

Best Practices in Discipleship

Renewing Our Missional Heritage

This is another must read for every Nazarene pastor and lay leader wanting their church to be more of a missional influence. Beyond just a simple program, these presenters and authors have proven principles in *Best Practices for Discipleship* for the encouraging the ongoing process of evangelism and discipleship in your local church. Here's what they are saying...

“The mission of the church is to lead lost people to faith and discipleship. The contributors to this book are doing this well. They are passionate about mission driven churches - churches that understand that the target audience is outside the church walls. In these pages they describe what it takes to build churches that attract and retain visitors -- unchurched people who learn to love and serve God.”

-Tom Nees

USA/Canada/Mission/Evangelism Director, Kansas City, Missouri

“This book provides valuable information about what God *is doing* to impact our world through His church, ideas about what He *can do* if we'll join Him where He is working, and inspiration of what He *will do* if we allow the creativity of His Spirit to flow in the church today.”

- Bryan Davis

New Life Church of the Nazarene, O'Fallon, Missouri

“As pastors gathered from around the denomination for this Evangelism Summit, there was a feeling that permeated all of us in the room. Regardless of style or method, we all wanted to reproduce ourselves spiritually to make disciples. If you feel the passion for discipleship in your church; if you sense the urgency that this is the time for discipleship, then this book will feed the flame.”

- Jeremy Gomez

Richfield Church of the Nazarene, Otisville, Michigan

"The Evangelism Summit was a time of great inspiration. These are people who are on the front lines doing the job for Christ. Every single presenter has something you can apply immediately to your situation. The concepts presented are absolutely the latest in proven practices!"

- Marc Royer

Crossroads Community Church of the Nazarene, Goshen, Indiana

“Here’s a rare opportunity to visit with some of the best leaders in the Church of the Nazarene from across the USA and Canada. Their proven practices for effective evangelism and discipleship offer an incredible range of options for any other church and pastor to glean for their own ministry. This book is a ‘must read’ every senior pastor, staff member, lay and youth leader, Sunday School teacher and church board member.”

- Jim Dorsey

Evangelism Ministries Director, Kansas City, Missouri

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Published by
Evangelism Ministries
USA/Canada/Mission/Evangelism Department

CONTENTS

Chapter One: Missional Discipleship: <i>Best Practices for Building New Disciples</i>7 by Jim Dorsey
Chapter Two: Small Beginnings for Strong Ministries: <i>Another Look at the Story of Gideon</i>15 by Larry Dahl
Chapter Three: Reclaiming the Great Commission: <i>Your Church's Mission Action Plan</i>31 by Stan Toler
Chapter Four: Making Extraordinary Christ Followers: <i>Out of Ordinary People</i>37 by Wes Humble
Chapter Five: Creating Stickiness: <i>Helping New Decisions Become Disciples</i>47 by Jerry Moen
Chapter Six: Opening the Front Door in Evangelism: <i>Closing the Back Door with Discipleship</i>62 by Marc Royer

Chapter Seven:	Crucial Keys for Missional Growth: <i>Starting and Growing Multicultural Congregations</i>72 by Jean Cidel
Chapter Eight:	Making Disciples One-At-A-Time: <i>Another Option for Discipleship</i>78 by Craig Rench
Chapter Nine:	Effective Evangelism in W.O.R.S.H.I.P.: <i>A Missional Worship Plan</i>87 by Nathan Ward
Chapter Ten:	It Can Happen Anywhere: <i>Accepting Your Missional Challenge</i>98 by Dan Huckins
Chapter Eleven:	God's New Math: <i>An Equation for Prayer Evangelism</i>107 by Brett Rickey
Chapter Twelve:	Healthy Staff = Healthy Church: <i>F.O.C.U.S. Goals for Ministry</i>116 by David Sharpes
	END NOTES132

This book is gratefully dedicated to

Visionary leaders in the Church of the Nazarene

*through these first 100 years,
to whom we owe so very much,
starting churches with much less than we have today,
building the denominational family we know and love;*

Faith-filled leaders serving now

*in the front lines of ministry as
sponsoring pastors, NewStart pastors,
ministry team lay leaders and volunteers,
evangelism leaders, mentors and disciplers,
Sunday School teachers, youth workers, children's teachers; and*

Innovative leaders moving into new paradigms

*reaching the unchurched in our world,
sponsoring the greatest Nazarene congregations yet to be,
leading our strongest new churches in the making and
discipling a new generation of members and leaders.*

Chapter 1

Missional Discipleship:

Best Practices for Building New Disciples

By Jim Dorsey

One of the most encouraging exercises for many church leaders involves on-site visits to other transformational congregations. Some of my most memorable encounters as a pastor involved visits to other churches while on family vacations, particularly ministries that seemed to be making an eternal difference. Now in our work with GROW Magazine, trips to missional ministries have become more regular, but no less encouraging. God's Spirit still works in remarkable and unpredictable ways.

This book allows you to journey into a dozen other ministries and to discover what they are experiencing. Each of the following chapters is presented by pastors who lead congregations fulfilling their unique mission. As you read through these pages, common themes will emerge. And, unique ministry efforts will witness to the innovation and vision casting of these leaders. Some of the ideas in this volume may work well in your ministry context, but all of them will not. They're not intended to be a one-size-fits-all. The cookie cutter, programmatic approaches to evangelism are fading from the scene. As a leader on the frontlines, you must become the expert for your ministry context.

What seems to be emerging is an approach to evangelism that allows for time to process faith. What these presenters repeat throughout these chapters is more than a program, but more of a unifying purpose. All the various ministries in these congregations seem to converge on a common mission for bringing people to faith in Jesus Christ and discipling them into a local community of faith in the Church of the Nazarene. Making more and better disciples became the common theme in all these presentations.

A Discipleship Plan and Process

Because of this overarching theme, these chapters all reflect an evangelism process. By giving attention to evangelism and discipleship as a whole process, these leaders are teaching us how to start and grow new, strong Nazarene ministries. Consider the various stages of assimilation and discipleship of new people, and new believers in particular, in your congregation's mission. Some of these groups may already be developing within your church's fellowship. The objective is moving them through the formation phases, growing in their faith and obedience to all that God may have for them. As an example, consider these groups that may be in your congregation right now:

New Guests

Most church leaders understand strong churches attract new people into their fellowship. One of the presenters said it so well: "New guests = new growth; no guests = no growth." In the following chapters, you'll find a wide range of ideas and insights for connecting with the unchurched in your ministry area. Most struggling congregations need to address this important step in the evangelism process: attracting new people into your ministry. These chapters will discuss ideas to assist your church in this important ministry strategy. What will you do differently to attract new people to faith in Christ?

New Attenders

After opening the front door to first, second and third time guests, then the challenge becomes connecting them into the church's fellowship. One of our presenters called it making the church "sticky;" another described it as "closing the back door." Whatever

the language or approach, intentional steps must be implemented for new people to connect with your church and become an active part of the spiritual family. In these chapters, you'll find multiple concepts and suggestions for making those connections. How will you make meaningful worship a vital part of your discipleship mix?

New Members

Somewhere in the discipleship process of effective evangelism, new believers connect with the mission of your church. Each of these chapters touches on this process that transforms decisions into authentic disciples. How the process happens may vary a great deal. But all agree in the measurable and tangible steps of growing devoted disciples: connecting to the shared mission of the church. For most, this involves the trio of time, talents and treasure in the mission. The requirements for this alignment varied in the different ministries. How is your church connecting with new members?

New Ministry Partners

As disciples grow in their faith, guidance into their specific ministry becomes a growing priority. Each member becomes a minister of God's grace in their fellowship and to their community. Discovering God's call for these members remains a unifying value. As more find their place of personal mission, the mission of the church will move forward. Together, we are able to fulfill God's mission in our community that none of us would be able to do alone. How do your members discover their own ministry calling?

New Leaders

Each of these presenters agreed leadership development remains an important part of their discipleship process. The progress of their ministry depended upon the strength and range of the leadership team in their fellowship. The stability of the ministry, the future growth and development, the ongoing missional passion and effective evangelism were all directly influenced by the pastor and the leadership team for that local congregation. Some of these leaders suggest that everyone leads somehow.¹

One of the typical questions becomes when do people make spiritual breakthroughs in this process? Of course, the answer is as unique as the new believers involved. Some

new attenders step across the line of faith in their first few visits to your worship service. Others need to feel like they belong before they come to believe. Just as no set pattern emerges in scripture, most involved with effective missional ministry today would allow adequate time for God's truth and His Spirit to transform lifestyles and personal values.

What you will read in the following pages will be how these leaders and congregations are seeing the best results in discipling these various segments in their congregation. Evangelism can no longer just be about making decisions to accept Christ as Lord and Savior. Effective evangelism encourages this faith process in the lives of disciples, to holy service in fulfilling their own mission in the context of a community of faith.² Then, each ministry begins to disciple a whole new generation of new leaders.

Our fastest growing church in the USA in 2005 was in Yuba City, California. This remarkable congregation under the pastoral leadership of Pastor Gary Moore grew during the past year in average worship over 400 per week. As Pastor Moore joined the rest of the innovative leaders at our recent Evangelism Summit to exchange insights and ideas, he brought the discussion back to the centrality of worship. He called it "Looking at the Big Picture." The next several pages are Pastor Moore's descriptions of the importance of a larger view of worship to all our efforts for evangelism and discipleship.

The Big Picture

"Jesus responds to Peter's confession that Jesus is 'the Christ, the Son of the living God,' by saying, "I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."³ I am not sure how seriously we take Jesus in that we usually think we are the ones who will build the church. Did Jesus mean what He said, or was He just talking to fill the moment? If He meant what He said, what implications does that hold for us as pastors and leaders of the church?

"Evangelism, however we may define it, is usually seen and understood as one of the major components of building the church. It is one of Rick Warren's five purposes of the church as explained in his book, *The Purpose Driven Church*. Most of us who have been educated in Bible Colleges and Seminaries have had some similar model that we have worked from in our understanding of how we go about building the church. I might also add that most, or at least, many of us have been frustrated by the lack of evangelism that

takes place in the life of our local churches. There are many reasons for that, and we all know them very well.

“Perhaps one reason for this frustration is that we have considered evangelism in a context that is really too small. We see it as one of the components, or one of the building blocks, or one of the necessary ingredients in building a church. Maybe one reason that the people in our churches are not really excited or motivated about evangelism is that we have placed it in an unworthy context. Much of that context has been an American worldview rather than a kingdom of God worldview. While we do not have time here to delve deeper, an American worldview always ends with the question, what’s in it for me? When we transfer that to evangelism, to reaching people for Christ, we can see that it really does not sufficiently answer the American question.

“So, realizing that we have not had the time to discuss the worldview issue, we will jump straight to the context issue. How do we place evangelism in a greater context? We know all the great scriptures that mandate us to reach the lost.⁴ What else could we say? Well, let’s try.

The Spiritual Conflict

“Revelation says, ‘There was war in heaven.’⁵ Now, if ever there was an amazing phrase in the Bible, it would be one. There are all kinds of questions about how, who, and why. We will leave those for now and just deal with the reality of this war and some of its consequences. The dragon, one that was fighting against Michael and God’s angels, was finally hurled out of heaven. This dragon, who we find out in other places, was Lucifer, the devil, and Satan; however you want to name him. He was not killed, but along with a third of the angels, who were fighting on his side, was kicked out of heaven. They were hurled to the earth. When did this happen? We don’t know, but it happened. We also know, from many other Scriptures, that this dragon was given dominion over the earth. We could question why and for what purpose, but the truth is he is the ruler of this earth.

“Now, God has never left the picture, but now He involves man. He covenants with man, beginning with Adam and Eve, then Abraham and the children of Israel, then through Jesus Christ and all who follow Him. What is the purpose of this covenant? Well, the best description is found in Colossians.⁶ There we learn that God is in the

process ‘to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.’ In other words, what God is up to until Jesus returns for his bride, the church, is reconciliation. Is that not evangelism? Of course, it is. He is reconciling all things, and all people unto himself through Christ.

“Now, according to the Word of God, God has chosen to do this through His covenant people, which on this side of the incarnation is the church, the body of Christ. In this light, the statement of Jesus to Peter that we read earlier is perhaps seen in new light. Jesus is about building his church. This is the flow of history. This is the movement of the universe. God is reconciling all things through what Christ has done on the cross. And He has chosen to use us, His covenant people, to accomplish this great reconciliation. How do we know this? Well, it is all over His word, but let’s look for a moment at II Corinthians 5.

“Paul had been in Corinth and started the church there. After receiving some reports on how things were going after he left, he felt compelled to write them and instruct them in certain areas where perhaps they had lost their focus. In the latter half of the fifth chapter of his second epistle, he zeroes in on the heart of the matter. In verse 11, he states that because they know God and who He is, they try and persuade men. Again, we do not have time to do all the background work, but Paul is talking about worship.

Encounter the Living God

“Worship is where we truly encounter the living God. As we encounter the living God in worship, we will learn and experience the heart of God. We will become passionate for what God is passionate about. What is that? Reconciliation. As we read in Peter, God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (Read Psalm 51 and see how the new, clean heart of David was a heart of worship and a heart for reconciliation.)

“So, Paul goes on then to say that our motivation is the love of Christ, or the heart of God. (v.14) Out of this experience of God develops a conviction. It is a conviction, we learn in verses 14-15, that Christ died for us and He died for all. Because of this conviction, we should no longer live for ourselves, but for Him who died for us.

“Remember when we talked about worldview? Well, now, in verse 16, we get to worldview. ‘So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view.’ In other

words, the bottom line question is no longer, ‘What’s in it for me?’ as the American worldview. The question is, ‘What is God doing?’ because out of conviction, I am living for Him. What God is doing is reconciling the world, the universe, and all that is in it, to Himself through what Christ has done on the cross.

“Much, probably even most, of our evangelism is done from a motivation less than the conviction just laid out for us in these verses. Now, God’s grace is so great that some do come to know him, even when the motivation is less than what it should be. There are examples of that in Scripture. This conviction that Jesus died for me and He died for all will not be more than words to us unless we are truly people of worship. We must journey often to the cross and be struck over and over again by the overwhelming grace of God and what he has done for us.

“Verse 17 gives us a brilliant picture of this reconciliation. We are new creatures, new creations, in Christ Jesus. The old has gone, the new has come. This is not just bad habits and sinful practices, though they would be included. This is a new worldview, new values, new purposes, and new contexts. Some of these are described in the following verses. We have been given the message of reconciliation (God does not hold men’s sins against them because of Christ) and we have been given the ministry of reconciliation (he describes this ministry as God reconciling the world to Himself in Christ) and we have been appointed Christ’s ambassadors, as though God makes His appeal through us. In other words, Jesus is building His church, and He has committed Himself to doing it through us.

What God is Doing

“Evangelism, then, is not just a component by which we build the church. It is what God is doing in the universe and he is using His covenant people to accomplish His purpose. We, as his covenant people, need to simply get in the flow of what God is doing. This was certainly the flow of the Holy Spirit that began at Pentecost and moved through the world as described in the book of Acts. It is the same Holy Spirit that flows today. We just need to let the river flow. Our question then becomes, not how can we build the church, but what are we doing, or not doing, to block the reconciling flow of God in our lives and in our churches?”

These thoughts from Pastor Gary Moore chart the course for the rest of the discussion in the following chapters. You will soon realize all the presenters in these chapters have a different approach for extending the Kingdom in the lives of others. The missional task encompasses a wide range of spiritual concerns. Some of these ministry models described in the following pages will appeal to you; no doubt others will not. We hope you and the other leaders in your church will be able to discuss what best fits your ministry context and begin to implement some of the ideas you'll review. When it works in your situation, we will celebrate those victories and changed lives.

Workable definitions for evangelism and discipleship are woven between the lines in these chapters as well. Whether "making family out of spiritual strangers," guiding people to become "Christ followers" or creating more of a Christ-like disciple, the strategies for building more and better disciples remains a central theme through each of these discussions. You and your church leaders can begin to discuss how you measure spiritual formation and track the discipleship progress in the lives of your new believers and members. Aligning your ministries to that crucial mission may well determine the strength and eternal impact of all your work.

We want to express our appreciation to all these presenters who gave so generously for helping in ministries of evangelism and discipleship. Many of their resources have been made available for you, either on-line or by ordering from their church's websites. Their contact information is available at the end of this book, if you have particular interest in visiting their websites or contacting their church offices. Additional resources and discussion guides for this book are available at no cost at www.NazEvangelism.org.

We hope your church will experience new adventures in missional ministry as your leadership teams discuss these chapters together and launch into new missional action plans for your church.

Chapter 2

Small Beginnings for Strong Ministries:

Another Look at the Story of Gideon

by Larry Dahl

The strength of vision and the ability to identify un-reached people is sometimes more important than the size of the sponsoring congregation. Drawing from lessons learned from numerous NewStarts on Canada West District (CWD), this chapter will explore ideas, thoughts and principles for starting strong new ministries from small beginnings. A story told here in Canada illustrates this so well:

Two mountain men sat on a log one day looking out across a valley and a distant mountain range. One of the men was a muscular giant of a man who sat still and quiet. The other man beside him was considerably smaller, restless and fidgety. The conversation went like this:

*The little man said, "I'll bet yah thar's some big bears up in them thar hills."
The big man replied, "Uh-huh."*

*"I wish I was a big man. Know what I would do if I was a big man like you?"
"Uh-huh," responded the big man.*

“If I was a big man like you, why I’d go up into them thar hills and I’d catch me one of them thar big bears – and I fight him” said the little man. “I’d tear him limb from limb. Yes sir, that’s what I would do if I was a big man like you!”

There was a brief, quiet pause for a moment and then the big man turned to the little man and said: “Yah know, there’s plenty of little bears up in them thar hills too!”

I love this story because it illustrates a quality of human nature that reasons: “If only we were bigger, if only we were stronger, if only we had more money, we would do many more great things.” There are times when we have convinced ourselves that only the great, the strong, and the powerful can do great things for God. It is true that bigger can be good, and stronger is desirable, and more money can be a help – but it does not always exclude us from becoming involved in those things that are vital and important. Bigger is not always easier, it’s just bigger.

It would be of interest to note that J.K. Warrick as pastor of Olathe College Church, now a General Superintendent in the Church of the Nazarene, and Bob Huffaker as former pastor of Grove Church of the Nazarene, have led the two largest churches in the denomination. Both of these exceptional leaders came from Grassland, Texas – a small town of only 150 people. It is my purpose in this chapter to remind us that the small size of a congregation does not exclude it from starting strong new ministries. When we consider that a majority of churches in North America are fewer than 100 in worship attendance, it is important to find ways to engage these churches in helping to expand the ministry of the church through strong NewStarts.

The context out of which I will draw the best practices contained in this article is Canada West District (CWD). Geography is a major challenge as the CWD covers three Canadian provinces spanning an area of almost 2 million square kilometers or 757,000 square miles. If you add in the two territories of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories it covers a total land mass of over 5 million square kilometers, or over 2 million square miles. The CWD consists of 37 established congregations and three compassion ministries. Eleven of those churches run less

than 50 people in worship attendance; 12 have less than 100 in worship attendance; and only three churches run more than 200 in worship. Under the leadership of the District Superintendent, Daniel Gales, the district congregations were challenged to take seriously the Faith Projections submitted to the General Superintendent at the 2001 District Assembly. That Faith Projection included, among other things, establishing 40 NewStarts by 2008, the centennial year of our denomination. At the time of this writing, local congregations have declared and started work on developing 33 NewStarts. The ideas and principles shared in this chapter arise, in large part, from the inspiration of their stories.

As a preacher I am always looking for a biblical framework upon which to hang my thoughts. From the outset of this project the Old Testament Judge Gideon¹ seemed a fitting character to model some of the behaviors that reflect the essential qualities for both NewStart sponsors and leaders. His story is especially relevant when dealing with the matter of small beginnings, limited resources and capabilities. Consider their qualities.

Some Level of Dissatisfaction

All change begins with some level of dissatisfaction. It is not hard to imagine Gideon's dissatisfaction with the status quo at the time that his story unfolds in Judges 6. His people have been reduced to living like savages, finding what limited shelter they can among the clefts and caves of the land. They are subject to the will and whim of the Midianites, Amalekites, and others who regularly swarm into their land and strip them of all the crops they have worked so hard to grow and all the livestock so carefully nurtured.

In those days, a farmer would normally harvest his wheat and take it to the top of a high hill where he would flail the grain to separate the kernels of wheat from the stalks of grain. The advantage of the hill was that it was exposed to breezes which would both cool the worker and blow away the dust and chaff. High hills, however, are also very public and when you are being victimized by every raiding party in the area you can't risk being seen. Gideon had been reduced to hiding away in the sheltered enclosure of a wine press. The location we are told would have

been in a valley area, out of sight, but also out of range of any helpful wind or breeze.

Anyone who has worked with grain will tell you that one of the truly undesirable jobs is shoveling out a grain shed on a hot, summer day. It is sweaty, difficult work and the dust and chaff work their ways into your clothing to stick to your skin, scratch, and irritate. The fine dust fills the air and seems drawn to ears, eyes and nose making everything dirty and unpleasant. Gideon might be protected from exposure but I can imagine that every swing of the flail was a reminder of how defeated and helpless he and his people were. No doubt the image of his family huddled in a cold and remote cave or a flimsy shelter, hungry and afraid, burned in his mind. But what was he able to do?

There is surely nothing more humiliating than believing you are powerless to do anything but try to survive. And in moments like that, it's hard to consider what more could be done? The Scripture indicates that it was at that terribly difficult time in the life of the people of Israel, that they began to cry out for God to help them. As unpleasant as it might seem, dissatisfaction is an important first step to real and meaningful change.

What will it take for us to be moved in that same way? To convince us that we cannot guarantee the existence of the church by just gathering more people into a single church. Certainly one of the clear messages coming through the analysis of the church of today is the feeling that doing church in the same old way is a recipe for extinction.

