be demolished—through prayer.

1. Paul explains that *"The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds"* (2 Cor. 10:4-5).
2. Ours is a spiritual battle, for which we must put on the full armor of God (Eph. 6:14-18).
3. God has given His children incredible access to His power through prayer (Mk. 9:23, James 5:16, 1 Tim. 2:1-4).

Binding the strong man:

1. In Matthew 12:24-30, in the context of delivering a demon-possessed man from his terrible spiritual bondage, Jesus spoke of binding up the strong man.
2. If spiritual strong men must be bound in order to affect the deliverance of their captives, how are they to be identified and resisted? If the god of this age has blinded the minds of the lost (2 Cor. 4:3-4), how is this spiritual enchantment to be broken?
3. The obvious answer to these questions lies in fervent and focused prayer—the kind that confronts the strong man's efforts and strategies and binds him through the power and authority that is ours in Christ (Matt. 16:19).

Claiming spiritual victory over Satan's strongholds and over the strong man:

1. George Otis Jr. points out that major changes happen for community transformation when God's people come to a point of desperation and they decide they will not tolerate the bondage any longer.
2. Through genuine prayer—crying out to God for His redeeming, liberating mercy and deliverance, we can experience freedom from the curse of Satan's strongholds (Ps. 126:5-6).

Praying on behalf of whole populations:

1. Moses prayed and interceded for Israel (Exodus 32:11-13, 31-32).
2. Daniel prayed for God's repentance for the people of Israel (Daniel 9:1-19).
3. Nehemiah prayed on behalf of the whole nation of Israel: (Nehemiah 1:6).
4. There are numerous other examples of people asking God to grant His mercy on a whole group of people: King Solomon in 1 Kings 8:44-50, Ezra in Ezra 9:6-15, Stephen for his murderers in Acts 7:60, etc.

In Christ, who has all authority on earth, we can have the victory and fulfill His Great Commission (Matt. 28:18).

1. He reigns *"far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come"* (Eph. 1:21).
2. In Christ we are over-comers (Rev. 12:11) and "more than conquerors" (Rom. 8:37), and God expects us to "come upon" the strong man and overcome him (Luke 11:21-22).

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Prayer Walking

Introduction: In Joshua 1:3 we find a promise of God to Joshua and the Israelites: *"Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses."* Many Christians are claiming this promise; they are praying and believing God for spiritual victories for the people and places where they are walking.

What is prayer walking?

1. Prayer walking is simply the act of praying while one walks. (Praying while traveling by bus or rail or by any other means is permissible as well, of course.)
2. Prayer walking is interceding on behalf of the people near to and/or associated with the place where one is walking (including oneself), believing in God for His miraculous intervention and provision for them.

Places of strategic prayer walking:

1. Centers of worship and practice of false religions (temples, shrines, etc.). Places of continued worship of anything other than God. These must be removed. (2 Kings 18:4-5 - speaking of Hezekiah *"He removed the high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down the wooden image and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it Nehushtan. He trusted in the LORD God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him."*)
2. Sites of other kinds of demonic strongholds (Acts 26:18 *"To open their eyes, in order to turn them away from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me."*) Prayer walking the streets in front of the homes of fortune tellers and black magicians can unleash God's power to break these strongholds.
3. Places of temporal authority: government offices, law enforcement posts, centers of justice, etc.
4. Elevated places (I Kings 18:42 *"So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees."*) In South Korea there are several "Prayer Mountains" where thousands of Christians go to pray. The believers pray as they walk up to the summit, or they sit in God's presence in one of the "prayer stations" that have been arranged along the path, special areas with seats provided, sometimes in a quiet grotto with beautiful plantings and surroundings.
5. Sites called of God for His purposes, to be consecrated to Him, such as church buildings, mission offices, etc. If a Christian literature distribution is to take place in a public area it is good to have some believers praying while they walk through the area where the tracts will be distributed, praying against the strong man (the devil) in that place and asking the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts of those receiving the Gospel literature.
6. Sites of present or historical tragedies and sins (An example of this is when a group of American Christians walked and prayed in a place where years earlier African slaves had routinely been bought and sold. They asked God to forgive the people of that city for this terrible sin of the forefathers.)
7. Sites with cursed or demonic names
8. Sites of frequent sin and corruption, such as pornography and sex-trade centers, or areas where illegal drugs are sold
9. Places of business (especially where alcohol is sold), and work places (especially where indentured servants or under-aged children are used)
10. Schools, especially where anti-Christian values and philosophies are elevated.