As long as Gideon's view of his world took in only the winepress and the meeting of the immediate needs of a few, there could be no great work to respond to the wider need of the nation. Gideon needed to move his line of sight from the confines of the wine-press to the wider need of the world outside. In the same way churches, big or small, need to come to that same sense of urgency about the need of people around us.

The local pastors made the first listing of projections in 2001. Subsequently they were asked to take those projections to their Church boards and congregations for review and acceptance. The very act of considering these projections made it clear that the grass-roots of the church *wanted* their churches to move beyond the

walls. It exposed a missional heart and, in some cases, it was the first time the church leaders and congregations considered the important question: “Who are the un-reached people in our community?”

Dissatisfaction that is left unaddressed, however, will lead only to discontent. A second strategic move was to ask congregational leaders to develop a plan of action to help them fulfill these faith projections. This second missional characteristic behavior then became evident.

An Openness for God’s Use

The Scriptures express it so beautifully in the story of Gideon. The Bible says “Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon.”² A more accurate and literal reading of that verse, according to Lloyd John Ogilvie would read; “The Spirit of the Lord clothed Himself with Gideon.”³ Here Gideon’s life was maximized by the Holy Spirit’s presence which virtually used him as a riverbed through which God would work. What ‘openness’ requires is a willingness to let God use you in *His* way, as opposed to the way you want to be used.

It is interesting to note that corresponding with the focusing on Faith Projections and the larger vision that it created, was a movement among numerous individuals working in many different fields and careers who began to consider a call to clergy ministry. At the time of this writing there are close to 90 individuals on Canada West District who have indicated God’s call to some form of intentional ministry, many of them second career.

This new openness to trying something risky and challenging became, we found, a beginning point for re-vitalizing old and established churches. The vast majority of the churches on Canada West District have been in existence for 40 years or more. Church planting models of the past left the impression that only strong, large churches or the district could afford to be involved with planting new congregations. Yet, district initiated and funded plants too often struggled to become independent from district support. A new way to start strong, new Nazarene churches was introduced.

There was an intentional change in the language being used. Instead of church plants we started to use the broader term: NewStart. “Zones” became “Mission

Areas;” “Zone coordinators” became “Mission Area Facilitators.” There was the establishing of the new position of Missional Transition Coach. A full-time district staff position intentionally insulated from administrative roles in order to allow the Missional Coach the freedom to work closely with local congregations and clergy leaders. All of this was in an attempt to help local congregations to reach their Faith Projections.

The NewStart emphasis created a new understanding and a sense of permission for congregations of all sizes to try something new. A great illustration of this is the NewStart Summer ministry on Hecla Island.⁴ Hecla is a small summer resort area north of the city of Winnipeg. John and Maxine Ingalls are active members of Winnipeg New Hope Community Church and own a cottage on Hecla. Each Friday evening they would return to Winnipeg so they could be ready to be involved in their church.

One day, as they drove in they noticed the volume of traffic heading out of the city to the resort Maxine said to John: “Something is wrong with this picture! We leave when everyone is coming here. We have been praying for an opportunity to influence our family and friends spiritually. What does God have to do? Kick us in the head before we can see the open door!” With the support and help of their local church pastor and congregation they have launched a summer ministry that reached an average of 75 people each Sunday the summer of 2006. It began with a burden and an openness to be used by God. And then, the openness can move into some type of action.

Obedience to God’s Will

Obedience to God’s will require that we rid ourselves of anything else that is a competing loyalty. Gideon found that before he and the people of Israel could move forward some things needed to go. The very night of his encounter with the angel of the Lord Gideon was called upon to pull down his father’s altars to false gods and to build a proper altar to the Lord. It symbolized Gideon’s determination to depend upon God for all of his needs.

Each church leader and congregation need to consider what competing loyalties they need to address in determining to begin something new. Success, affluence,

comfort – are just a few of those things that can test the resolve of a church and pastor to become involved in sponsoring a NewStart. Matters of growth, finances, and progress are important in all the work we do as a church. Questions like: “How much will this cost us?” “Who is going to do this?” “How will it impact our local ministry?” are very good questions that need to be asked. But not if they are the first questions asked. The first missional question is always: “What would God have us to do?”

E. Stanley Jones reminds us that, for those in Christian ministry – with a faith that has a cross at its center - success and failure are incidental to what we do and who we are.⁵

The parable of the talents is a call for us to be good stewards with what we have been given. As I read over the parable recently I realized that God’s expectation for each person was the same – only the amount they had been entrusted with was different. Each person was expected to make the most of what they had been given. It is a reminder that God doesn’t want us to think that the amount we have is important, but that we use what we do have – even if it is just a little bit. *There was no excuse for not doing something.* NewStart sponsor congregations are typically marked by a desire to grow – but also by generosity and a willingness to sacrifice for the right reason. They put faith to action.

Consider, for example, Manoj Ingle, the Winnipeg New Hope pastor who affirmed and encouraged the Ingalls in their summer ministry. Each spring he and his congregation celebrate this ministry beyond their walls by taking time in a Sunday service to have the congregation gather around John and Maxine to pray for and bless them as they prepare for this summer ministry. Pastor Ingles encourages people to travel to Hecla from time to time in the summer to be a support. He also knows that he is losing a key couple during the time of year that is critical for the church’s traditional summer outreach events. Yet his understanding of the importance of being obedient to God’s will is such that he has said:

“Imagine, if John and Maxine had continued returning to New Hope Church, Sunday after Sunday, like good Christians, and just sat in the church and then returned to the Island? If they had been like many typical church-going Christians, those 100 people and many more may

not have heard about Jesus Christ. Many would not have learned to study the word of God or consider the value of Bible studies and daily devotions.”

Expect to be Scared

Once you entertain the idea of doing whatever God requires you – there will be some frightening and scary moments. Almost every pastor or church leader who has felt the call to consider sponsoring a NewStart has, somewhere along the way, indicated that this is a scary thing to do. I almost believe that if I don't hear that kind of sentiment expressed in the early planning stage there is reason to think they don't understand what they are about to begin!

Some time ago a T-shirt manufacturer made a lot of money selling “No Fear” shirts. They had strong, sports-oriented slogans that challenged people to stretch themselves. Slogans like: “You miss 100% of the baskets you don't shoot – No Fear.” A friend of mine told me of a T-shirt he saw that said: “Some Fear,” and then the follow-up line: “Because if you don't have some fear, you're not going fast enough!”

I have often thought we should commission a line of T-shirts for Christians patterned after that which say: “Some Faith, because if you don't have some faith you aren't going where you need God to help you!” NewStart leaders invariably have an attitude that sees some fear as the sign of a new opportunity.

One of the reasons Gideon is so appealing as a character to study is because he is so clearly human – he is like us. While Gideon tore down the false idols of his father, he did it at nighttime in order to avoid open conflict. His caution and tentativeness is seen in many different places. Consistently in Gideon's story and in the lives of those who have taken the step to initiate new ministries for reaching people for Christ we discover that fear is always countered best by faith.

Ken St. Germain is a Metis⁶ by birth and a welder by trade. He is a member of North Country Community Church of the Nazarene in Grande Prairie, Alberta. Ken was wonderfully saved a number of years ago from a life of desperate alcoholism. As a new believer he carried a deep concern for his own people and his family who do not know Christ and with the support of his pastor, Mel Siggelkow, and the small

congregation at North Country initiated a ministry to a Metis Colony four hours north of Grande Prairie.

Ken is wonderfully open about what he sees as his own short-comings and inadequacies in becoming involved in this ministry but he has worked at overcoming his fear for the sake of this faith venture. He recently has also stepped out on faith to work part time so that he can more effectively work with area reservations. Responding to God's call into this area of ministry has resulted in numerous opportunities for him to speak to groups and to be involved in consulting with various aboriginal organizations. Moving ahead on faith instead of fear, he has discovered open doors of ministry to at least four major reserves in the North Country.

The Quality of Prayerfulness

We see the quality of prayerfulness all the way through Gideon's life. He appears to have a close conversation with God on a number of occasions that speaks of a vital, well-established prayer life. Consider, for example, that in recognition of the divine messenger who has come to him he sets an offering down before the angel of the Lord.

With a touch from the angel's staff the meat and unleavened bread is incinerated and then the messenger of the Lord disappears. Gideon is afraid for his life because he has looked upon the angel of the Lord face-to-face. But he is given immediate assurance from the Lord that he is not going to die.⁷ The physical presence of the angel was gone but Gideon recognized God's voice – evidence that talking to God was a regular practice.

Too often prayerfulness is assumed. Consider the demand placed upon NewStart pastors, particularly those who are by-vocational, and it is not hard to imagine the many ways they can find their time siphoned away from spiritual reflection and prayer. Jim Dorsey, Director of Evangelism Ministries for USA/Canada Mission/Evangelism Department (UCME), assisted Canada West District with an initial promotional training for NewStarts and with a return visit some months later to help equip pastors and leaders in starting new works. In each of the meetings he stressed the importance of making the first priority the business

for NewStart pastors and leaders the matter of building their prayer support lists. He emphasized that prayerfulness needed to be more than just a casual assumption, but must be a clear and intentional effort. There are several reasons why this is critical to the work of developing NewStarts no matter how abundant or how limited the resources.

First, NewStarts are invariably ministries that are focused on re-claiming the hearts of lost and disaffected people. We have to make the assumption that it will not happen without significant spiritual warfare. In the fall of 2005, as a part of an initiative to explore what it will take to start new ministries with and for First Nations peoples of Canada West,⁸ Mike Andrews, Director of Native Ministries for the Church of the Nazarene and John Nells, District Superintendent of the Navajo District traveled with across the District on a tour, and called it a ‘trail ride.’

They met with Indian chiefs, elders, local church ministers, and a host of people involved or interested in working alongside Native Christians. They traveled over 5,000 km. and had over 20 separate meetings and round-table discussion over nine days. The result of the trail ride was a report outlining eight specific strategic areas of ministry initiative. The most universal and often repeated theme in our meetings, whether in the church or on the reserve, was the need for concentrated, focused, intercessory prayer. Many of the aboriginal leaders and lay workers on the reservations spoke of spiritual oppression and bondage over some of the reservations which could only be countered by prayer.

Second, on a personal level, the creation of a spiritual discipline in prayer and spiritual formation is critical for the NewStart pastor. Often they are being called upon to begin their ministry in a vacuum without the normal structures of church life. Outside prayer support keeps them from being totally alone.

A third value of the prayer support group is for energy and support. NewStart ministers, especially in small beginnings, will be taxed to the limits. Like Aaron and Hur holding up Moses’ arms⁹ during the battle with the Amalekites – so faithful prayer partners bring support to the solitary NewStart pastor.

Finally, there is no more important value to pass on to people new to this work, and in many cases new to the faith, than the many ways God is at work in response to our praying. Countless numbers of NewStart and Sponsor pastors tell me that one

of the great sources of joy for them is being able to recount to their people and the people on their prayer lists the remarkable answers to prayer.

Choose the Right Team

As has been already mentioned, one of the reasons God selected Gideon was his openness to being lead and his obedience to God's will. Nowhere do we see this tested more clearly than in Gideon's defeat of the Midianites as told in Judges chapter 7. With an army of 32,000 men he was overwhelmingly out-numbered. The Midianites had a force of 135,000 tried and tested men of war.

Incredibly God's first comment to Gideon is that he has 'too many men' and he instructs him to send home all those who are afraid. Gideon loses over two-thirds of his army just by sending the fearful ones away. "There are still too many", God tells Gideon and he sets out a means of determining which men behave in ways most consistent with a warrior. His ranks are instantly reduced to a bare minimum of 300 men. The story is familiar to Sunday School children everywhere – how with 300 men and only torches and trumpets Gideon led his men to the destruction of a once great and mighty army.

An essential component in any NewStart venture is the selection of the right launch team. We can draw some lessons from Gideon. First, the Fearful need not apply to be a part of a NewStart team. Launching a new work, as has already been mentioned, requires a willingness to venture into areas which will not always be secure and comfortable. It is essential to have people of faith both in God's calling to this work and in the leader who is giving direction to the NewStart ministry.

There is a concept I have come to refer to as the 'God gap' – the lag time between when you act and when God moves. It is not that God has not gone ahead of us, and it is not that He is reluctant to move and act for us, nor is it that He is incapable of acting first. But we would not be able to enjoy the chance to know God has been in this all the way in any other way than by stepping out in faith first. It's about our need – not God's ability.

NewStart sponsor pastor, Gregg Rustulka, made this comment about the kind of people it will take to initiate a new ministry:

“Vision and passion go farther than qualifications and will bring longevity better than anything else. We must move out of the administrative mindset, and protectionist mindset, and look to place people, even if they have warts, in the place where they have a vision, and a passion for the vision of that place.”

Secondly, faith alone is not the only necessary component for members of a NewStart team. As with Gideon’s army there are certain behaviors which are necessary. Gideon’s 300 were selected by watching to see which warriors remained vigilant during the simple act of drinking water. Those who set aside their weapons and knelt to drink were vulnerable to attack from others; those who lapped water from their hands were not. Its not that one method was wrong and the other right – just that one was better suited for battle than another.

In similar ways NewStart teams will operate in manners different from that of a regular established church. A study of several failed church plants on Canada West District a decade ago revealed that many of the team members of those church plants came from mature, established congregations and made assumptions based on the church structures they came from. Matters such as signage, advertising and types of scheduled programming reflected the churches they came from and not the community they were trying to reach. While everyone was well-intentioned, not all were well suited for starting a new church community. The NewStart strategy for starting strong, new Nazarene churches the right way outlines ten components that should be in place to help start strong new churches.¹⁰ Finding the right launch team is one of the three top issues for strong, new works.

Selfless Humility

Gideon knew his origins, his limitations, and his past failures so he never attributes accomplishments to himself but always to God. In this way he is able to avoid the trap that snared so many great men of faith who let their egos turn their heads and hearts.

Consider, for example, his conversation with the Ephraimites.¹¹ Ego is written all over the words of the men of Ephraim, but Gideon’s response: “What have I

accomplished compared to you?” is so empty of guile and cunning that they lose their defensiveness.

Here is a quality too essential in NewStart Sponsor church leadership and NewStart leaders to pass over. Jim Collins, in *Good to Great*, indicates that humility was a surprising quality found in almost all of the leaders of great organizations. He described it as a willingness to allow others to receive the credit and accolades rather than promoting oneself. Starting strong new ministries from small beginnings would not be possible without generous open-hearted people who do the work and pay the price without regard for who receives the credit.

The Calgary North Hill church is a good example. As an older and established congregation in a land-locked location it recognized that it would be unlikely that they could retain many of the young married couples who came through their doors – so they promoted the new church plant that was using their building for office space and allowed the NewStart pastor to recruit any of those who came to the church and were interested in helping it to begin.

The result was that several of the core families who helped to start New Life Fellowship came through old North Hill. That story could be retold countless times as we consider what it takes for a pastor and a congregation to share their resources (finances, time, people) for the sake of helping another new work begin. II Corinthians 9:10-15 becomes a testimonial to that kind of sacrifice.

In the same way, NewStart pastors are often assessed as having exceptional skills and abilities in all the qualities necessary for a good church pastor. Yet they set aside the security of an established ministry for the risk and uncertainty of beginning a ministry focused on reaching those who are not yet a part of Christ’s kingdom. Very little would happen without the necessary quality of ‘selfless humility.’

Persistence to Final Victory

Gideon and his small team of soldier did not confuse the first victory with the final victory. They continued to pursue the Midianite army as it fled the country. On two occasions he sought for help from others on the way, but received nothing. Yet he continued until he had captured the last of the Midianite rulers.

Mark Noonan, NewStart pastor of RockyView Ministries, a satellite congregation of Calgary East Church of the Nazarene stated: “Starting is not hard – the work involved in keeping the ministry going is what is hard.” The harder part of ministry is always keeping at the work. The kind of leadership that is needed for a NewStart, particularly when the sponsoring church is small and limited, is the kind that does not give up but keeps on pursuing the mission and purpose with which the NewStart began.

Persistence includes a personal dedication for the long haul on the part of the sponsoring church and the NewStart leader. Don’t get into this if you are not planning to stay in it until the work is established and on its feet.

Dedication to Detail

True permanence for any ministry requires more than just a stubborn resistance to quitting. It also needs sufficient structure in place to sustain the work. That will require spiritual formation, thoughtful strategy, and an effective deployment of resources. It is interesting to read of Gideon’s attention to detail in his battle against the Midianite army. From the late night scouting trip into their camp, to the deployment of his men in three groups and the careful instructions about timing, he was operating with a careful plan of action laid out. He sends messengers out to recruit allies, he petitions others for food and supplies.

Especially for NewStarts arising from small beginnings there is a need for careful and detailed planning in order to sustain the work for the long term. Those who are experienced in NewStarts have determined that the greatest danger for any new work is starting too soon. The excitement of beginning and the urge to get started is almost a natural drive for NewStart leaders. A premature start, however, reveals a host of details that have not been completely worked through and they put at risk the long-term impact of the ministry. The principle of the ‘critical few’ is a concept first taught to me by Bryan Roller, pastor of Calgary New Life Fellowship, now Skyview Community. The principle says “Only do the critical few things that you can do well.”

The tragic side of Gideon’s story is that after his death the people of Israel were again drawn into worship of the Baals. They even failed to honor the memory of

what Gideon did for them. The large and great victories are important and exciting – but the small detail of training and rising up spirit-filled leaders is also a critical part of ministry that will last. There are many examples of NewStarts that began well but failed to be sustained after the departure of the key leader because structure and spiritual development did not keep pace with the new outreach.

Hopeful Confidence

We would have to confess that Gideon is not a natural hero. Courage is not something that exudes from him. If anything he is timid, insecure and somewhat whiny. Yet he so effectively illustrates for us that there can arise within even the most timid and unsure person a confident hope when we let God work with and through us.

In all the symbolism of Gideon's story nothing is more significant than the altar that he builds at the place where he first encounters the angel of the Lord.¹² He, the youngest member of an insignificant family in a minor tribe, is about to be called into battle and warfare with a fierce and powerful foe. From this point forward he will be asked to carry a responsibility that is far beyond what he feels he is capable of. And he marks the event with an altar that he called: "The Lord is Peace". We can assume that what it meant for him is that he had peace both *the Peace of God* and *Peace with God*. Any venture into the unknown will require that.

The peace of God will enable us to find a settled center upon which to rely when nothing else seems to make sense and doubt threatens to move in. Peace with God is at the heart of all that we desire for those we seek to reach. This point could have come almost anyplace in this article – but I leave it for the last in hopes that it is seen as the critical truth that each person attempting a NewStart latches onto in those moments when it all seems very overwhelming. I can imagine Gideon, the night before going into battle, or at a time of grinding fatigue and weariness, pausing to think back to the beginning of this mission – remembering the altar that he built with his own hands – and its message of reminder – God is my peace.

Conclusion

This chapter is written as an observer. My 25 years of pastoral ministry and five years as NewStart District Coordinator for CWD have been relatively secure. The churches I have served were established and stable in many ways. I never had to hold down a full-time job outside the work of the church to help make ends meet. I confess to being humbled and in awe of these NewStart leaders – both sponsoring pastors and NewStart leaders. They have demonstrated faith and courage in tangible and risky ways but with such conviction that I almost envy their adventure. All I have reported here is what I have learned by walking alongside of them. It is a tribute, I trust, to their zealous passion for Christ and their willingness to sacrifice so much for the dream of seeing God work in the lives of His missing children. God is at work – even in the small things – to do great things for His glory.

Chapter 3

Reclaiming the Great Commission:

Your Church's Mission Action Plan

By Stan Toler

The Great Commission hasn't been de-commissioned. Some would have you think that the mandate of worldwide evangelization had been mothballed like an outdated naval carrier. Dr. Billy Graham said that one of the greatest hindrances to evangelism today is the poverty of our own experience in evangelism. Could it be true?

An interesting book title, *Reclaiming the Great Commission*, drew me to its book review. The reviewer talked about the author's plea for the church to turn outward—to refocus its attention on mission rather than maintenance. Could it be that we have focused our spiritual strengths on attracting people to our programs and properties in order to raise our statistics?

Should the predominate method of building the Kingdom be pillaging another congregation and taking its members captives to our great church campuses? I hope not. At the core of every church's mission or statement of purpose is an underlying commitment to reach the lost and disciple the found.

I have spent my ministerial career trying to build strong, healthy growing churches. I have committed my life to expanding the kingdom of God through the ministries of the local church. For years, I have taught seminars, conferences, and in college classrooms

that church growth apart from evangelization is merely assimilation. There's a better way, and we must re-employ it. Jesus, the Lord of the Harvest, told His disciples to work while there is daylight. He said darkness is approaching; there will be a nighttime of disbelief and missed opportunity.

The Challenges of Evangelism

Not long ago I heard my friend, Warren Bird share the following statements at a lectures series in Louisville, Kentucky. His research revealed that by 2020:

- Over 42 percent of the United States will be single.
- Approximately 52 percent of the United States will be over 50.
- Native-born Americans will be in the minority.
- Nearly 130 million Hispanics will live in the USA; with two percent Christian.
- Over 70 million followers of Islam will live in America.
- More missionaries will be coming to the United States than going from it.

What must the church do to remain viable? It must do the very thing that characterized it at the start: *evangelize*. The shifting trends of urbanization, expanding non-Christian religions, and secular humanism can only mean one thing: the American mission field has emerged and we are called into the harvest.

We need to mobilize. We must turn from shuffling saints from one set of bleachers to another. We must take to the field and “do the work of an evangelist.” Every believer must commit themselves to winning the lost to Christ, and then discipling the found through vibrant local church ministries.

To do that, we must face the reality of what's happening in local churches:

1. Most churches are not committed to evangelism.
2. Very few churches have adopted a distinct evangelism plan.
3. There's a whole lot of transfer growth going on!
4. Discipleship ministries is sadly lacking in the church world.

We must “reclaim the Great Commission!”