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Unreached and Unengaged People Groups

An Unreached People Group (UPG) is a group of people that has fewer than 2% evangelical Christians.
An Unreached Unengaged People Group (UUPG) is a people group that has virtually no Christians, and not even a missionary or ministry team committed to reaching them.

One of the great benefits of research is the discovery and identification of people groups that have not yet been reached by the Gospel. Fortunately, much research has already been done which has given us the information below:

1. There are 11,307 people groups in the world (according to Joshua Project, May 2013).
2. Of these 11,307 people groups, 7,165 are still unreached (6,945, acc. to IMB, May 2013).

Unreached People Groups (UPGs)

1. Of the 7,000+/- UPGs, around 383 have more than a million people.
2. ***There are 159 UPGs of over one million in India alone.***
3. 2,165 of the world's UPGs have at least 50,000.
4. 3,665 UPGs have more than 10,000.
5. 3,500 have fewer than 10,000 people.

Unreached Unengaged People Groups (UUPGs)

1. There are 3,085 UUPGs in the world today (acc. to IMB).
2. Of these, 378 have more than 100,000.
3. ***There are 485 UUPGs of over 10,000 people in India alone***.

Some excellent web sites about the Unengaged:

1. Joshua Project: joshuaproject.net
2. Finishing the Task: finishingthetask.com
3. People Groups: peoplegroups.org
4. GlobalROAR (formerly known as "Adopt-A-People Clearinghouse"): globalroar.org
5. International Mission Board (of the Southern Baptists): imb.org/globalresearch

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" **Matthew 24:14.**

"Then saith he unto his disciples, 'The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.'" **Matthew 9:38**

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Research and Faith

Introduction: The importance and place of research is modeled for us as the nation of Israel was ready to enter the Promised Land. Moses was commanded by God to send out twelve men to spy out the land of Canaan. These twelve men apparently were adept at the techniques of spying out land, making keen observations, recording information and drawing conclusions. Upon their return, they reported what they saw to Moses.

Ten of the spies "made the hearts of the people melt with fear." Their description of the obstacles ahead caused the people to grumble, "If only we had died in Egypt! Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword" (Numbers 14:2)?

But Caleb and Joshua "followed the Lord wholeheartedly" (Joshua 4:8). They "silenced the people before Moses and said, 'We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it"' (Numbers 3:30). Calling them to faith they said, "Do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us" (Numbers 14:9).

What made the difference between these two and the others? Was it not the fact that the ten spies relied on themselves while Caleb and Joshua trusted fully in God? They all saw the giants in the land. The majority found themselves weak and incapable by comparison. Caleb and Joshua, however, never lost confidence because they never lost sight of THE ONE who is greater than all the giants combined.

Caleb and Joshua teach us that the power of information lies not so much in the information itself, but in the faith, conviction and character of the one to whom information and knowledge are entrusted. Vision, commitment, courage, self-sacrifice, persistence—the things we see in these two men—are an inspiration to anyone who would give his life to complete the Great Commission. The faith of such men determines whether the response to information will be positive and motivating or destructive and debilitating.

The task of conquering the land of Canaan can be considered an Old Testament parallel to that of making disciples of all nations. In the same way, the Lord has not told us everything we must know about making disciples of all nations. Today, more than ever before, "spies" must be sent out to discover who the peoples are, where they are and what they are like. This is no small task. And in the process of studying the Church and the nations we will face many "giants." How will we respond?