The Plan for Evangelism

Evangelism must not be an optional plan of the church—it must be an essential priority. The word “*evangel*” comes from Greek and Latin words, meaning “one who

brings good news.” An evangelist brings good news of the gospel. They are living witnesses to the gospel. They have internalized the cross and its claims. They are trophies of grace who cannot be content to sit on the shelf. They must *externalize* what they have experienced. “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.”¹

Evangelists are developed in local churches. Those churches that develop evangelists might be called evangelistic churches. What do they have in common?

- They develop winning relationships with unbelievers.
- They constantly focus on outreach.
- They embrace new ideas without hesitation.
- They give evangelism a high priority in budget matters.

The mission of worldwide evangelization, then, begins with local church leaders who will purposefully commit time and resources to equipping Christians to share their faith—in their immediate community.

The gospel message remains the same.² But methods for sharing it vary from time to time, and from church to church. Helmut Thielicke said, “The gospel must be preached afresh and told in new ways to every generation.” There are some essentials.

Pray for a Harvest of Souls

Whatever the method, evangelism always starts at the same place: prayer. Prayer is the primary ingredient for effective evangelism. “After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.”³

Study the Needs of the Community

What are the basic needs of the church’s primary target for evangelization? That is determined by serious and careful evaluation. First, what are the demographics or geodemographics—who are our neighbors? Second, what are the psychographics—what is on their mind? Third, what is the media data—how can they be reached? Fourth, what is the personal data—what are their interests?

Organize a Church Outreach Ministry

As mentioned, evangelism includes both message and methods. The modern methods for evangelism probably began with Dr. Bill Bright's *Four Spiritual Laws*. An entire generation of personal evangelists emerged from Bright's first doodling on a paper napkin in a restaurant. "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life" brought hope—and continues to bring hope—to millions. Other methods, including *Evangelism Explosion*,⁴ brought personal evangelism to the forefront.

Twenty-first-century evangelism tends to be less confrontational and more transformational (evangelism as a process). Whatever the method, it must always bring people to a point of decision.⁵

Evangelism methods vary. They include: Relationship evangelism (friendship evangelism), fellowship evangelism (Sunday school, small groups, ministry teams, electives, etc.), and worship evangelism (in-house presentations of the gospel). One of my favorites is relationship evangelism.

My friend and co-author, Dr. Elmer Towns shared at a seminar we were teaching recently a study that revealed how people came into a relationship with Christ. Here's what he discovered in his survey:

.0001	percent – TV or Crusade
1-2	percent – "Cold turkey" (door-to-door) evangelism
2-4	percent – Church program
3-6	percent – Sunday school
6-8	percent – "Walk-in"
74	percent – Friends or relatives

Friendship evangelism, winning people to you and then introducing them to Christ, is one of the most effective methods of modern evangelism. Today, we have more ways to connect with people than ever before—through digital electronics, for example—but we still live in a disconnected society. Believers making connections with unbelievers for the purpose of introducing them to the gospel message provides an opportunity to tear down the walls that often separate Christians from those who need Christ.

One of our newest efforts for ongoing evangelism involves partnering with the sister congregations across our district and the Evangelism Ministries in Kansas City. After several pastor’s meetings and planning sessions with the leaders of district mission zones, we have launched a district wide effort for bringing in annually the largest numbers of members by profession of faith. With the training and resources from the Evangelism Ministries, and strategies from our district’s Mission Area Leaders, all out efforts are underway for reaching and discipling the largest groups of new believers in our district’s history. The jury’s still out. But, starting several new churches, as well as some new discipleship ministries is beginning to show some promising results.

In my book, *The ABC’s of Evangelism*,⁶ I discuss the importance of networking. Each of us has a circle of friends—some of whom need Christ. A strategy for introducing those friends to Christ, and in turn mobilizing them to reach others, includes:

1. Pray daily for those friends.
2. Share four activities with them that is not church related.
3. Invite friends to an event at church that is designed for the unchurched.

After the relationship is established, and they are introduced to Christ—and other Christians—a Spirit-led opportunity may arise to present a salvation plan and use the *How To Go To Heaven Pen*,⁷ such as “The ABC’s of a Personal Relationship with Christ.” A basic presentation could include the following:

Receiving Jesus Christ is as simple as ABC . . .

Admit that you have sinned – Romans 3:23

Believe that Jesus Christ died for you – John 1:12

Confess that Jesus Christ is Lord of your life – Romans 10:9-10

Prayer:

“Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner. I believe that You died for my sins and arose from the grave. I now turn from my sins and invite You to come into my heart and life. I receive You as my personal Savior and follow You as my Lord. Amen.”

Mobilize Your Church for Evangelism

Like any other ministry of the church, evangelism doesn't just happen. The groundwork for the ministry is laid: people began to pray; funding is secured; resources are assembled; workers are trained; and the ministry is launched.

A second level of implementation builds on that groundwork.

Ask God's for his anointing on your plan.

Determine the people group you want to reach.

Try to understand the needs of your community.

Pray daily for your community.

Define your method of outreach.

Ask your people to accept the mandate.

The rest of the process links God's promised power⁸ with your personal commitment to resource and recruit.⁹ The attention of the world is being drawn to the eternal. It's time for a serious attempt to reach as many as possible, in every way possible, with the message that God loves them and has a wonderful plan for their life—an eternal plan.

Chapter 4

Making Extraordinary Christ Followers: *Out of Ordinary People*

By Wes Humble

In 1918, twenty individuals emerged from a tent revival conducted in the city of Newark, Ohio, to form what is now the Newark Church of the Nazarene. For many years they lived out the dream of those original members. In 1999, the leadership of the church was led to consider their health as a church. In particular, they were forced to look at their ineffectiveness in reaching unchurched and de-churched people. They were urged to honestly examine their lack of ability to connect with the culture in a meaningful way.

These days, weeks and months of evaluation motivated the pastor, staff and church board to start leading toward change. Over the next two years every ministry structure was assessed for its validity. Those that could not be proven valid and effective in reaching lost people were overhauled or eliminated. These actions led over one hundred and twenty people to walk away from the church. Many of them found churches in the community that would continue doing church with the ministry methods that were comfortable for them.

What happened after the mass exodus of a hundred and twenty people, or as I affectionately have referred to it, the “Reverse Pentecost,” has been truly a work of God. Most of the ministry structures that had been in place for years were taken with the group

who left. This allowed the church a time of re-visioning and rethinking their ministry and left the leadership team with the responsibility of putting functional ministry structures in place that would allow the church to do its work in a proactive and nimble manner.

The Setting

Since 2001, Newark Church of the Nazarene has been a whirlwind of what we believe to be God-ordained activity. The church has and continues to experience an unusual and steady rate of growth. I will include the numbers for the sake of better understanding who we are. Here is the growth as charted in the month of February for the last five years:

February of 2001:	330
February of 2002:	359
February of 2003:	498
February of 2004:	544
February of 2005:	667
February of 2006:	793

Approximately half of the growth reflected is unchurched people. We are a church that is very diverse in socio-economic perimeters. We have a continual influx of individuals who are struggling with some kind of life altering addiction. Others are just products of growing up in a post modern and pagan culture.

For the purposes of understanding the setting, let me describe the community in which we find ourselves. Our immediate neighborhood around the church is made up of middle to lower middle class families. The neighborhood is not impressive in any way, although because the older homes are affordable some of them have been purchased by people who are rehabbing them. Our church building is actually a combination of buildings from several different decades. The newest addition was completed in 1967. We are limited by space and an aging building. For many years we have endured many challenges associated with the building. Unpaved parking lots, inefficient windows and other noticeable problems existed with our current structure.

More important than the material needs of our church was the need to create and identify who we were. Of course, part of this is shaped by the Church of the Nazarene as a denomination, yet we found ourselves with this growing church body made up of

people and families ranging from absolutely no church or biblical background to those who came to us from other churches. A vast majority of the people who represented transfer growth did come from churches with a Wesleyan theological perspective.

Here then was our dilemma. Reaching people and growing the church has been the easy part. The glaring need was for some kind of intentional plan that would take people from solely attending a Sunday morning worship celebration service and turn them into growing and legitimate Christ followers. We found out very quickly that the interest item most often checked on our connection card each week was, "I want to be a member of this church." This can be explained by the fact that our weekly celebration services are very high energy and effectively meaningful to those who attend. Many people, even after the first time they attend, are so moved that they immediately want to join without having any idea what that might mean.

The first answer we had for this included a three and a half hour membership class that, upon review, we discovered was really nothing more than an infomercial for the different ministries and core values of the church. We were taking in members that often had no depth spiritually speaking. Many of these people have good intentions but we were painfully aware of their lack of spiritual growth and discipleship.

The Strategy

Within the first four years of our growth we also made a decision that would not be understood by some people. We are located in a challenged neighborhood that can legitimately be described as teetering on the brink of either further decline or becoming a place where people move and begin to rehab existing older homes that are affordable. We decided to stay and embrace this neighborhood as being a place that needed us. This decision to stay in the neighborhood caused us to begin the process of rehabbing our existing building to begin to meet the needs of doing ministry to a community.

We sold the land that had been purchased outside of town years ago. The hope then had been to leave the existing structure and neighborhood and relocate to an impressive piece of real estate along a highway a couple miles out of the city. We decided not to subscribe to the "if you build it they will come" mentality. We also felt very drawn to the mission field right around our own neighborhood. We have purchased an additional building in the community that was a fire house in the earlier days of the twentieth

century. This complex is going to be the sight of many community outreaches and will also house our Sunday morning video multi-site venue as well. We are also restarting a small Nazarene church that was on the verge of closing and have redirected their ministry to outreach and community care.

While the decision to not move gave us direction concerning where we would do ministry, we still were struggling with neophyte Christ followers who desperately needed to experience spiritual growth.

We began by developing the vision around our mission statement. The mission statement is simply, "Leading people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ." We defined our ministry plan by developing three main thoughts about spiritual growth and discipleship. They are:

Celebration: We believe that to have an effective community we must commit to a time of weekly celebration. At these celebrations you will experience authentic worship and challenging Biblical teaching on issues that are important to you today. We are a church that is fluid...adjusting our methods along the way to more effectively be the Church to our community.

Community: We are a church that cherishes authentic community...providing community groups to foster genuine and transparent relationships. Community groups or small groups play an essential role in the care and development of a believer. We are a church that is constantly growing...knowing that none of us have "arrived" in our spiritual journey, but are here to spur one another on in our spiritual transformation.

Call: We are a church that sees the potential in people and facilitates them in discovering God's design for their life and contribution to His kingdom. We believe that God's design is for every believer to participate in serving and building the church. We are a church that is compassionate...about people with needs in our community and is actively looking for ways to serve others in our community and around the world.

We further designed everything we do around these eight core values for the ministries of Newark Church of the Nazarene:

Our Eight Core Values

These values are the application of biblical truth through the unique personality of Newark Church of the Nazarene. These vital core values guide all we do in ministry.

Authenticity

As “a real place for real people” we believe we can’t be what God has called us to be if we play games with each other. Whether it’s what happens on stage, within our small groups, serving teams or in our homes, we need to be able to share our faults and weaknesses and not fake it. That’s authenticity, just being real.

Biblical Truth

Newark Naz is a place for people on every part of the spiritual journey, from those just investigating whether there is a God, to those who have made following Christ the priority of their life. This is a safe place for everyone. But safe doesn’t mean serenity. The Bible presents a dangerous message of life change. We don’t assume everyone believes, or even knows the Bible, but we do assume everyone who comes through our doors is open to exploring it. We believe the Bible is God’s inerrant truth and it is foundational to everything we do.

Culturally Relevant Communication

"Why did they do that?" "What does that have to do with church?" How many times have you heard (or thought) that after you saw something during a service here at Newark Naz? Maybe it was a movie clip or a secular song. Stuff that seemed to be the last thing you would have expected in church. Well, believe it or not, there is a reason for all of this. There is a method to the madness. *Culturally Relevant*.

Newark Naz is a place that helps connect those who are spiritually exploring God’s love and truth. To do this, we’re committed to doing anything to help people connect God’s timeless truth from the Bible with their day-to-day life. We do not engage in anything immoral or anti-scriptural to do this, but we do embrace creative methods used in our current culture. The challenge for us is that the Bible was written a long time ago

for people in another culture. The fact that we are in Newark, Ohio in the twenty-first century doesn't change the message that God gave 2000 years ago, but it does mean that we need to do some work to connect it to our lives today. That's what we mean by "Culturally Relevant Communication."

It's nothing new. It's the kind of thing the Bible referred to in Ecclesiastes 12:10 which says, "The teacher searched to find just the right words." In fact, it's exactly what Jesus did. Whether it was stories about sheep and goats, vineyard workers, or a guy who throws a party, Jesus used the current language and daily life of those around him to communicate truth.

Doing Life Together

We aren't interested in being a church where a lot of people get together for an inspiring service but never move beyond the casual arm's distance relationships of an auditorium. We want to grow by really "doing life together." Community is knowing and being known, loving and being loved, celebrating and being celebrated, and serving and being served. The people who really grow at Newark Naz, are those who move beyond the auditorium through serving and/or being part of a small group, service team and building friendships in which all of these happen.

Excellence

We don't believe in striving for unrealistic perfection. We do believe excellence is about bringing your best to God's work and to life in general. Whenever we do anything as a church we want to bring our "A Game." Whether it's our communication and music, how we hold babies in the nursery or how we take care of the building, we want it to reflect this.

Functional Structures

We believe that ministries are only valid when they are functional. Ministries that no longer support the mission of the church or are not functioning effectively will be

reviewed and eliminated. New ministries will proactively be encouraged and affirmed to meet the changing needs of the culture and our community.

Growth

We don't expect everyone who walks into this church to be a committed Christ-follower. But we do expect everyone who is around our community for any length of time to be growing. We expect every person to be moving closer to being the complete image of Christ in every area of life. When it isn't happening we need to ask why. The answers aren't always comfortable. In fact, we often grow only when we are pushed out of our comfort zone.

Reproduction

Reproduction is about recognizing something that God has created and then going about being a tool when He reproduces that element in other places. Newark Naz wants to be a place where Christ followers reproduce Christ followers, leaders reproduce leaders and churches reproduce other churches.

Notice the wording of the core value, *Growth*. "We expect every person to be moving closer to being the complete image of Christ in every area of life. When it isn't happening we need to ask why. The answers aren't always comfortable. In fact, we often grow only when we are pushed out of our comfort zone."

It was these words that led us to reevaluate our system of discipleship and Christian growth. One of the first things we have done in addressing this need was to totally overhaul the membership process. We do not want to discourage people from becoming members but we found a way to raise the bar and at the same time teach some of the basic and fundamental biblical concepts that these individuals would need to experience true spiritual growth.

People wanting to join Newark Church of the Nazarene now have to attend 12 weeks of classes. These classes, entitled *A Follower's Life*, are based on several membership class materials.¹ We have created from these materials a discipleship class designed for our new believers and transferring members from other churches. The following are the descriptions of the subjects included in this series:

Discipling Sessions for New Members

Section One: *Life in Christ* (Designed only for new believers)

SESSION 1: Who Is Jesus? (Part 1)

SESSION 2: Who Is Jesus? (Part 2)

SESSION 3: What is a Christian?

SESSION 4: The Lordship of Christ

Section Two: *Life in the Spirit* (Sections 2 and 3 also for transferring members)

SESSION 5: Who Is the Holy Spirit?

SESSION 6: Lifestyle in the Spirit

SESSION 7: Understanding Spiritual Gifts

SESSION 8: Sharing Your Spiritual Journey

Section Three: *Life in the Community*

SESSION 9: Keys to God's Heart

SESSION 10: Organism or Organization?

SESSION 11: Knowing God's Call

SESSION 12: Where Will I Serve?²

After eleven weeks of this class the participants are asked to pray about where they will be serving in the church. On the actual membership day, each new member introduces themselves to the congregation and tells where they will be serving. As you can imagine, this has an effect on others who are considering membership, as well as those who have been members for a long time but are not currently involved in ministry.

We have found this move toward raising the bar on membership to be a very important step in the discipleship process. We also offer classes for those who are new believers or seeking to be a Christ follower. We are continually amazed at how open unchurched people are to attending a class about Christ following prior to accepting Christ as their Savior.

We try very hard to assimilate people into the Three C's. *Celebration* is a must for everyone. If they aren't attending a Celebration service then we would have no reason to be leading them into a growing relationship with Christ. *Community* is strongly encouraged as a natural next step in a developing relationship. Small groups are an essential part of Christ following. Being in community with others is key to understanding and practicing the gifts that God has given you. The third C is *Call* and we

believe that every genuine Christ follower will be engaged in some form of ministry. We try to keep ministry opportunities in front of those attending the church on a regular basis. Many times it is our newest people who are the most motivated and excited by the many outreach opportunities that we engage in.

Just building the church through the numbers of people you can get through the door is not enough. Jesus clearly left us the mission we are to be about. Hear the words of our Lord, “. . . go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” It is easy to forget the last part of what Christ had to say about our mission.

I remember a well-meaning church member in my first church trying to encourage me because the “numbers” were down. He said, “Don’t worry pastor; the Bible says in the last days there will be a great falling away.” I remember that his words left me cold because they appeared to embrace a pull away from the culture and hold the fort mentality. Just hang on till Jesus returns and everything will be okay.

In reality, the world in which we live is in desperate need of Christians who are authentic Christ followers, who will follow Christ out into the culture and do everything they can to make disciples. Jesus’ last words on the mission were, “And surely I am with you always, to the end of the age.” We take great comfort in those words as we attempt to make disciples and Christ followers in our current age.

In his book, *Growing True Disciples*, George Barna writes, “I want to challenge you to rethink what true discipleship means and what it looks like in your church.” He then suggests the following transitions that might need to take place:

- Shift from program-driven ministry to people-driven ministry.
- Change from emphasis on building consensus to building character.
- De-emphasize recalling Bible stories; emphasize applying biblical principles that impact lifestyle and values.
- Move from concern about quantity, (people, programs, square footage, dollars) to concern about quality (commitment, wisdom, relationships, values, lifestyle)

- Retool development ministry efforts from being unrelated and haphazard to being intentional strategic
- Replace ministry designed to convey knowledge with efforts intended to facilitate holistic ministry.
- Alter people's focus from feel-good activities to absolute commitment to personal growth, ministry and authenticity in their faith.

The results of these efforts for evangelism and discipleship have been dramatic for our congregation. As Barna reminded us, "If we are serious about ministering to people, we could not have asked for a better place and time in history to be alive."

Chapter 5

Creating Stickiness:

Helping New Decisions Become Disciples

By Jerry Moen

There was a little accident in 1968, when Dr. Spence Silver was working on a project. He was experimenting for his employer, 3M, trying to make some of their adhesive tape work better for consumers. His 'accident' created the adhesive that Art Fry later used to create post-it-notes. Art worked for 3M and wanted to find a practical use for this new adhesive. The idea finally came to him when his old scrap paper page markers kept falling out of his church choir hymnal. He reasoned a little of that adhesive would keep the page markers stuck on the right page. Post-it notes debuted in 1980 and now most of the world uses them. To think it all started 12 years earlier with an accident!

We have been living that kind of a story in McMinnville, Oregon where we accidentally discovered an adhesive that seemed to cause people to stick to our church family. Church on the Hill had a history of trying new and different things long before I joined the staff as an associate pastor in 1994. The senior pastor, Wes Smith was very innovative and I caught his adventurous spirit for ministry so when the congregation voted me in as senior pastor in 2000 I continued in his footsteps. By sheer accident people started to stick. We went from a church with weekend attendance of 650 to 1,130 by May of 2005. When you combine many risk takers with a congregation who trusts

you, and you get everyone praying and working for the same goals, it seems you get stickiness!

Dr. Silver realized he had created something back in 1968 but he was not sure what it was, what to call it, or how to put it to further use. In looking back, I'll try to capture the key things that created stickiness at Church on the Hill, and then hopefully you will find a great use for it like Art Fry did for that crazy sticky stuff on post-it notes.

Two New Ideas

We did two things immediately in May of 2000. First, we instituted the 'New Creation Candle' in our weekend services. I learned this idea while working with John Denney in Porterville, CA.¹ We simply lit the candle in the weekend service if anyone in our congregation led someone to personal faith in Christ during the previous week. If that did not happen, we announced that the candle would remain unlit until someone would inform us of a new convert. This allowed us to celebrate the victories of our members who were practicing personal evangelism and recognize those converts by putting their name on the screen (with their permission) and on a permanent large board in the lobby. The first board has over 800 names on it and we have started filling up the second board. Accidentally we created a climate that encouraged, recognized, and applauded personal evangelism. It also adds a great dimension to what we call our weekend "Celebration Services." New people, as well as those who have been around, love to be part of a church that is reaching people for Christ. This practice makes it clear when we are achieving that as well as when we are not.

We recently lit the candle on a weekend for a woman who someone shared Christ with and this woman came back during the week to speak to someone on our staff. One of our employees took the woman into the lobby so she could see her name on the board. While looking at her name tears began to flow and she shared the story of her conversion and the joy she now had in her heart. What really made her tears flow was the fact that she could be so loved and welcomed and recognized as a person who mattered in a large church in a small town.

We frequently voice the spiritual journey of people in our church. Recently we received some new members into the church and I was able to say, "We have been

praying for Don and Julie² for over a year now. We lit the candle for Don in October, he was baptized in January and today he is pledging his loyalty to us, and to Christ, by becoming a member of Church on the Hill. Let's welcome Don and all these people into our fellowship!" Little statements like this help us paint the picture of the spiritual journey and the candle is a key step in this journey.

The second thing we did was change the purpose statement for the church. We worked with the board and many groups of people in the church and came up with a statement we all could own. This is printed on our stationary, hangs on banners both inside and outside our church, and is known by virtually everyone in our church. It has defined who we are and what we do. Our purpose statement has created an identity for our church that Jesus praised,³ Phineas F. Bresee modeled in Los Angeles, and is attractive to people in our county. These eight words have accidentally created a lot of stickiness at Church on the Hill. They are, "Meeting the Needs of Others through Jesus Christ." This statement guides our organizational structure, our church events and the lives of our people. Any one person or small group or class or congregation can find a way to meet the needs of others. Before we do anything, we simply ask the question, "Will this meet someone's need?" When the need is defined then the direction of your actions can be defined and guided. In keeping this statement ever before us, we get the focus off ourselves and onto 'others.' Sometimes those 'others' are in our congregation and sometimes they are not. The apostle Paul was not concerned who the 'others' were,⁴ he only instructed us to consider others as more important than ourselves. It seems that if we keep this focus on others, and have Christ's attitude, we can expect the church to end up with a Christ centered unity filled with love, mercy and affection for one another.

Finding a Place to Serve

Gerald has been in our church for over 60 years and the last week his wife, Shirley, spent in the hospital our 'Helping Hands' director called to see if we could help Gerald with anything. Pastors and other volunteers had been making regular visits to Shirley's room to pray with her and someone had passed on a note to 'Helping Hands' about the steady decline in Shirley's health. The thing Gerald asked for was some yard work to be done so that weekend a group of volunteers descended on his yard and got him all caught up on his yard work. His wife died on Monday and while the spiritual needs were being

tended to, so were some physical needs. Four months later his yard was still being taken care of and he was invited to join the small group that tended to his yard. It makes for a great combination when people get that kind of care in having their needs met.

We also use that purpose statement to drive us out into the community. In the summer of 2005 we learned that the local high school stadium needed a paint job but the school district could not afford to do the work. Our church took the lead and organized several other congregations in town to help us clean and sand and then repaint the bleachers and stadium covering. It saved the school district \$39,000 and was reported in the local paper as being the largest single gift ever given to our public schools. People in town learned that we are serious about meeting the needs of others and that adds value to our existence in our town.

This 'new creation candle' and new purpose statement seemed like the right things to do at the time but we really did not expect that it would create stickiness – but it had now begun! We then had to figure out how to meet, greet and be sweet to everyone who was coming our way. We had a very homogenous group of greeters who did a wonderful job of making everyone feel welcome at services but we needed to expand the variety of people at the doors to match the variety in the crowd. We made it easy for people to be trained as ushers, greeters and parking lot attendants and we created a large 'Connections Team' that made it comfortable for new people to come to church. We helped them park the car and gave them a ride in a golf cart to the front door of the church. We escorted them to the room they were looking for, showed them where their children would be, and then helped them get comfortable in the auditorium. This is where creating 'stickiness' can get sticky. If you do too much for people, they feel pressured and uneasy. If you do too little they feel unwanted. Dr. Silver could not use the new adhesive he had created because it was not sticky enough but Art Fry came along and found just the right use for this new glue. At times, we still fail at getting it right, but we have learned a few things along the way.

Worship Greeters

One Sunday morning a new woman in the lobby looked a little overwhelmed so someone chatted with her a bit and found out she was coming to attend the Celebration

Service. They offered to escort her to the sanctuary and to help her find a seat. This man sensed she was lonely and asked if she would like him to find a woman to sit with her during the service. She instantly said she would like that very much and so he asked a regular attendee he knew to come and sit next to this new woman. Those two women sat together and within two weeks this new woman, who turned out to be a widow, was a regular volunteer in the church office two days a week. It is now a year later and she is still a key volunteer in our office and it started with someone knowing just how much help to offer a first time visitor.

We ask everyone to fill out a communication card in every service and people are free to do that or not. They are also given some first, second and third-time visitor boxes to check.⁵ Depending on which box they check, we have a follow-up strategy for them. Everyone who checks first time visitor receives a dozen home made cookies and a welcome packet from a lay couple on Monday. We think it is very important that within 18 hours we make a surprise visit to their home. The trained couple never goes in, never stays long, and never tries to 'sell' the church. They are only delivering cookies and a welcome packet filled with coupons, a DVD of the church, and literature. Once in awhile they answer questions but typically, they let the next round of follow up answer any questions. Frequently no one is home and so they leave the packet and the cookies with a note. This gesture, without the personal visit, is nearly as effective as when someone is home.

The next round of follow up consists of paid ministry assistants phoning the family and offering information and help, if requested. They can also mail out specialized literature if someone makes a request. We also send out a welcome letter from the pastor and explain what will happen if they check the second time or third time box on their card. That way there is no surprise to them later. Ultimately the third time box will trigger an invitation to a 'new friends dinner' that is held in one of several homes. Several teams prepare the food, inviting several new families along with a few 'old families.' This helps new people to not only meet people who are teaching classes, leading small groups, or otherwise involved in ministry. It also helps them meet others who are new to the congregation, which gives them a sense of comfort knowing they are not alone in this new place. This 'new friends dinner' started as a casual dessert at the pastors house with my wife and I and has grown to multiple teams offering supper on

Sunday afternoons and dinners on Friday and Sunday nights. It is an idea that seems to have stuck for now but we may replace it with something more effective in the future. Only time will tell.

Reaching New Residents

Rich and Tracie moved to town and knew no one except Rich's parents who have lived in McMinnville for years. The parents arranged for our volunteer moving crew to unload the two U-hauls and set up their home. Then Rich & Tracie visited church and received the cookies. About a month later they attended a new friend's dinner and found out about our sports program. They played on our softball team and made many friends. Today Rich and Tracie host new friends dinners in their own home about once a month and stand as a great example of a couple who is 'stuck on our church.'

Our new benevolence ministry began to meet the financial needs of people who were coming. When our congregation heard we were helping with the financial needs of people they wanted to give us more money. They saw us being generous and what we were modeling caught on in various pockets of the church. Except for one year where we had a 13% increase in giving, we have seen a 20% or more increase in giving over the previous year since 2000. With the increased giving, we began to hire pastors to help us take care of these new people. When word got out we were paying utility and rent bills, giving away food and cars, and helping people with their indebtedness, the crowd swelled and many needy people came to us. To handle those who only wanted our financial help and not the spiritual help, we crafted a requirement that they attend some spiritual event regularly for six months before they were eligible for financial assistance. Many found Christ in those six months and whether they still needed financial assistance or not, they wanted to be a part of our church.

Community Ministries

Mike and Crystal came to us needing assistance and we explained that we had a lot to offer them before we got to the financial stage of assistance, and they took us up on our offer. Marriage counseling was first on the list and so one of our pastors began to give them some tools to help them communicate more effectively. They then joined a

small group that was working on strengthening marriages and helping one another learn how to better understand God's design for marriage. Soon after, they both accepted Christ and eventually were baptized as new Christians.

After six months they applied for help from the benevolence ministry and we helped them pay some bills and suggested they meet with one of our 'Good \$ense Counselors.' They were willing and within 4 months the volunteer counselor had them managing their money in a responsible manner. Crystal recently stopped me in the hall and just blurted out, "This church has totally turned our life around. When we came here we were not believers, were ready for a divorce and bankruptcy. I can't thank you enough for all the help this church has given us." Before that moment I had never spoken to Crystal. Our paths had not crossed, but I have never been more proud of our church then when I heard how we had met their needs. They are stuck at our church.

A large segment of the people who were coming to us had addiction issues and needed help with their recovery so we launched Celebrate Recovery in our church. Any community that has a drug problem has people who have needs. If you can meet their needs and introduce them to Jesus, they learn a new way to cope with life. That sounds simple but not easy. I hope you know the difference.

Dr. Silver had a simple discovery but it was not easy to make practical use of his discovery. It took 12 years before they figured out what to do with that glue! We are still trying to figure out all the ways we can meet the needs of those stuck in their addictions. We do know their needs are real and they will not make it without help, so we are here for them.

Many other churches in town send people to us and I frequently hear, "My pastor sent me here to get help. He says you can help me. Will you?" We have helped several Christians from other churches get clean and sober and then sent them back to where they came from. Word of this gets around our little town and people know we are truly here to meet the needs of others. Our Lord taught us "To let our light shine before men in such a way that people see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven."⁶ That is why we meet the needs of others, and we do it through the strength, resources and wisdom He gives us.

Celebrate Recovery

We have wanted to help people in recovery for many years and in the past have made some attempts at starting this ministry, but it never seemed to get off the ground until Pastor Bill Wertz joined our staff. He had previous experience in starting need-meeting ministries and showed us we would need to make a substantial investment to have a successful launch of this ministry. We sent several key leaders down to Saddleback Valley Community Church in Southern California for training, gave them a start up budget, and I preached an eight week series that showed how we all are recovering from something. While this can be a difficult clientele to minister to, we soon realized just how far reaching the sickness of addictions spreads. As we created a climate that made it safe to confess your struggles, people started coming out of the pews and joining those who were coming in off the streets. We found gamblers, drinkers, drug users, sex addicts and shop-aholics, to name a few, all around us.

Fred was a man who came off the street and found help at Celebrate Recovery (CR). He attended there for many months before he ever came to a weekend worship service, and that is o.k. around here. He had spent most of his 35 years abusing drugs and alcohol but God got a hold of him and turned his life around. He has been clean and sober for eight years, just graduated from nursing school, and is an R.N. now. He was married about four years ago and their blended family is raising kids up in a Christian household.

There is not a magic pill to swallow to make this kind of change. It took countless hours of meetings, accountability conversations, encouragement from dozens of people, and a supporting network that believed in Fred. His life is forever changed and he wants to stick with a church that will do that for him. He and his wife are currently volunteer leaders in our CR ministry and they are reproducing their story in others because they have learned, first hand, what it means to meet the needs of others through Jesus Christ.

A Place of Grace

Julia was married in a Nazarene Church over 60 years ago. She and her husband have been faithful members of our church for the last 45 years. She had a gambling problem that created many financial and legal hardships for the two of them and when

'her secret' was exposed the first thing she did was start attending CR. Her husband went along to support her, the church helped them get caught up financially, she shared her testimony with the entire congregation and we loved her back to wholeness. The 'old timers' could have been judgmental or shocked or embarrassed but instead they were loving, accepting and forgiving. We have become that kind of a church and people like to stick around that kind of a church.

Early in my assignment as senior pastor I knew we needed to add parking and more buildings and so I told the board we would grow if we created space. Then they started asking questions – detailed questions – about how the whole process would work. I could not answer those questions but I could see the big picture. Again, Pastor Bill Wertz knew of a church consultant company that he had worked with in the past and we partnered up with Brad Oaster of Harvestime. He spent more than a year with us organizing the church into various teams to study the many facets we needed to consider in order to accomplish what God had for us. Along the way he helped us craft a Strategic Ministry Plan and the unexpected result of that was agenda harmony like I had never before experienced in a church.

All I wanted to do was create more space so that the people who wanted to come would have room. The surprise was a church filled with people who wanted the same thing: become the church God had destined for us to become. People who are wandering aimlessly in life want to belong to a group that has direction and so we added another layer of stickiness.

Half-Way House Ministry

Jason worked for a local area half-way house for ex-cons and alcoholics, called Blanchet Farm. It is not a Christian outfit but the director was willing to take a van into town for a church service if the men wanted to go. Several of the men had attended a Bible study in jail where men from our church go every week to teach inmates about God's word. Now that there were on the outside they wanted to see the church these men were from.

I must digress here and tell you how this 'inside study' originated. Clancy Hinrichs was a college professor until he retired in his early 60's. He wanted to serve God with the rest of his life and he spent a couple years dabbling in various ministries until God

made it clear. Clancy was to work with inmates so he gathered a few other men around him, researched how to gain access to the area facilities (County, State and Federal), and got started.

Within two years we licensed him as a local minister and the State of Oregon hired him to direct their chaplaincy program. The Federal Prison near us has opened their doors to our Bible teachers and so has the county jail in our town. We then added a 'CR Inside' ministry team for women led by several of our ladies. The probation department and most of our local judges have applauded our work and they trust us to help them deal with offenders. We did not see that surprise coming, but it has made people want to be a part of our church.

Now, let's turn our attention back to Jason and Blanchet Farm. When men started asking the farm director to take them to church, it was Jason's job to drive them back and forth. At first he would sit out in the lobby and drink one of our Espresso's while the guys attended church. All the way home, they would talk about the service and eventually Jason came into the worship service with them.

It was not long until John had a drastic conversion experience. He had spent several years of his life behind bars and never thought he could get a normal life back for himself. To make a long story short, today he has a wonderful wife, a solid job, and is active in several ministries in our church. Jason has found a place to call home for the rest of his life and what a life it is!

Children and Youth

I have not even touched on the children's ministry and youth ministry that occur here, but we could share similar stories from those different segments of the church. Frequently the local school district and sheriff's office refer teens to our youth programs. Our youth pastor is the first person the sheriff's office calls when they need a chaplain for a youth or their family.

We now have a CR program just for teens, who are struggling with addictions. We also offer leadership development for youth as well as Bible quizzing and other classes, separate worship services and small groups in homes. We have long known that when teens are taken care of it makes families want to stick around the church as well.

Chris started attending our Tuesday night high school group just to hang out with his friends, but soon he found Christ. His Christian parents had not been going to church anywhere but now that their prayer for Chris was answered, they quickly made up their mind to make our church their home. He has several younger siblings and the entire family is involved with his parents serving in the children's department.

Scott and Valerie were younger adults who had been in our church for several years and they had a troubled niece come to live with them. They had no idea how to manage and raise a teenager who was already off on the wrong foot, but they plugged her into our youth department. The young girl is now a believer and her aunt Christine is the leader of our CR for Teens program. She found the help she needed for her own niece and now she is meeting the needs of others.

We believe that the local church is the hope of the world and that our local church is a beacon God wants to use to enlighten our entire county. We must offer help and hope to families. They have nowhere else to turn. We are the only organization that can right the wrongs that exist within family structures today. To create stickiness we have to offer help to the nuclear family and that means a well-rounded program meeting the various needs in today's family.

We are currently building an indoor play structure (we live in rainy Oregon) that will be the largest in the northwest. Nearly three stories tall and nearly 3,000 sq. feet, we expect to become the church where every kid in Yamhill County wants to attend. We do not apologize for using a playground to attract kids because we know that once we attract them we will share Christ with them. Once they are converted, God has saved a soul from death. We believe kids and their families will stick around here and grow in grace, discover God's best for them, and have their lives forever changed. We know that lost people matter to God and so they matter to us. We must continue to do all we can to reach out to the lost, and we have. The continuing challenge is how to hold onto them.

Discipleship Ministries

Our discipleship ministries must present, to new people, a compelling reason to grow in faith. We are learning how to present those opportunities in attractive ways. Of course, the pulpit is a tool to use, but I believe true spiritual growth occurs in situations like small group bible study, mentoring relationships, service projects and mission trips.

All of these programs take funding, staffing and continual promotion but the investments all pay huge dividends. The growth and change in our church has caused some people to leave the church but many have stayed and they are the ones who are teaching the new people about the spiritually mature life. We need these people to pass on what only 20, 30 or 40 years of following Christ can teach you.

These people who have stayed the course amid new music, new preaching styles, the introduction of drama and video into the Celebration Services, relaxed dress codes, ex-cons and troubled youth, smokers in the parking lot, frequent visits by the police, and so much more are real heroes. What they use to experience at church is gone. Gone are the days where you knew everyone and felt comfortable, everyone looked alike and acted the same. Gone are the old ways of doing church but so much new has come. The old wine skins of yesterday could not hold the lost souls of today but these new wine skins are working well in McMinnville.

The Call to Ministry

Out of our mentoring ministry we discovered a group of people who felt called by God to full time Christian service so we started a two-year intern program for older, established adults. The first year we began with 12 men and women and ended the year with six. All six have finished their second year and are furthering their education and training in various ways.

Some have enrolled in the home course of study through our denomination, one has enrolled in an on-line bible college, and one is entering the M. Div. program at George Fox University, near us. Our interns preach three or 4 times a year in our mid-week service and one preached on the weekend for us. This has shown our entire congregation that if you will apply yourself to spiritual disciplines, you can end up with a larger public ministry and perhaps even a career in serving God for pay!

Of course, there is quite a weeding out process so that not all who start out strong finish well. The second crop of interns began with five and ended with only one person being eligible to start their second year. We do not know where these interns will end up but simply training them up has done wonders to help others stick around and see if they, too, can someday be an intern at Church on the Hill.

New Leaders

Kathy had a good job with the school district, which provided great health insurance for her entire family. She loved working with the young children in her class but God spoke to her about ‘fishing for bigger fish.’⁷ He asked her to invest in the local church instead of the local school, so she quit her job and volunteered full time for the church. She found in niche in our benevolence ministry and after a year we found a way to pay her enough so she could pay for the family’s health insurance. She is just now finishing our intern program and she will soon be the director of our new 501 C-3 “Hope on the Hill.” Our dream is to see this new ministry take our purpose statement (Meeting the Needs of Others) to a whole new level in the physical needs department, which will open up doors to thousands of new people for us to reach and meet their spiritual needs. Kathy sees what God has planned for the rest of her life and we have given her an avenue to see that calling become a reality here on ‘the hill.’ It was an accident, but we discovered that giving people a chance to serve in a big way creates a very high level of stickiness.

Helping with the Connections

The key principal here seems to be that loyalty to the church greatly increases when someone discovers what God wants them to do and then an outlet for that to happen. For some, the biggest ministry they can discover is being an usher so if their gifts and graces have them equipped for that we give them a place to usher. Richard came to us a few years ago and gave his life to Christ. Most people consider him socially awkward most all of his 50 years but he was ready to shed some of his awkward ways.

After two group-training sessions, he was ready to start as an usher in our mid-week service. Then after three or four private coaching sessions, Richard was ready to be a greeter at our Saturday night Celebration Service. He is one of the first to show up and one of the last to leave. His level of commitment is higher than most because he has a role to play. Getting people involved in service makes them want to stay around.

Our first step is to meet the needs of those who come in our doors. When the people of our congregation meet the needs of a visitor, they are likely to stick around for about a year. Eventually they may begin to look somewhere else for ‘a better deal’ unless something else happens. If they make a connection into a small group of acquaintances

and start to build friendships, they are much more likely to stick for the long haul.

Therefore, we constantly keep the idea of being in a small group before the congregation.

Sometimes we use campaigns and high profile promotional events to give a big boost to small group attendance. Other times people will hear a sermon series designed to increase small group attendance. Frequently there will be references to small groups in the weekend message or testimonies from people about what their small group means to them. We know that those who are a part of a small group consider themselves a part of our church.

Small group attendance is one key factor in long-term stickiness, but there is a second and equal factor. It is the 'serving in ministry' factor. When someone discovers something they can do for God and be fruitful in their efforts, if we will help them to do it, they will stick around the church. We have made it as easy as possible for everyone to find a way to serve.

As soon as visitors show up they hear that everyone is invited to get involved. When someone wants to volunteer before they have taken CLASS 301: Discovering My Ministry, we make them an office or building and grounds volunteer for a short term. That gives our paid staff a chance to meet them, assess their skills, and steer them in the right direction. It also protects the rest of our volunteers from someone who could be a ministry wrecker. In addition, it gives non-believing volunteers exposure to Christians who are trained to influence others for Christ. We don't insist you first must be a Christian to volunteer at our church. Even pagans can do a good job sweeping the floors or assembling booklets and when they perform these menial tasks, they are making connections with people who may eventually lead them into the Kingdom of God.

Once a person takes CLASS 301 (after taking 101: Discovering Membership and 201: Discovering Maturity) and then gets involved in a Spirit-gifted ministry, the dynamic changes. They are a Christian who is practicing some spiritual disciplines and, especially if they are a recent convert, a roller coaster ride is in their future. As they begin to serve God, there will be ups and downs. This makes coaching, training and other team members a very valuable asset to this new Christian servant.

Volunteerism creates stickiness but without the necessary support volunteers begin to fail in their service. Our quarterly training with the group gives them a sense of

stability and helps them to realize they have a solid resource available to them. It shows an organization that is out ahead in their thinking, ready to lead them around the next corner in this journey. The ongoing coaching they receive from their team leader may be set up on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. This consistent coaching helps us to steer the ship to the right or left, depending on the current needs of any ministry team. Finally, doing ministry on teams gives everyone a sense that they are not alone in life. We do not have anyone who does ministry alone. They all must be working with others, even if one person could do the thing alone. We tell them they must be duplicating themselves and they must be mentoring someone else, so they must get others to join them in their ministry.

Over the last 95 years, there have been many 'Dr. Silvers' who have made discoveries here in McMinnville. It has been my intention, to imitate Art Fry and discover how to put these discoveries to work. We have very few new discoveries but we have been surprised at the level of stickiness we have discovered. If we meet their needs, get them connected to others in meaningful relationships, and help them serve in ministry we typically find that they will stick around and help us make this church a beacon of hope for our county. We will keep looking for new ways to make all this happen but it really boils down to meeting the needs of others through Jesus Christ. Since we all need a place to belong and to know others need us, you could say that all these steps are truly meeting the basic needs that all people have.

I suppose we could have talked about the need for relevant and genuine worship services, how contemporary music reaches new people and what the arts have done for our public services. Without a quality worship experience it would be difficult to attract and retain new people. Yet it seems to me that a quality worship service without all the other need meeting ministries occurring would yield little in the way of evangelism. You could say that the weekend celebration services have attracted the crowd, but it is the things contained in this paper that have caused us to hold 500 people in the last 5 years. I have not yet discovered how to keep this thing going, but my guess is there is an unexpected discovery just around the next corner that will help us with that.

Chapter 6

Opening the Front Door in Evangelism: *Closing the Back Door with Discipleship*

By Marc Royer

A concept continually discussed among church leaders is how a church can get more people coming through their doors. Once the people start coming the next discussion is how do you retain them, synthesize them, and connect them. Often the question is asked, “How do we close the back door once they start coming in the front door?”