When men of faith present data on the harvest field and the Church of a nation, it can help the body of Christ—church leaders, evangelists, church planters, lay people—get a picture of what God the Spirit has been and is doing. It can challenge them to set goals and make plans for completing the Great Commission in their native land.

When people who lack faith, however, present the same data, it can cause the Church to shrink back from the seemingly impossible task. Men and women who gather and present accurate data with bold faith and indomitable courage unleash the real power of information.

Caleb and Joshua, the researchers, never lost sight of the One to whom all power and authority in heaven and on earth have been given (Matthew 28:18). So, we also must understand and walk in "his incomparably great power for us who believe" (Ephesians 1: 18-23).

Research is a vital part of the strategy. But the act of gathering vital, accurate, up-to-date and challenging information is no guarantee that the Church will stand up and say "Let us go and make disciples of all peoples, for we can certainly do it." We must combine such information with faith, "For without faith it is impossible to please God!" (Hebrews 11:6).

But "With God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26).

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APPENDIX:
A Few of India's Unreached Unengaged People Groups (UUPGs):

(Population numbers are gleaned from the web site of "Finishing the Task" [May, 2013]. *)

There are virtually no known Christians in any of the people groups below, nor was there any mission group committed to reaching them in May, 2013.

Name:	Language	Pop.:	Rel.:	Comments:
Darji - Urdu (or Darzi)	Urdu	1,100,000	Islam	Muslim Darji make up only about 1/3 of all Darji. (Others are mostly Hindu.) Another 300,000+ live outside India, mostly in Pakistan and Bangladesh. They are often tailors. They live primarily in North India, especially in Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.
Gadaria (or Gaderia)	Hindi	963,000	Hindu	Originally sheep herders, the Gadaria are now mostly masons, though some remain in animal husbandry. Half the total number live in U.P., with other concentrations in M.P., Rajasthan and Bihar.
Dhoba	Bengali	709,000	Hindu	The Dhoba are a caste descended from India's aboriginal Dravidians. Bengali-speaking Dhobas live primarily in and around West Bengal.
Dhoba	Maithili	647,000	Hindu	Maithili-speaking Dhobas live mostly in Bihar. (There are also many in Nepal.)
Gadaria	Vaghri	510,000	Hindu	Most Gadaria-Vaghri live in Gujarat State. There are no known Christians and no ministry tools (Scriptures, etc.) in their language.
Turha	Maithili	299,000	Other	The Turha live primarily in Bihar State. They speak Maithili and Hindi.
Kalal (or Kalwar)	Marathi	197,000	Hindu	The Kalal were traditionally distillers and traders of country liquor. They live mostly in U.P., Bihar, and West Bengal, with some M.P.
Kalal	Mewari	122,000	Hindu	The Mewari-speaking Kalal live mostly in Rajasthan. The *Jesus* film and some Scripture portions are available but no one is currently working among them.
Darji	Marwari	113,000	Islam	Similar to the Urdu-speaking Darji above except that they speak Marwari, a Rajasthani dialect. They are generally traders, often quite successful.
Malakar	Bengali	54,000	Hindu	The Malakar are a Backward Class caste group, makers of garlands. They live primarily in West Bengal. (Many more Malakar live in Bangladesh.)

* Populations are rounded to the nearest thousand.

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Gathering Harvest Force Information

Steps involved in the process:

1. Recruit and train researchers.
2. Mobilize the researchers to compile data from libraries, government agencies, health and social service centers and other places.
3. Conduct informal interviews with government, medical, and social service people to discover the physical and social characteristics and needs of the people in the area.
4. Compile all the notes and forms used to record information from the library research. Implement the data tabulation and analysis plan.

Tips on what kinds of people to interview:

1. People who are qualified or have experience to speak on the subject you are studying.
2. People who have a strong opinion or a unique perspective on the category of information you are studying.