As a congregation asks these questions, it’s not uncommon to observe one of two phases: either “The Blame Phase” or “The Conference Phase.” During “The Blame Stage” you’ll hear questions like: “Why aren’t we growing? Whose fault is our lack of growth? Why can’t we grow like the church down the street? What is the pastor doing that is inhibiting the growth? What isn’t the pastor that would cause growth?” Then, comes frustration, more blame, disappointment and eventually, disillusionment.

If “The Conference Phase” develops, you will notice a never ending supply of quotes and ideas that never really take off. It is usually the leadership level of the organization that goes off to learn something and comes back to implement it. The most common scene that occurs is once the person comes back with great excitement at what they have heard; they are met with the reaction of rolling eyes from those who didn’t attend the conference or seminar: they don’t buy into what they are hearing.

The typical scenario for churches in the past has been: (1) Get a new pastor. (2) Have a little growth spurt when the church folks all come back to see what the new guy looks like. (3) Tire of the pastor. (4) Plateau and then a slide in attendance. (5) Blame the Pastor’s lack of “calling.” (6) Get a new pastor and repeat the whole scenario again.

Missional growth does not happen until we get serious enough about getting people in the front door and closing the back door—that we break out of the patterns of the past. The prophet Isaiah describes the essential elements of breaking out: “Enlarge the place of your tent—stretch out the curtains of your dwellings—spare not—lengthen your cords—and strengthen your stakes—for you shall expand to the right and to the left, and your descendants will inherit the nations, and make the desolate cities inhabited.”¹

Crossroads Community Church of the Nazarene in Goshen, Indiana was worshipping in a Junior High School a little over four years ago, and had been located there the previous five years. After implementing this scriptural approach, the results have created a break-out atmosphere for missional growth, as the following statistics reveal:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Average Worship</u>	<u>New Members</u>
2002:	137 average in worship	5 new Nazarenes
2003:	286 average in worship	67 new Nazarenes
2004:	430 average in worship	113 new Nazarenes
2005:	605 average in worship	127 new Nazarenes
2006:	1025 average in worship	221 new Nazarenes

Think, Live, and Believe LARGE “Enlarge the place of your tent...”

If church leaders were honest they would admit that they are not dreaming about what God wants for their ministry; instead they’re coveting and eyeing another ministry. It is easy to fall into this bad habit going to church growth conferences. Pastors and church leaders hear all kinds of ideas that were successful for someone else. Ideas are brought back and applied with the thought that it will be equally successful here as it was there.

Instead we should be asking ourselves: “What does God want for us?” Write down your answer. Now sit down with those in your leadership team and ask them the question. Go around the table and write down each response one after another on a large

board. Likely there won't be any surprises. People will say what they have already said—but it is important to let them say it because what your leadership team has just said to the question of “what does God want for us” is what you want to direct into a corporate vision.

The leadership team of any organization has to determine what the Spirit of God is doing in their community. The key to success is to work backwards from what has been established as the end result. This end result/goal can be achieved using this three step approach:

1. Define as specifically as possible what you want: “This church needs to get 100 new people through our doors in the month of July – we used this intentionally using the summer slump month - and see half of them return the second and third time.” Maybe your faith statement might be: “This church wants to add 100 to our average attendance in the next year,” or “This church wants to add 100 new members by profession of faith this year.”

2. Define why you want this: “The church needs to make its missional purpose to connect people with God—because we need to break out of what we have ever done before.” or “The Pastor has such a huge ego.” (Interesting what pure honesty will do in the eyes of people today in relationship to their loyalty and fervor in inviting others to church).

3. Define how to get there: “If each person invites 10 people a week to church who they have a relationship, statistics show one in ten will come;” or, “If church leadership visualizes and defines that the ‘end result’ is not just getting them through the doors - but keeping them!” Then, the church leadership team will work on a systematic approach to connections like: a trained first impressions team; an organized team of people who identify, follow up, and connect new people to our church; an aggressive Sunday School or small group ministry that invites them to a further experience with church.

Casting a vision with those you lead means that you think, live and believe large. Leadership must be able to “boil it down” so it is understandable and applicable for people in order for them to feel ownership.

Stretch yourself! “...stretch the curtains of your dwellings...”

The prophet Isaiah addresses the idea of wanting to grow. If you want to grow you have to stretch—and if you grow you will be stretched.

Stretching requires every organization to count the cost. Growing pains are real. The size, duration, and type of pain varies during growth so the best approach to growing pain is to be sure to make everyone aware of its presence. It is helpful to blame things on growing pains. Things like disagreements, difficulties, stubbornness, verbal blurting, hurt feelings, and various conflicts are all signs of growing pains in a local church.

One of the best things to do in opening the front door and closing the back door is to blame “growing pains” for all your difficulty. Then the missional growth gets the attention off blaming the leadership, the leadership team, or that insecure member who doesn’t really want to grow out of the fear of being forgotten or over-looked with a lot of new people.

Closing the Back Door

There are not many church problems that couldn’t be solved if you added a hundred people quickly to the ministry of the church. Mega-church level excluded (those who run over 2000 on a weekly basis), everything changes when adding 100 people to your congregation, and more specifically closing the back door for 100 people.

This stretching (stretching of your curtains) can take on at least three specific forms. If you want to open the front door and close the back door on 100 new people to your church immediately will need to:

Unify the leadership team

A church can only grow when the leadership team is unified. Leaders need to be positive about one another privately. Everyone needs to be on the same page with the vision of the church. Not only does this require people being positive about their pastoral leader, but they must support him or her all the way through the leadership team. People coming through your front door can sense division the moment they arrive. They will leave as quickly as they came if the leadership team is not unified. Too many churches actually have fallen in a comfortable level of disunity. They like the equilibrium of the

organization to be slightly off so they don't have to stretch and come half way. If you want to add people you have to be unified.

Create a sense of urgency

The church already has the idea that Jesus is coming very soon built into its DNA. No organization on the planet should be more aware of the need to urgently work at its purpose than the church! The leadership of the church should be driven by the idea that this Sunday might be the last one to accomplish our purpose. A sense of urgency drives the idea that 100 years from now most of us will be looking back at what we did or could have done for Christ from our heavenly home. Time is short—life is temporary—our message is life changing!

Every person targets five people for Christ per year

Every Christian needs to be connecting people to God on a daily basis. Connecting people to God is the purpose for the existence of people on our planet. Churches need to stretch and work toward multiplication of the Kingdom of God. We get too excited over additions when God created the world externally to multiply and the Kingdom of God within us to multiply!

Targeting people for Christ doesn't involve any special training. Make out a prayer list and pray for these five people several times a day, every single day. When relating to these targeted people look for opportunities and open doors to share what God has done for you. Sharing what God has personally done in your life plants the seed that others will water and eventually God will bring the increase. There is no need to memorize a prescribed plan - people today see right through a canned sales pitch. Share from your heart. Be real and stretch to be confident that God is working in you and in them.

“Stretch the curtains of your dwelling” requires a church to affirm and value every single person who comes through your doors. Instead of “sizing them up” for their problems, a church that stretches the curtains of its dwelling sees every person with unlimited potential in Christ. If you see the people who come in the front door as people with this kind of potential, you're more likely to not have a problem closing the back door.

Don't hold back "...*spare not...*"

A "break out" attitude has to include being all out, all the time, for Christ. Hold nothing back and have no regrets. Risk is not something that happens occasionally. Risk is something that should happen all the time - and will happen all the time in the "break out" missional church.

Somehow, many churches have lost the idea that ministry takes plenty of hard work. We aren't playing games or politics - we are working as laborers on an eternal harvest. Jesus teaching was to pray for laborers to come. He didn't say to pray for the harvest, because it is already ripe. He taught pray for the workers to come and harvest.²

We have to go all out and get the word out. Churches rarely budget much, if anything, for advertising. There are many different excuses for holding back in this way: advertising is too worldly, or God will just bring them in, or effective marketing is too expensive. Yet, a one minute advertisement during the morning drive time twice or three times per week on the most popular country music station in your area, will more than pay for itself with new people.

There are some other areas where the church needs to go all out and hold nothing back. If the Governor of your state was coming to church this Sunday, just think of the preparation you would make getting ready. If the President of the United States were going to be in your service this Sunday, just think of how "all out" everyone would go. Yet, there is someone more important than all of these who might be there this week. At this point we think it must be Jesus, which is reason enough for us to go all out this Sunday and every Sunday. But actually, the guest of honor is the person who is lost in sin. Jesus said any time we do anything for the "least of these" we are doing it for Him and on His behalf.³

Some ways we should be going all out and holding nothing back is in our preparation for our guests:

- The lawn mowed and trimmed.
- The shrubs and landscaping trimmed.
- The weeds removed.
- The parking lot well maintained.
- The outside of the facility up to date, painted and clean.
- The main entrance large and inviting.

- A fresh smell coming into and through out your facility.
- The worship bulletin and other printing should be neat, proof-read, and computer generated.
- No posters or announcements on the front doors.
- Restrooms clean. Plenty of space especially in the ladies room.
- The music is lively and sing-able.
- The message is well prepared, relevant and short.
- The inside of the facility is spacious, uncluttered, and easily maneuvered.
- The nursery makes parents feel secure and safe in leaving their children.
- The children’s ministry is fun and inviting for kids to come to and creates a desire to come back.
- Everything done in ministry should be practiced, rehearsed and prepared.

A church that is not holding back, deeply desires to accept and synthesize new people easily. The sign of this kind of mentality is the ability to listen and try new ideas, realizing some will work and others won’t. A church that “breaks out” and opens the front door while closing the back door is trying out new things. They celebrate their successes and accept their failures without making people feel bad just for trying. Trying something in today’s church climate is growth!

Develop your patience “...lengthen your cords”

Every church that wants to open its front doors and close its back doors has to get used to grinding it out every single week. Every week is an opportunity and there should be great anticipation of who is going to be coming along to church and an expectation of what God is going to do. This attitude is set by the leadership and needs to be the vision that is cast. Anticipation and expectation are keys to develop the disciplines for patience. They are the disciplines of God’s grace in our lives. There are many different ways to develop patience (and the disciplines that will develop patience) but here are three ideas that can help:

EXALT

The worship experience is an important area of development—and the development of patience in a church. It should be well planned, short, relevant, and Biblically based. The music should be lively and sing-able. The worship service should be God centered.

The announcements should be short and the offering should be included as part of worship. There should be a *First Impressions Team*⁴ in place—greeters, ushers, and hosts. These people should present the first impression of your church as sincere and caring.

New people should be hosted as guests. At the same time, avoid smothering or pressuring people—let new people or visitors find their place at their pace. The follow-up of new people should be carefully designed and continually scrutinized to develop the best way to close the back door. A first-time letter, then a telephone call, followed up by an email is a start to let people know you appreciated them visiting your church and welcoming them back next Sunday.⁵

EQUIP

Every ministry of the church should be designed to equip people with God's Word. Whether it is children's, youth, or adult ministries, they should be designed to want people to come back for more. The reputation gained from developing these ministries will create a "word of mouth buzz" that creates momentum in a community. This is effective in both bringing them in and retaining your new people. Equipping believers also includes a church wide membership class that meets on a systematic monthly time and place basis, as well as a basic Christianity class and a class for finding your spiritual gift.

EXTEND

Developing patience and "lengthening your cords" also means your communication is snappy. Weekly tools of communication include a sharp worship folder/bulletin, power point slide announcements, a welcome center close to the main entrance, and creative promotions of your church ministries to your community. Promotional campaigns should include four of eight major promotional avenues produced and displayed in short spurts: newspaper, billboard, radio, local network television, cable television, direct mail, mass email, and hard materials.

A church that is opening its front doors needs a website designed not only to promote its ministries but to minister to people. Outreach events at Christmas and Easter targeting the unchurched in your community become powerful tools of invitation.

A couple of things to not overlook when developing patience are:

1. Make sure your business management is well done and accountable, directed by the church staff and supervised by the board of directors.
2. Organizational structure needs to be leader driven. The board of directors works with your lead pastor to cast the vision and set the budget. The staff works under the direction of the lead pastor to accomplish the vision. A leader driven organization helps things move more quickly and smoothly allowing for steady growth.

Encourage Those Around You “*And strengthen your stakes*”

People are desperate to be affirmed. They will always respond to something positive. The best way to make sure people receive what they need is for the church individually and corporately to be positive about everything.

People follow. The only way people know how to respond is by how they are led. If your people hear something negative, they will be negative. If they hear something positive, they will be positive. To be the kind of encouragement where people will come in your doors, an environment has to be created where people will invite people. People bringing people is the most effective way to make sure the back door gets closed, because the new person who is brought by someone they already know is already connected to your church.

There is no need to take any chances about people inviting people. Go ahead and ask your people the question: “What do we need to do around here so that you will feel comfortable to invite your family and friends to church?” It might be good to include another question/statement to this question: “If we do what you just wrote down, will you invite them?” You can get a good idea if the church crowd really buys in to opening the front door and closing the back door if they commit to this.

Be bold and courageous “*For you shall expand to the right and to the left, and your descendants will inherit the nations, and make the desolate cities inhabited.*”

Isaiah the prophet states clearly that what we do today will affect not only our own future but the future of our children and our children’s children. It should not be a surprise that our destiny is at stake because the work of the church is eternal. Let’s put these Biblical principles to work wherever God has planted us and 100 years from now we will rejoice in all that God was able to do throughout eternity through faithfulness and obedience to Him.

Chapter 7

Crucial Keys for Missional Growth:

Starting and Growing Multicultural Congregations

By Jean Cidel

Praise be to God from whom all blessings flow. I have seen the hands of God in my life, and He has been faithful. He has enlarged the space beneath my feet. He has done great things, and I rejoice for being called as a messenger of the Gospel, as it is said in Isaiah 52:7: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news!” Oh, thank God for his goodness.

The North Miami Haitian Church of the Nazarene started in 1982 with 12 persons in the first meeting. They grew very rapidly and had over sixty individuals attending our worship services after three months. In their third year, they had about 180 in worship attendance. However, in 1987 we had experienced a great loss when half of the members left the church. God’s grace became their anchor and the thrust that kept them moving forward. We have looked closely at the basis for our growth over the years, and are convinced that the following have been the keys for our missional growth.

Prayerfulness Is Key

Prayer has always been a vital part of our church. It is the catalyst for the countless life transforming moments in the life of each member as well as the church. Prayer is

definitely the first key. The word of God teaches us that there is power when two or more people come into agreement in prayer.¹ The result has been truly remarkable and multifaceted.

Vision becomes very clear and purpose is very precise when God's people pray. Resources are allocated as answers to the prayers that can come in two basic categories: human resources and assets. The most profound result of prayer is a transformed heart desiring to see people come to the knowledge and fullness of Jesus Christ. It is through this instrument that God often deals with the motives of the human's heart and gently guides it toward the will of God. People become aware of their sinfulness and see the need to seek God's holiness and righteousness.

In prayer, we find and touch the heart of God and our true identity. Our members have developed a love for prayer and intercession. The emerging of prayer cells, which forms into small groups, is one of the leading causes for our growth. The members of these groups minister to each other. When there is a need or crisis, people respond quickly to the need of the affected individual. Prayer is the key that unlocks all closed doors.

“When we work, we work tirelessly; when we pray, God works.”²

Another Key for Missional Growth

Vision comes as a result of prayer. It unites all forces and provides a common ground for development. We are dynamic and virtually unstoppable when we are united. Being anointed and united, we defy natural law and step into God's supernatural abundance; therefore, there is no limit in what we can do to advance the kingdom of God.

When vision is clearly stated, it gives every member a sense of purpose and points to the goals that need to be reached through consorted efforts. Vision brings life and joy on the scene and wakes up all sleeping giants. It encourages the members to stretch themselves and reach for new heights that might have seemed to be impossible. Where there is no vision, the people will restrain from doing anything.³

The American businessman Joel A. Baker writes: “Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.” God's vision is to change the world through the church by giving us His vision. We embrace the vision by faith because that is the only way to reach our divine destiny.

We do not stumble but walk into greatness when we trust God like the patriarchs have done.

“No vision and you perish; no ideal, and you're lost; your heart must ever cherish some faith at any cost. Some hope, some dream to cling to, some rainbow in the sky, some melody to sing to, some service that is high.”⁴

Leaders and Teams

Leadership and teamwork form the third key component for missional growth. “Leadership is the ability to bring together a team of influential people with a passion to work for God toward the greater good of the church.”⁵ Leaders share their powers with the circle of dedicated individuals that surround them. They define the purpose of establishing the connection between this group of independent individuals who collectively have the capacity to complete a task or a project.

Some team members will bring themselves and offer their services, knowledge, skills and expertise. Additionally, the leaders have to recognize potential servants from the congregation at large. They care about their team members and their families. They pass on the vision to their staff members. The team must take the message to the followers and reinforce the fact that each member from the congregation has an active role to play in the success of the ongoing movement. The leaders must give team members a chance to complete their assign works. They have to encourage and affirm their team members as well as holding them accountable for their areas of ministry.

Training becomes a perpetual theme in all sectors of ministry to sustain expansion and effective leadership. New relationships are formed through the bond of genuine love.⁶

“You know what makes leadership? It is the ability to get men to do what they do not want to do and like it.”⁷

Empowerment

The fourth key of missional growth is empowerment. The apostle Paul encourages us to prepare God’s people for the works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built

until we all reach unity in the faith.⁸ We have provided every member with a Talent Trade Profession Worksheet (TTP). We learn about the member and the skills that the individual possesses as well as ministry experience. We encourage all members to find a ministry of interest and get trained in the area of desired service.

Every member is an agent of the church and is empowered to tell others about the ministries that are available. People will often remain idle until they know that have been empowered to do something for fear of church politics. By using the TTP worksheet, we discovered that many members have similar interests but various methods. As a result, we gathered these members and provide them the opportunity to share their individual approaches so that we may find a more excellent way for outreach. We teach all of our members to say, "I am an agent of God. I am empowered by the Holy Spirit, and I am sent by the Lord, Jesus Christ."

Unlock Your Potential

Recognize and maximize your strengths. I believe that every congregation has its own DNA and its own brand. The earlier you understand this fact determines a great deal of your effectiveness in reaching the masses. Three of the most prominent characteristics of our missional church are the loving people, the worship atmosphere and a missional heart. In addition, the ability to hold three different worship services simultaneously also contributes to our growth.

We are committed to reaching people for Christ: children, youth and adults. We see ourselves as a family and know that we are a big family. Our code for living comes from Ephesians 4. Everyone is welcome here. Everyone counts in this family. We understand that there is always potential for conflicts in the home or the church, so we remind everyone constantly that we need to be "humble, patient, bearing with each other in love. Furthermore, we have to do everything in our power to keep the unity of the Spirit."⁹

We love the Lord with all our hearts, minds and souls. We express this love that we have for the Master through worship. He meets us in the midst of the celebration. It is an atmosphere of unrestricted praise and adoration powered by the Holy Spirit. We are satisfied and made whole in His presence. People are looking for that life changing moment, and we pray that it happens to at least one person every time we meet.

We work diligently on the preparation of our worship services to minister to the people of God. We have a worship team who understand that they are a royal priesthood called to lead God's people before his throne to obtain grace and mercy to live a sanctified life. This team has been provided with professional equipment that produces enjoyable worship music. The musicians and singers know that they are one when they come before the Lord. It is our passion to be a church that cultivates true worshipers of Jesus Christ.

Who knows the price of a soul? We are part of a missional church and we have a heart for the lost. Our mission came from the word of God which states: "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'"¹⁰

We count the cost of reaching the lost and backslider. We will use all appropriate mediums to accomplish the Master's purpose. It has been said, "Salvation is free, but evangelization cost money." So we look for our strengths, invest, and expect a great harvest.

Celebrate the Victories

The fifth key for strategic growth is the celebration of all the victories, even the small ones. Every milestone that we reach can be used as a motivational tool to encourage the team and the people of God to reach for the next objective. The success of one team member is the success of the entire team. When moral is high and the people are motivated, we can conquer and overcome any obstacles.

We celebrate all victories, and we acknowledge all failures. We analyze our shortcomings and learn from them, and then we turn them into positive experiences. We celebrate the goodness of God and testify of his mighty deeds to strengthen the faith of others. The Psalmist wrote: "Shouts of joy resound in the tents of the righteous: The Lord's right hand has done mighty things!"¹¹ The Apostle Paul encouraged us to "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"¹²

Patience, Persistence, and Perseverance

The last key quality for strategic growth is the 3 P's: Patience, Persistence, and Perseverance. We trust God and continue to do what he wants us to do. We keep reemphasizing our objectives. We expect that we may encounter set backs, yet we remain patient and firm in our determination.¹³ We endure hardship like a good soldier. We do not complain because it is our privilege to be counted among God's servants.

In order to keep growing, we improve the methods that are working and cease to work on activities that do not produce fruits. We are running in a long race that requires endurance, so we keep on training to stay fit. We keep our eyes fixed on Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.¹⁴

One unknown author wrote "Champions are a rare breed. They trust God while others ask for answers. They step forward while others pray for volunteers. They see beyond the dangers, the risks, the obstacles, the hardships."

We fight the good fight of faith because we know that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. God bless you as you go and fulfill His mission in the location where he places you.

Chapter 8

Making Disciples One-At-A-Time:

Another Option for Discipleship

By Craig Rensch

Yesterday, October 29, 2006, Jack and Sally¹ gave their hearts to Jesus Christ. Their very first visit to our church, Anaheim First Church of the Nazarene, became a special Sunday for us. Every fifth Sunday we have what we call a Brunch Sunday. Instead of meeting in our sanctuary for our morning worship service, we gather in the gym around tables for up-beat worship, a children's choir presentation, a creative arts presentation of some aspect of the gospel, an evangelistic message from God's Word and a delicious brunch.

Jack and Sally had come on our invitation to watch their 11 year old daughter, Julia, sing with the children's choir. They were visibly overwhelmed by the love and friendliness of God's people. Praise the Lord, sometimes God's folks just do the right thing!