Tips on carrying out the survey:

1. Spend time in the communities where the people group is located. Observe their behavior patterns. Try to identify their cultural values and other characteristics that help you understand the people group.
2. Make sure to record the date of data, the date it was published and the source.
3. Always record the page numbers, sources, and summary statements of information or quotes taken from books.
4. Make sure to record the name of the person being interviewed, his or her title and position, and the date of the interview.
5. Your questionnaire should be limited to five to ten true/false or multiple-choice questions. A typical interview should last no more than ten minutes.
6. Adapt the guidelines for conducting interviews in the areas of demographics, social welfare, cultural studies, economics, local religions and politics.
   - Teams of two are not essential here.
   - Set daily goals.
   - Be careful to avoid political or religious arguments. Remember, you are interviewing people to understand their opinion about society and the issues that have bearing on the growth of the Church.
   - Indicate the difference between factual information and opinions when you record the responses.
   - Ask for name of other people that should be interviewed.
7. Conduct a sample survey of individuals from several neighborhoods and communities in the area you are studying. This will provide information that will help you determine the needs, attitudes, and potential responsiveness of the people.

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Understanding the Status of the Harvest Force in the Targeted Area

The Objectives:

1. You will want to identify and locate every denomination in the targeted area.
2. You will want to determine the number of pastors and churches, their attendance and membership and, and their growth rate.
3. You will want to determine where the churches are distributed throughout the targeted area and what languages and people groups they are reaching;
4. You will want to determine what methods of evangelism they are using and what methods and programs they have to train new pastors.
5. With this information you will be able to make projections for the future growth of the whole Church and of each denomination, and to identify effective methods and models of evangelism, church planting, and pastoral and leadership training.

Different kinds of Surveys to help you understand the harvest force:

1. **The Preliminary Survey** - This survey involves making a list of all denominations and independent churches in the area, determining the number of churches and members for the current year, and doing an in-depth survey on from one to five of the denominations.
2. **The Primary Survey** - This survey involves all of the steps in the preliminary survey with the exception that it includes an in-depth study of the top 10-15 denominations and independent churches.
3. **The Periodic Updates** - This survey involves bringing the information up-to-date every one or two years on the top 10 – 15 denominations (or as many as possible), and doing in-depth case studies on effective denomination and para-church growth programs that demonstrate effectiveness in seeing churches planted and bringing new believers into fellowship.

The Process:

1. Make a list with the names and addresses of all known denominations, mission agencies and para-church organizations in the targeted area. Determine which of these Christian organizations you will survey.
2. Do library research to find out as much as possible about each denomination before engaging in the field survey.
3. Inform national and regional Church leaders of the survey purpose and plan.
4. Design survey forms and other tools for recording the data.
5. Recruit and train a team of researchers to conduct the survey. Since the survey will involve interviewing Church leaders, these researchers should understand and have some experience in Christian work.
6. Prepare letters of introduction from the committee or task force for the field researchers to use in presenting themselves to Church leaders. A letter from a national Christian organization, such as an Evangelical Fellowship, is also helpful.
7. Mobilize the survey team to conduct the survey using your standard questionnaire. Make appointments with the leaders who will be interviewed.
8. Collect and organize all survey forms from the researchers. Implement the plan for data tabulation and analysis. Determine the rates and patterns of growth of each denomination.
9. After the initial information has been analyzed, conduct a second interview with the key leader(s) of the denomination. Ask them to explain the history and growth of the denomination based on their own experience and understanding. Look for personal testimonies and stories about the unique working of God through the ministry of this denomination. This information is valuable to help determine the reasons for the growth or non-growth of the Church.

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Tips for Better Understanding the Status of the Harvest Force

Tips on developing the survey questionnaire:

1. The number of questions on a denominational survey form may be from 20 to 30. Include questions that are vital to meet the survey objectives. The questionnaire should be designed to be filled out in 30 – 45 minutes.
2. Questions must be clear and unambiguous. Use vocabulary that will be understood and accepted by most denominational leaders. Test the questionnaire on two or three leaders before launching the survey. This will ensure that the questions are understandable.

Tips on where to get information for library research:

1. Denominational yearly, quarterly and monthly reports or publications (such as denominational yearbooks).
2. Articles, books and theses written about the history, growth and status of the Church or of a particular denomination.
3. National, regional, or denominational church directories.

Tips on what kind of Church leaders to interview:

1. Chief executive officers or directors of denominations, key pastors of large or growing churches, and directors and missionaries of mission agencies.
2. Regional and district supervisors.
3. Key lay leaders within the denomination.
4. Statisticians, secretaries or record keepers.
5. Leaders of Christian education programs, such as directors and teachers of seminaries, etc.
6. Directors of Christian social service organizations.

Tips on carrying out interviews:

1. Whenever possible, send field researchers out in teams of two. During the interview, one can be asking questions while the other is recording the responses. This may not always be possible or practical.
2. Seek to find the leader of the denomination. If he cannot be found, try to find another key person who would know the information you are looking for. If no one can be found, find out what the leader's schedule is. Come back on another day.
3. Whenever possible, make appointments with the denominational leader ahead of time. Always be prompt to an appointment.
4. Always be polite. Introduce yourself, explain what you are doing and present the leader with the letter of introduction. Explain that you need his help to understand what God is doing among them so this can be a blessing to others.
5. Be familiar with the questionnaire. Always ask the questions in the same order. Never disagree with the leader's answers. Show that you are interested and understand perhaps by nodding your head and by restating what you have heard.
6. Never get into discussions or arguments about doctrine, theology or politics. You are there to learn from this leader. Keep the conversation focused on the survey questions.
7. Record all responses correctly on the questionnaire. Return to questions that were skipped. Ask him to clarify answers that you did not understand. Write answers clearly. Repeat answers as you are writing them down. Make sure you write down the date of the interview and the name of the person you interviewed.
8. Ask the leader for names and addresses of other people whom you should interview. These could be regional leaders, key pastors or evangelists who have a good understanding of what God is doing in the area.

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Understanding the Status of Local Churches in the Targeted Area

The Objectives.

1. You will want to identify and locate every local church or congregation in every community.
2. You will want to determine the total number of the churches, the seating capacity and the total number of people actually attending church;
3. You will want to determine what people groups and sectors of society are being reached;
4. You will want to determine how rapidly and consistently new churches are being planted.
5. With this information you will be able to identify un-churched and unreached communities and peoples, to identify areas and peoples that are noticeably open to the gospel and to set goals for church planting.

The steps involved in the survey:

1. Make a list with name and addresses of all known local churches and congregations in the country. Determine how many and which of these churches you will survey.
2. Inform Church leaders in each geographic area about the purpose of the survey.
3. Design survey forms and other tools for recording the data.
4. Recruit and train a team of field researches to conduct the survey.
5. Prepare letters of introductions from denominational leaders and other Christian organizations known and respected by the majority of the pastors in the area (such as Pastors' Fellowships).
6. Mobilize the researchers to survey the local churches. Add new churches discovered into the survey schedule.
7. Collect and organize all survey forms from the researchers. Implement the data tabulation and analysis plan.

Caution! A Local Church Survey of all congregations requires greater support and involvement of the Church. It also takes a much longer period of time (1 – 4 years, depending on the country). Therefore, we recommend:

1. Do only a sample Local Church Survey (3–5% of all churches) in phase 2.
2. Do a complete Local Church Survey in phase 3.
3. You may find it necessary to do a complete Local Church Survey in place of a Primary Denominational Survey in phase 2. Do this ONLY if the majority of the denominations in the country do not keep reliable or accurate records of active members, attendance and congregations.

Send letters 2 –3 weeks before the survey to key pastors to inform them of the survey.

Provide a letter for the survey teams to use in the interviews.