At least eight different people came up to their table to greet them and introduce themselves. They had all been praying along with us for Jack and Sally's salvation for many months. And now, at last, they were actually visiting our church service!

Sowing for a Harvest

For almost 4 years, our discipling team has eaten several times weekly at the local Denny's restaurant where Sally has been our excellent waitress. We have claimed her soul for Jesus for a long time now. Every time we saw her we looked at one another and declared, "We are going to lead her and her family to Jesus!"

Over the course of time, we had the opportunity to take Jack and Sally groceries when they fell on hard times. They live with their daughter in a single motel room where they pay rent by the week. This particular motel is one of the roughest places in town. But it's the best that they can afford right now.

For various reasons, Jack has had a difficult time holding down a job. Sally has been the primary bread-winner most of their 11 years together. Over time, we won Sally's trust and she began to share her prayer requests with us. Then last summer, she began to allow us to pick up her daughter for Sunday morning services and Wednesday nights. Soon after that Sally allowed us to scholarship her daughter to our District Children's Camp where she gave her heart to Jesus. A District Children's Talent Show followed, where little Julia won a yellow ribbon for her painting. She was so proud to show it to her parents.

My wife and I had taken Jack and Sally out to dinner several times and slowly won their trust and friendship. Then we picked them up for church yesterday, since they have no transportation. During the simple message about the Lord's Prayer, our church people were praying for Jack and Sally. When the invitation came at the end of the simple message, Jack and Sally responded with raised hands. The church erupted in cheers and applause. So many had been praying for this moment!

Later while driving them home, both Jack and Sally remarked several times how "moved" they were by the service and how touched they were by the friendliness of the people.

Reaching New Groups

There are 185 languages spoken within a ten minute drive of our church. Jack is a member of an ethnic group that is not represented at all in our congregation. He is our very first person from this particular group. We have been specifically praying that God

would give us some men of this ethnic background to disciple for Jesus. Jack is the answer to those prayers.

And now the real work of disciple making begins! We have very little in common. Most of our congregation is English speaking white. Jack is not. I am older than Jack by at least 20 years. We come from radically different worlds. I am the first white pastor that he has ever been around. How in the world can I disciple him?

Of course, the ideal is to have some mature disciple makers in our church that shared Jack's ethnicity that could partner with him for the first critical months of his Christian life. But there is no one. I'm it. And I am honored. And Jesus is going to help me.²

I am not sure what I am going to do, but it will involve meeting with Jack weekly and doing a lot of listening. I want to win his trust and friendship. He warmly greets me and expresses his appreciation of me and our church openly. But I want to get closer.

Jack is my spiritual son in the faith. Together, with the praying men of our church, we "birthed" him in the Spirit through prayer, love, involvement and intercession. Now, we are tasked by our Lord Jesus to help Jack become a follower of Jesus, a disciple of Jesus, a servant of Jesus and eventually a disciple maker for Jesus. I am committing myself to Jack for as long as he will allow me to be his friend. Frankly, my goal is to be the best friend that Jack ever had! I want to cover him in prayer daily and teach him how to pray. I want to help him become like Jesus in every way.

A Plan for Discipleship

And, we do have an approach in mind. By God's grace and His phenomenal, amazing providence and divine guidance the Lord has led me to a model of discipling that is sweeping the world and revolutionizing discipling, spiritual formation and church planting. We have reworked some of the parts of the plan and renamed it *A Master Plan for Evangelism*. It is a model that is presently being used, it is estimated, by over 6,000 churches world-wide and 3,000 churches in America. This discipleship plan is being used by the fastest growing church in the world today. This particular church is seeing over 5,000 people on average come to Christ every week.

It is a mindset and a methodology that has been effectively implemented by the fastest growing Church of the Nazarene in the world today. This vision of multiplication

is being used by the largest churches in at least nine countries in the world including England, Russia, Singapore, Italy, Scotland, Columbia, Peru and other countries. I have proposed to research, transition and implement this model in my local church of Anaheim First Church of the Nazarene over the next four years.

This is the most explosive, dynamic, multiplying model of disciple making the world has seen since the Book of Acts. Dr. Yonggi Paul David Cho of Korea, and pastor of the world's largest church with over a million people in his church, has declared publicly that this particular model of spiritual reproduction and intensive discipling is a model that "can revolutionize and empower the church all over the world to take cities and nations for God."³ I think he is right.

This *Master Plan for Evangelism* originally went by the short-hand name of G-12. Many other church circles have heard of this movement. Most Nazarenes I am finding have never heard of it yet. G-12 stands for "The Government of Twelve." This is a cell church vision and model. Nineteen of the 20 largest churches in the world are cell churches. Several of them are following the G-12 plan.

A cell church is not just a church with cells. It is a church where the whole movement, thrust, life and ministry of the church functions in and through the cells. Cells in a true cell church are not the same as home groups, care groups, fellowship groups, Bible Study groups, prayer groups, service groups, affinity groups or special interest groups. As Colin Dye of Kensington Temple in London writes:

*"Rather, they are tiny units of 'church' doing everything that 'church' should be doing, while remaining part of the overall body. Cells are where the evangelism, discipleship, pastoral care and prayer life of the church takes place."*⁴

The vision and mandate of G-12 finds its model and example in the way Jesus Christ ministered to and through his twelve disciples. Again, quoting Pastor Colin Dye of London whose church has exploded in recent years utilizing the G-12 model:

"Based on the way Jesus chose and trained twelve disciples, the G-12 vision is proving to be the most effective way of equipping the body of

Christ in the world today. Its goal is to see every member of the body of Christ serving the Lord Jesus and fulfilling His Mandate to make, mature and mobilize disciples in all nations.”⁵

How This Plan Began

It all began in 1983 with a pastor in Bogota, Columbia and a small congregation of 120 people. Pastor Cesar Castellanos was so discouraged and frustrated that his church couldn't grow beyond 120 people that he officially resigned from the church to wait on the Lord until God would show him what he should do next. For four months, Pastor Cesar waited in prayer before the Lord. Through a series of visions God revealed to Pastor Castellanos a strategy of evangelism and church growth through cells.

In 1986, he went to Korea and adopted the principles of the cell church as taught by Dr. Paul David Yonggi Cho. By the end of 1991, there were 70 cells and roughly 700 people in the church. Pastor Cesar was not content and he earnestly prayed to the Lord for a plan or something to accelerate the growth of cells and leaders. He believes that the Lord showed him the missing component – the vision and concept called “The Government of 12” or G-12. Castellanos writes:

“I began to see Jesus’ ministry with clarity. The multitudes followed, but He didn’t train the multitudes. He only trained twelve, and everything He did with the multitudes were for the purpose of teaching the twelve. Then the Lord asked me another question: ‘If Jesus trained twelve, should you win more than twelve or less than twelve?’”⁶

The Lord continued to show Castellanos that Jesus chose twelve to reach the multitudes. As Pastor Cesar waited on the Lord and studied the life and ministry of Jesus further, he began to realize that Jesus stayed with these twelve disciples permanently until they were trained, and then He released them, gave them authority, and empowered them to disciple the nations. The call in Castellanos’s heart was clear: find twelve fruitful and faithful men and reproduce, by the Spirit of God, Christ’s character in them. His wife, Claudia, began to do the same thing with twelve women of the church. His youth pastor,

Cesar Fajardo, (Castellanos' brother-in-law) did the same thing with the youth of the church. Each of these "twelve" would in turn win, consolidate, disciple and send twelve more: from 12 to 144 to 1,728 and then to 20,736. God had promised them unprecedented growth if they were obedient to the vision that He had given them. And unbelievable multiplication came. From 1991 to 1994, the cells grew from 70 to 1,200: from 1994 to 1999, there was an explosion of growth. They grew to 20,000 cells with 45,000 people meeting on the weekends for celebration services. In 1996, the cells grew from 4,000 to 10,500, with each cell having between six and 25 people.⁷ Today over 400,000 believers are being disciplined in over 80,000 cells. Each of these 400,000 disciples are being trained and groomed to lead their own cells. In contrast, Dr. Cho's church "only" has 75,000 cells for 1,000,000 people.

This new ministry model is causing Dr. Cho to re-examine his own methodology. Cho has long maintained that only about 10% of any church has the gift of evangelism and only these should be cell leaders. But in the G-12 churches, it is the firm belief that every Christian should be trained and mentored for life to be an effective leader of a cell. The church in Bogota truly believes that in a year or two they will have 400,000 cells each averaging four or five people. Even eight year old children are trained and equipped to lead children's groups.

The church has continued to explode with exponential growth. Today, thirteen years after God gave Castellanos the vision of ministering to twelve men; over 400,000 are being disciplined by leaders who are training them to be soul-winners, disciplers and leaders of cells and groups of twelve. The youth group has reached 65,000 youth who lead over 1,500 teens to Christ every week. The whole church is seeing over 5,000 people come to Christ weekly! Their retention rate is the envy of any church in the world. They are now retaining between 80-90 percent of their first time converts and nearly 65 percent of these new believers follow through with the nearly year long training to become cell group leaders. They are on target to add 200,000 to their church in this calendar year alone.

This is nothing short of miraculous. Amazingly, it is apparently reproducible and transferable to other cultures and countries. As stated earlier, this movement has spread all over the world. It is on every continent but Antarctica. It is being implemented by

over 6,000 churches worldwide. Over 124 denominations in East Africa alone are using this model of discipleship and multiplication.

An Overview

Here a brief overview of the *A Master Plan for Evangelism* and its key values:

- It is God’s vision to see a world populated with spiritual sons and daughters who love and worship Him.
- It is God’s will that everybody become a born-again, Spirit-filled believer.
- It is God’s will that every believer become a witness, a soul-winner, a true Great Commission disciple of Jesus, a trained leader, a trained leader of leaders, and a spiritual reproducer that multiplies multitudes.
- It is God’s plan that every believer be disciplined for life in a “spiritual father-spiritual son” relationship. (or in the case of females a “spiritual mother-spiritual daughter”)
- It is The Lord’s will and plan that on-going, life-long discipleship be done in the context of loving small groups where love, prayer, accountability, correction, evangelism, disciple making, service, worship and leadership training can best take place. (John Wesley believed the same thing and in the 1700’s had small cells or “bands” of same-sex groups of twelve.)
- It is God’s will that every believer become a “Spiritual Parent” who has led others to Christ and nurtures them into full maturity in Christ and to become true reproducing disciples themselves.
- With God’s help and a lot of prayer and hard work by faithful disciplers, new believers can and should be trained to become soul-winners and leaders of cell groups within a year’s time. This is done by weekly cell meetings, one-on-one same-sex mentoring, a series of classes with over 90 hours of interaction, instruction and assignments, and two weekend retreats within a disciple’s first spiritual year.
- Following our Lord’s example, trained cell leaders who prove faithful and fruitful in soul-winning, prayer, and cell leadership and multiplication are then

brought into permanent, same-sex, closed groups of 12 under one spiritual leader who is also under a leader. These groups are long-term, namely, for life! Each disciple eventually attends three small groups a week. They lead their own open evangelistic “fishing” cell with between 3 to 20 people. They attend their leaders closed group of 12 called a “G-12 group” for on-going encouragement, spiritual leadership, prayer support, accountability, correction, love, and evangelistic challenge and goal-setting for souls and cells.

- There they enjoy depth fellowship with their leader and 11 brothers or sisters. In time, they form their own closed group of 12 “spiritual sons” (or “daughters”) and meet with them as their spiritual guide, guardian, parent and leader. But they continue to meet with their 11 brothers and their leader every week in the original group of 12. It is a lot of work. But remarkably, thousands all around the world, in virtually every country, are doing just this!

This, in a nutshell, is the vision and ministry model for *A Master Plan for Evangelism*. There are several other layers and levels including “Network” meetings, “Generation” meetings, “Macro cell” meetings and “Miracle Catches” (large evangelistic rallies). These other gatherings can occur monthly, quarterly, or in some rare cases, weekly.

It is not a perfect, flawless methodology. Nothing that any of us will ever do will be perfect. But it is a vision, a method, a process and a model of “doing church” that God seems to be blessing mightily. As I write the words for this chapter, this coming Sunday Jack and Sally’s daughter, Julia, is getting baptized. She is inviting her grandparents on both sides to be there. Jack and Sally will be beaming with pride and joy as we baptize their little girl who has a vibrant testimony of her love for Jesus. Who knows, now that Mom and Dad have prayed to receive Christ, maybe they will end up getting baptized this coming Sunday too!

I want to love and serve Jack like he has never been loved and served before. I want to model what it means to be a good “follow-up” friend. I want to model Christ-like discipling for Jack. I dream of the day when Jack will lead one of his buddies to Jesus, and I can coach Jack in discipling him just like I disciplined Jack.

In Acts 9, Ananias and Barnabas had no idea that the Saul of Tarsus they were discipling would someday become the great Apostle Paul! Only God knows who Jack

really is and who he is going to become! I am going to disciple him, by God's help, as if I were working with and coaching the next Apostle Paul. What an incredible joy and honor this is for me.

I can't wait to call him tonight.

Chapter 9

Effective Evangelism in W.O.R.S.H.I.P.

A Missional Worship Plan

By Nathan Ward

Unity of “the church” was a familiar topic to Jesus. In fact, His final instructions to His disciples and prayer to His Father was that there would be unity in the body. In John 17, this is mentioned repeatedly. Jesus prayed that we would be “one.” This is what the “world” accurately criticizes the most when they look at the church. They don’t see consistent unity and they are right. From my perspective, this prayer of Jesus has remained largely unanswered, except for a few brief, shining moments. Why?

I have given a great deal of thought to what it will take to see unity in the church. How can unity be achieved and maintained? Will this happen through programs, ministries and church growth? Will evangelism and discipleship make this a reality? I have had all kinds of ideas. Many of them were good but not all of them were from God.

Created to Worship

Now, I have come to what I think is *the* bottom line of unity. I am convinced that this prayer of Jesus can only be answered as the church becomes the “House of Worship” that it was created and intended to be. Worshipers are what we are to become and worship is what we are to do. Someone has said, “Emotionalism is worshiping God only when you

feel like it.” But genuine spirit and truth worship, as in Romans 12:1, brings unity. This means that we become “God-gazers.” We give Him our undivided attention. The focus is no longer mostly on the mighty acts of God and what we want from Him. We now center on who God is and what He wants from us. That’s it! He wants us! We’re as good as it gets!

The Father values us greatly. The Bible says that He takes great delight in us and sings over us with joy.¹ God loves to gaze at us and He wants us to return His gaze. He says to us, “You are mine!”² and He wants us to say to Him in return, “You are mine.”³

We instruct our people that when we use the word “worship” it is actually to be a declaration of our personal surrender and sacrifice. “Lord! I am Yours!” We are the sacrifice He is looking for. Looking back in my life, I’ve got to tell you that I was created for worship. *I live to worship* and *I worship to live*. I didn’t know it, but I have always longed for it. It’s what I loved as; a child, a teenager, a college student, a youth pastor, an associate pastor and now as a senior pastor. All through the seasons and years, it’s still true!

Growing up as a preacher’s kid, I always loved the church. I remember that it was in an atmosphere of genuine worship and “God-gazing” that I saw so many wonderful things happen. People were saved and they testified and apologized and were filled with the Holy Spirit. They even cried and laughed and were healed. I always loved it. In fact, I lived for it. I didn’t want to leave when these times ended and people went home. As a kid, I wanted to “hang out” in the Lord’s presence. Time just seemed to stand still when the Lord was near. Nothing else mattered.

Looking back over sixteen years of youth ministry, I realize that all of my groups were focused on worship. Time and time again, God would break in on us in powerful ways in totally different settings. These were the greatest moments of unity that I can ever remember and they always produced significant life change. Worship always turned our focus and our gaze back on God.

My view of worship has greatly expanded over the years. You see, I thought it was mainly about what happened on Sunday mornings at church. Now I realize that worship encompasses all of life. The Father is not just looking for “Christians.” This represents

evangelism. He is seeking fully devoted worshipers of Jesus. This represents discipleship and holiness.

Devoted to Worship

When we are fully devoted worshipers, it means that we choose to give God an undivided heart and our undivided attention. We see all of life as a celebration of God's presence. We daily offer a sacrifice of praise which is actually the sacrament of obedience. Our core identity as God's people is to be known as fully devoted worshipers of Jesus. We are absolutely sold out and surrendered to this call. This is a way of life. "Oh, let me rise in the morning and live always with you!"⁴

True worshipers are those who are "relationally occupied." In other words, they are no longer available because they have been spoken for. Their hearts have been captured by and surrendered to the love of God. They are constantly being "courted by their Creator." This is a romance and surrender that never ends. It is all-consuming and actually intensifies over time. This love-relationship never wears out and never wears thin.

Worshipping God is contagious! Sally Morgenthaler was right when she wrote on "worship evangelism." It's a powerful force that cannot be denied or stopped! Worship draws people to God like a magnet. Evangelism and discipleship are all wrapped up in the balanced package of worship. Both of these will naturally flow from a genuine heart of worship.

Evangelism is an overflow, an extension of worship. A friend of mine said that "God measures fullness by the overflow." Worship is the expression of an intimate love-relationship with Jesus and this can't help but overflow and spill out on others everywhere we go. We love Jesus so much that we are compelled to give His love away in large doses to everyone we encounter. It is only God's love flowing through us that has the power to bring change to lives.

Discipleship flows from a heart of worship as well. The reason that we desire to be lifelong learners with a teachable spirit is that this is simply a means of getting closer to Jesus. That's our goal! We want to know Jesus better, not just know more about Him. It

is true that we will follow our gaze and it is also true that people will follow our gaze. God-gazing is contagious!

Our Cornerstone

The literal cornerstone for our new church in Wooster, Ohio reads:

“2006 – Created for Worship – Romans 12:1”

The literal foundation of our church is built upon the worship of God. That’s what we are called to do. Worship has to be our top priority. “Worship is the strategy by which we interrupt our preoccupation with ourselves and attend to the presence of God. Worship is the time and place that we assign for deliberate attentiveness to God.”⁵

Strategy of *W.O.R.S.H.I.P.*

This has been the emphasis that has totally changed the course of Wooster Church of the Nazarene over the past eleven years. Worship is all-inclusive. It covers all our responsibilities, so it will bring and maintain balance to the mission of the church globally. This will require a whole perspective we have learned to call our **W.O.R.S.H.I.P.** strategy.

Worship: (Eyes)

It is true! We will follow our gaze. Being in the presence of the Lord necessarily comes before doing. God is not looking for “dead meat,” He is looking for “living sacrifices.” Knowing and being a friend of God is our highest goal. We are called to be “God-gazers” in every season of life.

Everything that we do comes out of a heart of love for Jesus. Our entire life flows from our posture of worship, our intimate love-relationship with Jesus. That’s why Jesus says, “*Come here!*” We have *kept* our eyes fixed on Jesus in order to stay close to Him and to keep tracking His direction. “We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from start to finish.”⁶ It is such an honor and privilege to minister to Him.

“So brothers and sisters, since God has shown us great mercy, I beg you to offer your lives as a living sacrifice to him. Your offering must be only for God and pleasing to him, which is the spiritual way for you to worship.”⁷

Outreach: (Feet)

We must continually find ways to connect with “compassion evangelism,” both here and there. These are opportunities to give His love away right here and right now, where we are. “Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? When did we ever see you sick or in prison, and visit you?’ And the King will tell them, ‘I assure you, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!’”⁸

We do this because God wants to see more people become Christians and then, fully devoted worshipers of Jesus. We are called to find creative ways to bring Jesus to others. “Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is what the Scriptures mean when they say, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”⁹

Relationships: (Arms)

The Bible commands that we commit our lives to “transformational connections.” Continuous life-giving fellowship with people helps them get connected and stay connected to God. “Going it alone” will always be a limiting factor in our spiritual journey. Relationships network with every dimension of this W.O.R.S.H.I.P. strategy for evangelism and discipleship. “But if we are living in the light of God’s presence, just as Christ is, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from every sin.”¹⁰

People come to our church for many reasons, but they mainly stay for one. They get connected! For example, they may love our style of worship, but if they do not get connected, they will not stay around for long. On the other hand, people may come and

not like our style of worship at all. But, if they get connected, they will stay. “And all the believers met together constantly and shared everything they had ... all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.”¹¹

People come to our church for many reasons, but they mainly stay for one. They get connected! For example, they may love our style of worship, but if they do not get connected, they will not stay around for long. On the other hand, people may come and not like our style of worship at all. But, if they get connected, they will stay. We often say around our church “People are just one friend away from the church, and just one friend away from Jesus.”

Service: (Hands)

Everyone is called to minister generously based on God’s gifts, His call and His timing. We are to invest our lives towards eternity by taking the form of a servant, just like Jesus. When we “give our lives away” we are actually “sending them ahead.” “God has given gifts to each of you from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Manage them well so that God’s generosity can flow through you.”¹²

Every fully devoted worshiper of Jesus will be actively investing their lives in others. It is our calling and duty to always be ministering “within.” As the scriptures teach us, “Your attitude should be the same that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God. He made himself nothing; he took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form. And in human form he obediently humbled himself even further by dying a criminal’s death on a cross.”¹³

Holiness: (Heart)

We are commanded to walk out Biblical wholeness by loving God with everything that is within us, our heart, soul, mind and strength. “Give unto the Lord the glory due to His name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.”¹⁴

We are called to walk this out every day of our lives with purity, passion, power and His abiding presence. “But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God, who

chose you to be his children is holy. For he himself has said, ‘You must be holy because I am holy.’”¹⁵

We are to be the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the “living cornerstone” of our lives. We are to be constantly moving towards holiness and wholeness. “But God’s discipline is always right and good for us because it means we will share in his holiness. No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening ... it is painful! But afterward there will be a quiet harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.”¹⁶

Instruction: (Head)

We are called to take Christians and turn them into disciples who are fully devoted worshipers of Jesus. We must commit to give them the instruction that they need in a balanced way, over time. This will produce a quiet harvest of stable and secure followers, as well as empowered leaders to keep advancing the kingdom of God.