Developing the survey questionnaire:

1. Limit the number of questions in a local church survey from to five or six. Include only questions that are vital to meet the survey objective. The questionnaire should be designed and to be filled out in 15 – 20 minutes.
2. Questions must be stated clearly. Use simple vocabulary that will be understood by the people you will be interviewing.
3. Have the questionnaire translated into the primary languages spoken in the areas you will be surveying.
4. Test the questionnaire on five to ten people before launching the survey. This will ensure that the questions are understandable.

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Demographic and Ethnic Research

There are different kinds of information to be understood and researched in order to gain a clear and accurate understanding of the spiritual needs and opportunities in the targeted area:

1. Demographic (population makeup, location and density) and the geographic situation
2. Ethnic and people groups
3. The strength (or weakness) of the Church – the available "harvest force"

Understanding the geographic and demographic factors:

1. You will want to describe the demographic makeup of the people in the targeted area (in other words, to determine how many people live in the area, and where they live).
2. You will want to identify the geographic makeup of the targeted area and to count, locate and describe the various kinds of communities (urban and rural);
3. With this information you will be able to identify every community, and to identify, locate and determine the size of every group of people needing to hear the gospel.

Four different kinds of demographic and geographic surveys:

1. **The Initial Demographic Study** - This involves doing library research to gather the vital population data, the number, growth, density and distribution of people within the area.
2. **The Initial Geographic Study** - This study involves describing geographic subdivisions and understanding the administrative or political structures. It also includes a description of the physical and political characteristics of the area.
3. **The Basic Study of the area** - This study involves discovering the physical and social characteristics and the needs of the people.
4. **The Demographic Updates** - This is field research projected to verify or update the vital statistics of the levels.

Understanding the Ethnic and People-Group dynamics of the targeted area:

1. You will want to identify and locate every language and people group in the area;
2. You will want to determine how many people make up each group;
3. You will want to describe the basic characteristics of each group (including religious background, social makeup and other cultural distinctives);
4. You will want to determine the extent of their exposure and response to Christianity and measure their openness to the gospel message;
5. You will want to discover the perceived health and social needs that the Church could help meet to demonstrate Jesus' love and power.
6. This information will allow you to identify every unique people group that needs to hear the Gospel in its own language, culture and condition. You will also be able to determine characteristics about each group that will help you to develop methods to evangelize and plant churches among its people.

Two kinds of Ethnic and People Group Surveys:

1. The Preliminary Study - This study involves making a list of all the known languages and people groups in the country, gathering statistics about their size, growth and distribution in the country, and determining the number and kinds of churches (if any) that exist among them and which ones are growing effectively.
2. The In-depth Studies - This study involves developing a detailed profile on each group (especially on the ones where the need for churches in greatest, based on the population to church ratio) and describing its characteristics to develop possible strategies and methods to use toward further saturation church planting among them.
3. It is important to gather enough detailed information to tell both who the people are and how they can be reached with the gospel message.

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Doing the Demographics/Ethnics Research

The steps involved in the study.

1. Make a list of all known languages spoken throughout the country. Classify them according to those that are indigenous to the country and those that represent expatriate or foreign residents. This can be done through library research and interviews with organizations involved in linguistic work.
2. Make a list of all known people groups within the country and indicate the primary reasons why they are considered a unique people group.
3. Locate the areas and communities in which each language and people group has a significant presence. Determine how many speak each language or make up each people group in each community.
4. Conduct an informal sample survey of several individuals from each group to determine their religious background and their basic cultural distinctive.
5. Recruiting the Researchers:
   - The missionary community is a good resource for conducting research – especial those who are familiar with linguistic work or people groups.
   - Local pastors and church members who are familiar with one or more specific language or people group are also a good resource.