“But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. It is God’s way of preparing us in every way ... fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do.”¹⁷

Prayer: (Knees)

Prayer-power is the foundation of the church. Prayer must soak and saturate everything we do. “Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. If you do this, you will experience God’s peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.”¹⁸

Every staff person and every ministry must be blanketed with and shielded by prayer. Every board member has to have specific staff assignments that they cover with prayer. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results.”¹⁹

Prayer teams must cover each staff person and the ministries that they represent. The Wooster Church runs primarily on “prayer power.”

I remember our first visit to Brooklyn Tabernacle for their Tuesday morning staff meeting and evening prayer meetings several years ago. Actually, they were both prayer meetings. I think that it’s the closest I’ve ever been to heaven on earth. Instead of their massive choir loft being filled with famous singers, it was filled with people of prayer and real intercessors. I’m convinced that this is the heartbeat of the church and the key to their evangelism and discipleship accomplishments over the last twenty years.

Evangelism Touch Points

The altar is still a powerful tool to be used in the context of worship. It is a place to respond immediately when the Holy Spirit is speaking. We train our regular attenders and our leaders to leave footprints towards the altar regularly as an example to all. We use the altar every chance we get. It’s normal! I don’t believe that we can wear out the altar. New people don’t seem to have a problem with the altar. In fact, they love it! They embrace it and use it and make positive comments about it all time.

Invitations can still be given effectively during times of worship. This can even take place in the middle of worship any time there is a clear sense of God’s presence. It is often done before the sermon is delivered. People need to give a definite physical response as an indicator that they are serious. It helps solidify the decision they have made.

I love it when God shows up in services and people would get saved. I thought it all happened in a moment of time. Now I see that God was constantly at work preparing hearts to be His dwelling place. His love kept on drawing people to a moment of decision.

A Community Block Ministry

Block Ministry is an idea that came from The Dream Center in Los Angeles. It is one of the most powerful forms of compassion evangelism that I have ever seen. It can impact an entire community. Any church of any size can do this in any community. I know of

nothing that can touch an entire community more rapidly and effectively. Our regular presence on the streets gives credibility to everything else we attempt to do in the city.

We build relationships over time with weekly and biweekly visits to homes on selected blocks and by simply serving these precious people in any way we can. We always have something in our hearts and hands to give them. Groceries are distributed on our final visit at the end of each month when the need is greatest. The same teams always go to the same blocks week after week.

The opening for spiritual breakthroughs often comes as we get to know them and begin asking how we can pray for them. This approach is simple and non-threatening. Before long, this leads to an opportunity to pray with them about a particular need or concern. Then, we are able to lead them to Christ and to a church. It's definitely a form of "Friendship Evangelism."

Discipleship Touch Points

Instruction is needed more than ever. We are putting together a "Structure for Instruction." This will consist of courses we believe people need in order to keep growing spiritually. There are four levels involved. We have started with a solid foundation and will keep building on it. Each level will begin with a basic discipleship class for that stage of spiritual development. Courses will be determined for every level of advancement. We will use every means possible to gather groups of people for systematic and thematic instruction. Our goal here is simply to create fully devoted worshippers of Jesus.

Sunday School is still a wonderful vehicle for instruction. Due to space limitations, we have had to use all kinds of times and places. Our goal is not to complicate family schedules. We want to make instruction times as convenient as possible. So, we will use every major gathering time for instruction. This includes Sunday morning which is the still prime time available to the church. Every class we offer is a "connection point" to other people and to the church.

Small Groups are gatherings that have radically changed how people are able to get connected with Wooster Church. In small groups, "Fellowship and Discipleship" happens. Small groups are one strategy for instruction. Groups are not all about

instruction, but that is a major component of each gathering. All the groups have worked through several books together over the years. Practical application of the instruction takes place in these groups.

Deliverance Ministry is an intense form of instruction and prayer where people are brought to wholeness and freedom in Christ. The Holy Spirit is the primary teacher in this format. This can take place one on one or in various sized groups. Unquestionable results come directly from this ministry over the last several years. Total life transformation is a regular result of this particular ministry of instruction. Over the years, nothing has produced more radical and rapid spiritual change and growth in our church.

Mentoring Groups are being formed as intense groups to take people deeper and higher in their relationship with Jesus. Men and women who are mature and fully devoted worshipers of Jesus select three to five people of their gender and pour their lives into them. They instruct them, hold them accountable and pray with them. They meet on a regular basis. This has been happening informally but it represents a growing edge of the church. This produces the highest rate of rapid spiritual growth that I have ever seen. It grows the mentors and those being mentored at the same time.

Might Men is a great gathering of men that have been meeting every Tuesday morning at 5:30 for the last three years. Basic and advanced instruction has been poured into their lives from a master teacher. After the teaching, they break into smaller discussion groups for application and prayer. This is an in depth mentoring time for our men. It is creating leaders that are getting involved in the lives of other men and going deep.

Women of Excellence is an instruction time on a weekday evening. It is similar to what the men have done with instruction from a lead teaching team. It is followed with personal application and prayer. It is a wonderful connection time for women as they are being challenged to pour themselves into other lady's lives.

Prayer Shield is a very intense time of instruction, application and prayer for people who have a special calling to be people of prayer. They meet together regularly on Sunday evenings for advanced training from a lead teacher. This group is responsible for taking the prayer ministry to a whole new level in our church. They are making and incredible difference.

In closing I remind us of the words of Jesus when He said, “Upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.”²⁰

I love His Church. I have always believed that local church is “where it’s at.” Jesus said that He would build His church and that it would keep right on standing. He built it to last by on this unshakeable foundation.

Chapter 10

It Can Happen Anywhere:

Accepting Your Missional Challenge

By Dan Huckins

Of all the unlikely places for God to be growing a church and using it to reach people far from Him, one of the most unusual places appears to be Lima, Ohio. When we see growing churches highlighted, they are usually located in developing suburbs in metropolitan areas of the country. Yet, if I were to write a book about Lima Community Church of the Nazarene (LCCN), I would title the work, “It Can Happen Anywhere.” Through the following pages I hope to clearly articulate the best practices contributing to the ongoing growth of Lima Community Church. Describing these best practices includes those that are overt and those that are present but not as readily discernible.

Our Creation Story

Steven Sample, President of the University of Southern California, believes one of our most important responsibilities is to tell and retell the “Creation Story” of the organization we lead. This allows people to connect viscerally with the future by showing how where we have been indicative of is where we are going. Moreover, you can learn a great deal about a local church’s culture from its history.

The First Chapter

Everything begins with a dream, whether that is a microwave or the chair you are sitting in, or in this case, a church. In April, 1941, eleven adults had a dream and the courage to act on that dream. Their dream was to start a church to reach people for Christ that the mother church was not currently reaching. They wanted, in the words of an older member, to “reach people on the other side of the tracks.” This dream became a reality and eventually carried the church through two relocations and three different names.

The Next Chapter

When Grand Avenue Church of the Nazarene, formerly The Victory Church, contacted Wayne Sharpes to be their pastor, one of the key conditions was that he would agree to lead them in relocation, the second in their brief history. In 1976, they began the adventure by purchasing twenty-one acres of property located on the northern edge of the city of Lima. Within two years they built the first phase and successfully made the transition, once again changing their name, this time to Lima Community Church of the Nazarene.

Over the course of Wayne’s twenty-two year pastorate, the church grew to an average attendance of 900 persons, two worship services, and several staff members. This growth came through many means, but primarily through strategic need meeting ministries and strong, decisive leadership. His motto for the church was, “A healing message for a hurting world.”

Upon his retirement Wayne’s son, David, assumed the role of Senior Pastor. Because of his tenure first as Youth Pastor and then as Executive Pastor, David had the leadership “pocket change” and the boldness to make sweeping changes in worship style from a more traditional Nazarene setting to a more contemporary one. Additionally, David’s excellent communication and capable leadership allowed the church to double in size over the course of his five years as Senior Pastor. Near the end of his tenure, David also led the church to build a 32,000 square foot youth building called “The Axis.”

By this time, you may be wondering why I am telling you all of this. It is because I have learned in best practices; everyone stands on someone else’s shoulders. I am highly

indebted to both Wayne's and David's leadership. More to the point, a church's history and leadership indicates something about the genetic code of that local church. Not to overstate the obvious, there are genetics to every church culture that either hinder or accelerate its capacity to reach more people for Christ. These genetics, if not already present, must be painfully encoded into the DNA of the church, or change will result in little to nothing fruitful. In biblical terms, this is the heart or spirit issue. Does this local church possess a changed heart toward those who are not in the Kingdom? Unfortunately, many of us spend the best years of our lives trying to convince people to do something different when they possess no heart to do so. As Lead Pastor of LCCN I am most blessed to be on the receiving end of changed hearts.

This congregation's DNA has almost always included an urge to grow and stretch and change. Their genetic code here allows the people to be permission-giving to their leadership. Instead of asking "Why?" the people here ask "Why not?" Evidence of this came early in my pastorate when encouraging the leadership to remove the pews and replace them with chairs, thus providing 20% more seating capacity for the objective of reaching more people. Apart from a few criticisms, the change was made quite easily. Coupled with this urge to grow is an environment of love and acceptance that is seemingly intangible yet noticeably present in the broad range of persons attending LCCN. From my perception these factors, in company with strong leadership, have been and are the drivers for the tremendous growth of the church, especially over the past thirty plus years.

I am working diligently to fuel this "advance mentality," as Erwin McManus terms it. We are a church that stands on its toes, not on its heels. Perhaps my greatest concern is that of allowing "success" to become our enemy. Meaning, rather than always being ready to catch the next wave of the Spirit we may become satisfied, ride the one we are on for too long a period, thus losing energy, leveling, and ultimately declining.

How the Story Continues

After prayer, the singular best practice for us at Lima Community is in making certain, in the words of Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great*, that we "get the right

people on the bus” of our staff. This is inclusive of pastors, directors, and support staff. I am firmly convinced that a church’s maximum effectiveness for the Kingdom begins here. We use the “3 C’s” plus two more to determine who these staff will be – Character, Competency, Chemistry, Calling, and Compensation.

Although we sometimes miss the mark, we exercise due diligence in bringing on to our team those who are “A” players as leaders. These leaders must “fit” with our vision and philosophy of ministry and not only do the ministry but recruit, train, and develop others to join them. As I am sure this is true for others, I am extremely impatient with staff members who fail to offer “get-r-dun” leadership. To facilitate this further we are readying ourselves to institute a grading system (A-F) to aid in evaluating each of the staff. A “B” in performance is a passing grade; however, a “C” on two consecutive six-month evaluation cycles will more than likely, barring extenuating circumstances, result in resignation or dismissal. This is a stewardship issue. With our people generously giving and the limited resources we possess to fuel our work in the Kingdom, we try to be very assiduous in who we invest in as staff. Lima Community has a very gifted and aggressive staff. Sometimes I feel like I am herding cats, but leaders rarely congregate easily.

The next level of best practices at LCCN is the process we used in defining our purpose. We operate under the assumption that God’s purpose for us combines both the dynamics of the Lima region and the teaching of the Scripture. Thus, to begin we launch a study to understand the community and the people we are seeking to reach. The following are some of the highlights from the county in which we reside:

- Population of Allen County – 108,000
- Average regular church attendance – 17%.
- Divorce rate – 63% (13.6% higher than U.S. average)
- Illegitimate birth rate – 50%
- Important to preserve traditional American family values – 92.9%

As you can see, the region has a very high level of brokenness relationally as well as emotionally. Along with demographic information we are learning that the number of family and marital issues, exacerbated by extramarital affairs, is staggering. Our

conclusion is that although the majority of the people in this region do not know how to sustain a healthy family, they desperately want the knowledge and experience.

To probe further into the spiritual health of the region we contact every church in the county asking them for their average worship attendance. From this we discover that nearly 83% of the persons who live in our county do not attend church regularly, if at all. This is surprising to us as a staff but even more surprising to people of the church.

With this information in hand we began leading the church through a process of refining the reason we exist as a church. To accomplish this we simultaneously work with concentric circles of people all reading and discussing the same material – church board, staff, “Purpose Team,” and congregation. While the Purpose Team, responsible for putting our purpose into writing, works together, everyone else walks through a six-week daily Bible study complete with prayer and journaling, reading *The Purpose Driven Church*¹ with a Wednesday evening study of the same, and listening to a six-week sermon series.

The result has been a statement that reads, “Our purpose is to be a community that serves others in our region and the world by sharing the transforming grace of Jesus Christ, developing spiritual maturity, and equipping them for ministry, in order to magnify God.” Far more significant than this statement is the process just mentioned. We know that for a purpose to truly matter the “why” behind the purpose is more critical for people to grasp than the “what” of the purpose. The work of coming together to listen, pray, read, discuss, and teach is the only way we know to accomplish this task effectively. Consequently, our purpose is a tool for leadership to evaluate decisions with the greatly added benefit of increased ownership and focus on who we are and why we do what we do.

With an understanding of the community and a clear purpose, saturated with prayer, we can define success. We call this definition “critical success factors” – the measurements of success for our ministry. We want to be so very careful in defining these to avoid what we believe is the unbiblical practice of describing success simply by higher budgets and greater attendance. The following are our critical success factors:

1. Family Ministry – building Christ-centered families (i.e. children, youth, family theatre, parents)
2. Life Journey – Discipleship and life transformation, A-B-C process, Connections, Journey Groups, Marriage
3. Outreach – Baptisms, Alpha Course, Video Venues
4. Leadership Development – foundation to all the above

As we seek to determine and evaluate our effectiveness, we continually return to these measurements. The outcome of these factors is increasing concentration of our energies and a clearer understanding in leadership circles of what is essential.

Therefore, it should not be surprising that these next best practices exist as our growth engines. The first engine is our family ministry philosophy. I say philosophy because while the family ministry concept is leading to a number of strategies, we are careful not to confuse what we do with why we believe we are doing it. We believe that families, starting with the children, should be the priority ministry in our church. This includes, but is not limited to, a well developed and unified plan of how to disciple children from birth to age 18, inclusion of the parents in weekend ministry with their children, and support of parents in their efforts to raise children with a biblical worldview.

For this philosophy to become reality, our beliefs need to translate into staffing and finances. Practically speaking, we have a family pastor who gives oversight and direction to youth as well as children's ministries and their staffing and objectives. Instead of two departments, youth and children's, there is now only one - Family Ministry. While many churches often give verbal assent to this idea, most provide a good children's ministry that is organized around the adults. This may work effectively for them; however, family philosophy is the reverse of this thinking – adult ministry is organized around the children and youth.

To begin accomplishing this philosophy we first give our full attention to raising the bar for our age appropriate children discipleship strategies (Nursery, Rainbow Island - pre-school, Segullah Island - 1st grade-5th grade). The changes include the following:

1. Identifying and hiring an “A” leader as Children’s Director
2. Increasing the children’s staff (currently four full-time, four part-time, and three weekend nursery)
3. Eliminating the number of children’s ministry times (i.e. Sunday and Wednesday evenings)
4. Focusing our efforts on excellent weekend children ministry
5. Remodeling a portion of our children’s ministry area
6. Boosting the children’s budget

By instituting these changes and enhancements, our experience is a 67% increase in the number of children attending on a regular weekend in one year’s time. We are noting a Copernican shift in thinking where children bring their parents to church rather than the other way around.

We are now in the planning stages for offering a “Family Theatre,” à la NorthPoint Community Church in Alpharetta, Georgia. This necessitates altering our Sunday morning schedule to accommodate two additional Sunday morning hours of fast paced, Nickelodeon type theatre where the parents are required to attend with children. Therefore, children will attend their discipleship/small groups one hour while their parents attend worship service, and in another hour both will attend family theatre together.

Multi-Site Ministry

The second growth engine and best practice for us at LCCN does not come with complete intentionality. Because our 10:45 a.m. service is our optimal time for worship attendance, we encounter the most seating pressure. Even with the replacement of pews with chairs we are often at 90% or more capacity. One of our efforts to relieve some of this pressure and open up seats for new people in the worship center began in October, 2005, with the launch of a concurrent video venue service in another area of our building. This service targets a different mindset with a more aggressive music style, alternative seating, five-minute break in the middle of the service for coffee and snacks, and the sermon on the screen. Presently, our expectations are exceeded demanding that we prepare for relocation of the venue to a larger room this fall.

What started as an overflow idea has quickly become a strategy for us. We are coming to understand that because of the balkanization of our culture we are experiencing the death of one size fits all. A mosaic culture expects options with taste in narrow casting. The best examples from our time are satellite radio and cable television. Translated for LCCN, this is signifying our becoming one church in many locations, a small church feel with a large church punch. Our plans are to start another venue on-site as quickly as possible (e.g.: NASCAR, Gospel), and an off-site venue in another community within a year. Additionally, one of our members is pursuing the possibility of a prison venue.²

The advantages so far with our first venue include more growth, more opportunities for people to serve, more bang for the buck (cheaper to start a venue than to build), and the elimination of the size of the barn determining the size of the harvest. As a result, we consistently break the 2,000 barrier in attendance.

Allow me to conclude by looking at a surprise practice for us. Over eighteen months ago we begin to project space needs for the next 1-5 years. At this point it becomes readily apparent that we will need more space in the near future. Not knowing exactly how to address the challenge, the Holy Spirit makes clear the need to purchase more property. In a matter of days we begin discussions with the owners of 162 acres of farmland across the street from our current church buildings. Soon after we agree upon a price and close on the property in December, 2005. Because of the need to pay for the property, expand several of our ministries, add much needed parking, and erect a discipleship building, we decide to launch a financial stewardship campaign. Honestly, I would rather do just about anything else. But we soon learn that a financial campaign can be a best practice. More precisely, I am soon to learn the power of a parking space.

During the planning process leading up to the campaign launch, one of our leaders notes that adding asphalt parking spaces was not very “exciting.” In other words, she does not feel altogether motivated to give for asphalt, even though she understands the need. Out of that conversation grows the concept of what we now call “The Missing.” The description of “The Missing” are the unchurched persons who drive onto our campus and cannot find a parking space, or enter one of our worship venues and cannot quickly

find a seat, and are likely to leave and not come back. That concept of “The Missing” people is taking on its own life and becoming the language of our local church culture.

When we talk about spiritually lost people we talk about them missing from the church and missing from Christ. There are many reasons we believe this language use is vital. First, it is image driven and not merely conceptual. Second, according to those we read, persons who are spiritually lost do not like being called “lost.” I suppose they feel that label carries negative connotations. And third, more and more of our own people do not understand what it means for someone to be “lost,” but they clearly understand someone “missing” from our church family.

Not only does the campaign become a catalyst for renewed language, it forces me as the lead pastor to make and keep the vision clear. I slow down long enough to pray and put our vision into words then communicate this picture of the future in as many ways as possible. Two statements emerge - our vision’s opening sentence becomes “To help the missing find their way back to God, starting with the children, so that together we can join the journey of transformation.”

From this we expound on our campaign and church strategy in an acronym:

G.R.O.W.

G – Grip God’s heart to reach the missing (land, parking, and video venues).

R – Retool to teach the little ones with a primary focus of families (children’s ministry area remodel, children’s staff, and family theatre).

O – Over the edge into deeper spiritual water as authentically transformed people one life at a time.

W – to be World changers and adopt an overseas orphanage.³

What do I once again need to learn as an obvious best practice?

Keep the vision clear!

Chapter 11

God's New Math:

An Equation for Prayer Evangelism

By Brett Rickey

My friend Jerry uses a particular term to explain the phenomena of God's blessing over his finances when he tithes the first fruits of his income each week. He says that he doesn't always know how his money is going to stretch to pay all the bills after he has given, but somehow God always works it out. He calls it "God's math." The fact that the numbers don't always add up on paper doesn't seem to bother him, and it certainly doesn't bother God for that matter.

I have seen God's math work in many areas of our church life. As a New Start pastor, we have never had enough money to do what we wanted, but we believed in the old saying that "If it's God's will, then it's His bill." So we trust in God's math for our church's finances as well as our personal needs.

A few years ago, we were again confronted with God's math in a new way. This time he used algebra. Simply put, God gave us an easy formula to use at Tulsa Family Church that has revolutionized the way we do outreach. We found that winning lost souls for Christ was truly as effortless as this straightforward formula.

Are you ready for this? Here it is:

$P^2 + P =$ More people who know Jesus.

Or as we say it in our advertising, **The Greatest Gift = P² + I²**. Get it? Well, probably not, so let me break it down. Here's how we deliver the Greatest Gift to people far from God. (Salvation being the greatest gift.) Jesus once defined the greatest act of love anybody could give. "Greater love has no one than this, that He lay down His life for His friends."¹ When Jesus said these words, He was on his way to the cross. He knew that real love always involves sacrifice, especially when the lives of other are on the line.

I was allowed to witness this greater kind of love in action in 1995. At that time, I was working in the insurance industry in Oklahoma City. As you are probably aware, that was the year of the infamous truck bombing of Murrah Federal Building by Timothy McVeigh on April 19, 1995. On that particular day, I was 5 miles away and saw the plume of black smoke rising from downtown, but had no idea what had happened. Minutes after the blast, a co-worker who was downtown informed us that a bomb had exploded and buildings were damaged. Something inside me had me in my car headed toward the destruction.

I was able to park and run toward the damage, hoping in some way to help. Cars were still on fire, and by this time the police had formed a perimeter that we couldn't go past. I watched the firemen and authorities scramble to dig away at the debris and try to find anyone who needed out. These brave men and women were willing to risk their lives to do what they had to do to pull people out of the rubble. Nobody took a poll on whether it was the smart thing to do; they just acted out of love for their fellow man.

Unfortunately after weeks of digging, only a few survivors were ever found. People had volunteered from all over the country to help in the efforts, but to no avail. Hundreds lined up for city blocks to donate blood for the potential survivors. It was a tremendous tragedy that was followed by a tremendous outpouring of love. No cost was too high to get those people out of the rubble and back to good health.