Developing the forms and charts to record the information you will gather:

1. Design the forms and charts to be used for recording geographic and demographic data.
   - Geographic information will include a description of the physical and political characteristics of each geographic level.
   - Demographic information will include the total population, the number of men, women, and youth, the urban and rural populations, the literacy rate, the number of communities and their sizes.
2. Prepare a systematic format for documenting descriptive information gathered from books. Using small note cards or sheets of paper can enable you to do this. Use this format to record information about the history, the political, economic and social climate, and the religious background of the country.
3. Prepare various kinds of brief questionnaires to use in informal interviews with key regional and local figures. Interview government officials (including regional and city planners and statisticians), health and social service people, religious leaders and others.
4. Use a tape recorder in these interviews and then have them transcribed later. Interview a sample of individuals in a region to community to measure their interest, awareness, and potential responsiveness to the gospel.
5. The area of people group research requires more explanation. However, there are a number of other resources that we recommend to help you develop survey forms and questionnaires for use among specific people groups.
   - *That Everyone May Hear: Workbook*, by Ed Dayton, published by MARC (Missions Advanced Research and Communication Center). This workbook will lead you through the steps of research and analysis to describe the people group and to help you determine what steps can be taken to reach the group.
   - *FOCUS! The Power of People Group Thinking*, by John Robb, also published by MARC. This booklet will guide you through understanding the characteristics that define a people group.
   - In addition to these resources, we recommend *The People Profile* form developed by Global Mapping International, Inc. This is an excellent, comprehensive form to summarize a large amount of information on people groups.

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Tips on carrying out the survey:

1. Whenever possible, send out field researchers in teams of two for safety. One can be asking questions while the other is recording the answers. (NOTE: This may not always be practical.)
2. Get started as early in the day as practical. Set a goal for how many interviews you want to conduct each day. Try to cover all the churches in one area at a time to limit time spent in traveling long distances and backtracking. Avoid conducting interviews around meal times.
3. Use whatever street maps are available to locate the church. Ask local residents for directions. Speak to the pastor or leader of the church. If he cannot be found, try to find an elder or deacon of the church. If no one can be found, ask someone about the pastor's schedule. Come back on another day.
4. Always be polite. Introduce yourself, explain what you are doing, and present the pastor with the letter of introduction. Explain the you need his help to understand the status of the Church and what God is doing through the Church in his area.
5. Be familiar with the questionnaire. Always ask the questions in the same order. Never disagree with the respondents' answers. Show that you are interested and understand perhaps by nodding your head and/or by restating what you heard.
6. Never get into discussions or arguments about doctrine, theology or politics. You are there to learn from the pastor. Do not let him go off on a tangent in answering the questions.
7. Record all responses correctly on the questionnaire. Return to questions that were skipped. Ask the pastor to clarify answers that you did not understand. Write answers clearly. Read answers out loud to eliminate misunderstanding. Make sure you write down the date of the interview and the name of the person you interviewed.
8. Go over your list of congregations with the pastor. Ask him to add any he knows are missing from the list. Give these additions to the survey coordinator so they can be incorporated into the survey schedule.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is the target area you have defined for your church planting efforts? What are some methods you can use to determine information about the "harvest field" and "harvest force" in your area? What resources are available?
2. What is the best way to gather the harvest field information that you need? How is the most appropriate way to approach people in your target area? How can you minister to them in the process of doing your research?
3. Name the number one obstacle to your work of church planting. What research is necessary to help you define, address, and remove this obstacle? If removed, how would your church planting effort advance?
4. What is a "call to action"? How is the "call to action" formed? What would the "call to action" be in your region?
5. With whom could you share your research once it is completed? How can you present it in such a way that other churches and/or Christian organizations will catch a vision for church planting in your region?

"Missionary research is spiritual warfare. Satan has held sway for thousands of years in many of the places we will go to, and he is not about to give up his secrets or give the kingdom of God the advantage of strategic information.

"Research is not for the timid, but it can be successfully done by the meek. It is not at all easy, but it is altogether possible when it is done in the power of God, through the Holy Spirit, and for his kingdom."

- Niyi Gbade (Calvary Ministries, Nigeria)

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