What motivated these people was simple. There were people trapped under the rubble. And to do nothing about it was totally unacceptable. That vision is a group of people dedicated to bringing people out of darkness into the light of safety. It's a picture of what our churches should be about, but many times miss. Instead of rescue centers for those trapped in darkness, we have become resuscitation centers for those asleep in the light. It's dangerous to be a pastor to people that enjoy sleeping in the light. So we

decided to do something to combat the tendency that every church battles of becoming ingrown. We decided to be more focused outwardly, but we decided the battle would be won first from our knees.

The Variables in this Evangelism Equation

At our church, we went on a year long quest to pull people who were far from God out from the darkness of sin and the rubble of broken lives. So let's get back to Algebra. Remember the formula goes like this. The greatest gift = $P^2 + I^2$.

Pray for Those Who Are Spiritually Lost: P¹

Prayer is the most important tool in any evangelistic effort. We pray for lost people to accept Christ and begin to follow him. But no prayer = no effectiveness for Christ. The Bible assures us that "the prayer of the righteous man is powerful and effective."² But many times the prayer part is an afterthought instead of the focus. Churches can get locked into cool methodology and producing slick shows where people are entertained, but where little life change seems to happen. Prayer must be the centerpiece of the greatest gift campaign.

At the outset, let me give you a little of the nuts and bolts of how we administered this campaign. In October 2003, I formed a committee called the Greatest Gift Team. These were people who share an unusually high passion for evangelism and I knew if I could get them all together talking about evangelism, good things would result. We began announcing the campaign in December, and planned on launching it in the New Year.

On the January launch day, we asked people to submit a list of 3 names of friends and families who are lost on a card called an "impact list." Our greatest gift team took those names and put them in a database and printed out a card to give back to the person who submitted the names. The card they were given was laminated and a magnet placed on the back to put on their fridge at home as a prayer reminder. The team committed to praying for these people, and quarterly our team followed up with each person to see how

the person was doing that we were praying for. I will get to some of the results later on. So now back to how we pray. When we pray, we do it specifically in three ways.

First, we pray for them to find Jesus. Since Jesus coached his followers to ask, we ask. We believe that God can help others when we pray for them. I know this sounds elementary, but there are some who think it's not biblical to pray for lost people. We do it anyway.

Secondly, we pray for others to help them in this journey to faith. Jesus once said, "ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."³ We know that God has agents everywhere, and that he needs to be able to utilize their gifts to help your friends. Your prayers actually help God accomplish his will on the earth and more workers get sent when you ask. Jesus knew that this prayer would work. That's why he taught it to us.

Third, believe that God will answer. This is the faith element in our prayer, and it is usually the most difficult. We know that God hears every prayer lifted up and that our faith is a factor in whether or not we get an answer, but sometimes we don't see results quick enough and the devil makes us feel like our prayers aren't heard. Don't believe that lie! Believe Jesus when He said "For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."⁴ Keep knocking if you don't get an answer, and knock like you know somebody is home and will eventually answer the door. So remember, the first P = Prayer

Added to prayer, is the second P which is:

Prepare Your Life Message: P²

Prayer is not the only thing for lost people to find Jesus; they need to hear real life stories about the difference that He makes. Most of the Christians I knew growing up had been Christians since birth, it seemed. So a lot of them didn't have the real "bad boy turns good stories" that make a testimony exciting. This made them feel a little less excited about telling the story of how Jesus had made a difference, when it was a so hard to define to an outsider.

But one thing I know is that everyone has a story to tell of how God's grace has changed them. But not everybody is prepared to tell it. And that's the sad truth in many of our churches. People just aren't ready to share what God has done for them because they haven't stopped long enough to count their blessings and write them down.

So we decided it would be good if people could prepare what salesmen call an "elevator speech." This is being able to condense your life message into a 30 second sound-byte that you could say without thinking. John encourages by reminding us that we all have a story. He wrote "Those who believe in the son of God have the testimony of God in them."⁵

For the campaign to succeed, Christians must be able to articulate their story. It doesn't have to be a theological discourse, just the difference that Jesus has made. And when God's people start talking about their great God, the word gets out. Paul writes of the Thessalonian church "The word has gotten around. Your lives are echoing the Master's Word."⁶ When you get the word out in your town, people will start talking.

Peter tells us "be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you, but do it with gentleness and respect."⁷ Notice you don't have to be a genius that answers everyone's arguments. Just be gentle and tell anyone who will listen about the hope you have in Christ. You can do this at Starbuck's, the gas station or Super Cuts. Just be ready and be available and let God do the rest.

The first two variables in this formula are so simple and so powerful: Pray and prepare. But as the TV infomercials say, "But wait, there is more."

Invest in Their Lives: I'

Of all the variables, this one always proves to be the most difficult. It's difficult because it requires something that none of us can spare: our time. Most people in the US are busier than ever doing more and more things. People are working more hours. Add to that the average person spends hours each week just commuting, and you can see the rub. Even church calendars can add problems to the lives of busy people by over scheduling so many activities at the church. For lifelong Christians, the game can

become one where we show up when the doors are open out of habit, or because guilt and shame if we miss something.

So instead of investing our limited time with lost people like Jesus did, we can get wrapped up in our own little church world while the outside world quickly approaches an eternity without God. And when church activities become more important than investing in the life of someone far from God, churches begin to shrink and die. Jesus said in the Great Commission:⁸ make disciples of all nations.

Can I tell you a little secret? Making disciples takes personal time. It's a lifelong process. And really, this element has been terribly under reported in today's church. Making disciples goes beyond having someone repeat the "sinner's prayer."

Here's something you may not know. Did you know that Jesus never had anybody repeat any "sinner's prayer?" Nope, never. Not once. Here's what He did. In Matthew 4, He said two words "*Follow me.*" In another case, when He encountered a man possessed by a legion of demons, Jesus set him free then sent him home to tell others. In another case, Jesus told a woman caught in adultery to "Go and sin no more." That was how Jesus gave an altar call. Three different calls but the same Jesus did the work. But that call to follow or tell others sounds harder than just repeating a prayer.

As for the fishermen, I don't believe that those guys were converted when they dropped their nets. I really don't. I think they began to learn and watch and listen. And as they did, God changed their hearts a little bit at a time. Then one day, when Jesus asked the question about who he was, Peter could answer, "You are the Messiah." He finally got it. My point is that making disciples is a process that is time-consuming and tailored to each individual.

I am sure that most people who follow Christ are first invited into fellowship by someone they really trust or love. These Christian people invest time in their lives and they become richer. And as a result of this investment, the lost person, living in darkness, begins to see a new light in the Christ follower. And many times, a gradual dawning will take place. The decision to follow Christ was done one step at a time, instead of jumping off a cliff in a leap of faith.

When a Christian invites an unbeliever into their life, the results can be extraordinary. Peter said that we are a living witness whether we choose to be or not.

“Be careful how you live among your unbelieving neighbors. Even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will believe and give honor to God when he comes to judge the world.”⁹ This scripture assumes that you are in some way close to your neighbors. In our isolated garage door opener/internet/cable TV/cell phone culture we live in, it can be difficult to connect with anyone face to face. Sadly, I have met many Christian people who no longer have any influence in the lives of any unbelievers. This is sad, but there is a remedy. You must invest your life into the life of another person in order to make a disciple of Christ.

In a similar way, Jesus said “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”¹⁰ In both of these scripture. Unless they see something good, they don't praise God. And they won't see something from you if they don't know you on a personal level. The fourth element involves bringing them into your family of faith.

Invite Them to Church: I²

When the hard-living woman met Jesus at the well, she knew she really liked him. In fact, intuitively, she knew he had what all of her friends needed. So she told the whole town about it. She said "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did."¹¹

After we have prayed, prepared our story and invested love into the life of an unbeliever, it follows that we will have earned the right to invite them to see the Jesus we see in the body of Christ. Many lost people rail against the church because it is full of hypocrites. And sad to say, sometimes it is true. But so are the places they work or that bar they frequent. Hypocrisy is not limited to the church. And so, after lost people see the light in you is real, they are more likely to open their heart's door to Christ.

And if our church is a church that believes in prayer, then when lost people come in among us, the resulting life change is certain through the power of the Holy Spirit. We must never forget that Jesus loves lost people far more than we do. He is wooing them all the time. He is calling them to receive His life and His truth and His way. When people far from God get into his presence in worship, *they feel* something that goes beyond rational explanation. And that's why we want to get them to our churches.

Because if they get a little taste, we know that they will want more. The Psalmist writes, “O taste and see that the LORD is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!”¹²

I know in this cynical age, we tend to forget the power of corporate worship on the heart of an unbeliever. We think everything has to be done perfect for the message to get out. All of us can see obvious holes in the way things are done at our home church. That gives us pause when we want to invite someone new. But we don't have to put on a perfect show in order for God to use us. God uses yielded hearts to change the hearts of others. Excellence is important, but it isn't as powerful as God's Spirit at work. And God can use churches of any size to make this campaign happen. You may not even have a pastor in your church right now, but you can pull this off. All it requires is a willing heart full of passion for lost people and ready hands to do whatever God asks.

Prayer + Preparation + Investing + Inviting = The Greatest Gift.

So what happened at Tulsa Family Church as a result? Well, here's an excerpt from the report to our district in 2004. It was an exciting time for our congregation:

Statistically speaking, this has been our biggest growth year yet. Weekend worship attendance was up 50% and giving was up as well. God was able to grow our church while still meeting in a school on the weekends. Our growth was fueled first by prayer. In October, we began talking about the Greatest Gift campaign for 2004. We asked everyone to identify 3 unsaved people in their life, and submit their names for prayer and to do four things over the course of the year. We ask them to pray, prepare, invest and invite. We also assembled a team to pray for these people and we follow up quarterly with everyone for an update.

As we began the campaign in January, we saw immediate numerical impact that has continued over the course of the year forcing us to add a second worship experience on Sunday mornings. Average attendance since adding this second time in April and May has been at 642 (up

68% over the same months last year). The results are showing what God is doing because of specific prayer.

One story illustrates this best. Teresa Meadows is a new, growing Christian. She is relatively shy by nature, but loves Jesus and believes in prayer. In June 2004, she told me that of the three of people that she has been praying for because of the Greatest Gift campaign, two on her list have given their heart to Jesus. We have already baptized them. The third person is her sister, who is not a Christian yet. But her three children have come to church and prayed to receive Christ. The total on her list was three, but so far the number that she has impacted eternally has been five.

All this happened because of the concerted effort to pray for the lost, a willingness to get her story out, and a commitment to invest in their lives and then to invite them to church.

My hope and prayer for your congregation is that you will put this into motion in some form. Last year, my friend Pastor Larry Morris from Broken Arrow Church of the Nazarene led this effort in his church. They improved on the idea by adding an additional component. Each week, they would light a candle for someone on the list who had given their hearts to Christ. At the end of the year, 123 candles were lit. Prayer evangelism works. And the monetary cost is negligible.

Your church will change if you embark on this journey. God's word guarantees it. It will cost you comfort because change brings discomfort. And your church may have to invest more money as you grow. But if your heart is truly with God's, then the days ahead will be among the most exciting you have ever witnessed.

Chapter 12

Healthy Staff = Healthy Church:

F.O.C.U.S. Goals for Ministry

By David Sharpes

You cannot truly lead someone to a place you have never been. That is why in areas of family life, personal devotions, work ethic and community building we must be living examples of what James 3:1 teaches: *“Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, for you know that we who teach shall be judged with greater strictness.”* In this passage, James is addressing those who may have been facing the temptation to become teachers when they were not actually called by God and/or given the spiritual gift of teaching. For those of us who are called to lead in the Church, two principles are clear and foundational.

First, both God and man require more from those who have been given more.¹ When God calls a person to a place of leadership, much is required of that leader from God. The call to teach requires a standard of excellence and faithfulness. Secondly, the principle of sowing and reaping is also relevant.² As teachers we reproduce ourselves in the lives of followers (students). The Biblical model for *teaching leadership* is Ephesians 4:11-13. Paul says here that the act of teaching will result in the building of the Body of Christ, and ultimately growing followers to become more like Jesus.

The flip side is the resulting judgment on those who would lead by teaching in wrong directions in both word and example. This side has two ramifications. First, God Himself will judge those who teach wrongly.³ And secondly, our sisters and brothers in Christ will be affected if we are not leading in healthy ways, demonstrating a life of confession and grace. Not only must the teacher/leader be taken seriously, with excellence and in all faithfulness, but the attitude of the servant is also an important issue.

Discipline of Service

In His most famous teaching on service, Jesus concluded, “*For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.*”⁴ While Jesus’ service to mankind on the cross is unrepeatable, we are called to serve through many “little deaths” in service to others.

Service is an outward spiritual discipline that flows from the heart of a servant. The disciplined servant is one who can do what needs to be done when it needs to be done. Discernment and obedience are keys. We need to prayerfully discern the rhythm of the Spirit so that our “yes” and “no” to calls of service come out of harmony to His will for our lives and not from addictive or compulsive personal needs.

The call to service is also one of mutuality. Probably no one describes this better for me than Henri Nouwen in his book, *In the Name of Jesus*. In chapter 9 entitled, “From Popularity to Ministry,” he challenges the leadership of Christ’s church by comparing a corporate (performance-oriented) model to a biblical (servant) model.

The attitude of the true servant is found in one that not only serves, but knows how to be served by the Body of Christ through accountability, fellowship, and sharing life together. Nouwen writes, “Even the so-called ‘helping professions’ have been so secularized that mutuality can only be seen as a weakness and a dangerous form of role confusion. The leadership about which Jesus speaks is of a radically different kind from the leadership offered by the world. It is a servant leadership – in which the leader is a vulnerable servant who needs the people as much as they need him or her.”⁵

In developing healthy and true servants who lead, God convicted me that the following areas are key accountability issues for Christian leaders. If not given careful

attention, it will be easy to get out of focus, to be led by our emotions and egos and not by the Spirit of God. The Enemy has found great success in leading unbalanced, unhealthy Christian leaders into areas of subtle and blatant disobedience. He would like nothing better than to destroy what God is building at our church.

In our attempt to maintain a healthy pastoral staff, we implement F.O.C.U.S. goals for all staff members. These are used with dyad partners in monthly accountability, quarterly review by supervisors and at the annual review for considerations in compensation.

F.O.C.U.S. means ...

Family is the First Priority

The scripture says in I Timothy 3:12-13, “*a deacon must manage his children and household well. Those who have served well gain an excellent understanding and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.*”⁶

Q: How are things on the home front? This area involves goals and objectives for time with your spouse, children and extended family. Examples would include: vacation times, dating your spouse, time spent at home with family, etc. Are you being a winner here first?

Life’s relationships are covenants. That is what it is about from beginning to end if we strip the secularity from our eyes and look at the biblical perspective: the triune God making man and woman in the divine image; God entering into covenant with His people; that covenant using marriage as its chief metaphor in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

Life is about covenant. And marriage lies at the heart of that covenant. So that means when someone says, or expresses frustration that, “my marriage is interfering with my career (or ministry) goals”, he/she is thinking secularly.

Life is not about careers primarily; life is about relationships and the covenant contained therein. Our marriages and families take priority over our career, ministry, and everything else on earth if we think biblically.⁷

Objectives in Ministry

II Thessalonians 3:7-10 instructs, *“For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, on the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you . . . this we did to make ourselves a model for you to follow.”*⁸

Q: What are the objectives you would like to see accomplished in the ministry you are called to lead or support? Not all objectives or goals in your work are tied to numbers, though numeric goals should be included here. Please think about what ministries you see your area of responsibility expanding into or deepening, and how they contribute to the missional purposes (The Five M’s) of the church and the overall mission to KNOW GOD AND MAKE HIM KNOWN.

Mission - To help seekers find a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Magnification - To teach people to live a lifestyle that praises and glorifies God.

Mature - To help people grow and to learn the truths of the Word of God.

Ministry - To help believers find their unique place of service to others in our world.

Mercy - To touch the hurting people with caring ways to minister to the whole person.

In developing objectives for ministry, the minister finds a starting point in the purposes of God. God is not just the starting point in these decisions for directions or goals in ministry; He is the source of them. To discover your purpose in life and ministry you must turn to God’s Word. In fact, it is not necessarily healthy to make your pattern

or focus of ministry the pattern of another congregation in another location. The practice of ministry based on biblical principles should be within boundaries of knowing the context of your ministry, your call, and your spiritual giftings. Our vision for ministry in our mission field is based upon the community in which we serve and the vision God has built within us.

While there are always transferable principles and pace-setting ministries at which we look, our objectives for ministry cannot be based upon pop psychology, success-motivation, mega-church ministries or inspirational stories.

As a leader, you should pray that God will give you a vision – a **preferred future** - for the people that you are called to lead. Andy Stanley writes, “So pray. Pray for opportunities. Pray for the people who could help you launch your vision. And while you wait, plan! Develop a strategy. Dream first with God, and then find the one, two, or three things you *can* do and get busy. We don’t know what God is up to. It is better to be ready even if nothing happens than to run the risk of missing out if he brings an opportunity your way.”⁹

Stanley calls this a “Building Block.” The building block is: **Pray** for opportunities and **plan** as if you expect God to answer your prayer. Only God brings the revival, we can be nothing more, and should be nothing less than “ready participants” when in His sovereignty, He moves.

Communicating or Connecting with People

Ephesians 4:29 teaches, “*Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.*”¹⁰

Q: What are your goals in communication with lost people, church leaders or other staff? I am interested in how you will be fulfilling one of the key jobs of spiritual leadership: communication and relationships with others. I am convinced that when your relationship with God is strong, God uses us as instruments of encouragement and spiritual guidance.

The greatest leaders are able to communicate and connect with people at both the individual and the audience level. The old adage, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care” holds true. You develop credibility with people when you connect with them and show that you genuinely want to help them. As a leader your key focus will be putting people into places of service where their spiritual gifts are best utilized. Communication says we don’t release them so that we abdicate our leadership until they are ready and able to fully lead. Even then, it is not what expect, but what we inspect, encourage, and train that gets done.

Developing (effective) corporate meetings to communicate the vision and the goals and objectives to fulfill that vision is important. Caution: Ministry can get so busy in planning and preparing, that people can be overlooked in the process. Don’t miss the people – they ARE the mission.

While some feel inadequate in corporate meetings, don’t let personality become a rationalization for not finding effective communication strategies. You will find the ability to connect with people where you would least expect to find it. John Maxwell quotes in his book, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, then House Speaker, Newt Gingrich’s eulogy at the funeral of Sony Bono. It speaks to this issue.

*“You looked at him and thought to your self: ‘This can’t be a famous person.’ He smiled, he said something, and then you thought to yourself: ‘This can’t be a serious person.’ Four jokes and two stories later you were pouring your heart out to him, he was helping you solve a problem and you began to realize this is a very hard-working, very thoughtful man who covered up a great deal of his abilities with his wonderful sense of humor and his desire to make you bigger than him so he could serve you, which would then make it easier for you to do something the two of you needed to do together.”*¹¹

He learned the law of connection by winning people over before he enlisted their help. He knew you had to touch the heart before you ask for the hand. As pastors we must communicate over and over the vision and direction for ministry. Rick Warren says it must be cast every 30 days from the pulpit.

Don't ever underestimate the importance of building relational bridges everywhere and always between yourself and the people you lead.

Under the Surface

Philippians 2:12-13, *“Therefore; my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but much more in my absence – continue to work out your salvation in fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good pleasure.”*¹²

Q: What are your goals and objectives for your personal walk with God? Do you have a personal prayer partner with whom you have no role conflict and with whom you can share and pray? What are your Bible reading and personal prayer goals and disciplines? Who are you reading after in your devotional time? What spiritual formation things are you doing these days?

As a staff we are to be constantly exploring our interior space and seeking to live authentic in our relationships.

The F.O.C.U.S. of this goal twofold: firstly, it is meant to give permission for staff to explore interior space, admitting brokenness, failures, sins, and attitudes that we all carry without fear of judgment, shock, or retribution. This benchmark has led some of our staff to personal and marriage counseling. We are finding that in God's Army, only the wounded can serve. The brokenness that comes from the “Wounded Healer” metaphor seems to be one of the greatest preparations for effective ministry that flows from personal health; and secondly, it has helped develop a consistency for staff in their prayer, Bible reading, accountability, and spiritual disciplines. This has helped move our staff closer to the heart of God through the effects of community.

The most unhealthy time in the life of the minister is when we forget we are a person and not just a pastor. Archibald Hart writes, “Only God really knows our hearts, the innermost part of our selves. Only his Word can establish crucial boundaries for the self. We ignore these revelations to our peril. On the other hand we also ignore to our peril some of the solid insights of psychology, those not at variance with God's revealed Word. I am constantly amazed by how congruent Scripture is with the essential truths we are discovering about the mind.”¹³

The people-centeredness of ministry demands a lot personally from pastors. This danger that threatens from without and within can be counteracted only if the leader is evaluating personally, in a safe corporate setting, the interior issues of life. Practicing the spiritual disciplines (i.e., solitude, Scripture reading, prayer, etc.) are renewal points that leadership must practice in order to lead effectively.

I love the way Bernard of Clairvaux, a 13th century monastic expressed this:

“If you are wise, you will show yourself rather as a reservoir than as a canal. For a canal spreads abroad water as it receives it, but a reservoir waits until it is filled before overflowing, and thus communicates, without loss to itself, its superabundant water . . . in the church at the present day, we have many canals, few reservoirs.”

Staying in “Shape”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 says, *“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”*¹⁴

Q: What are your goals for physical and professional growth? This may involve personal and formal times. How about your sleeping and eating patterns?

We are to love God with all of our body, mind, soul, and spirit. This involves the physical care of the body in diet, exercise, and healthy living patterns. Renewal of ourselves day by day through proper diet and sleep are just two elements that will keep us from living stressful, anxious lives.

Goal-oriented, Type-A personalities are especially susceptible to work-a-holism, adrenaline addictions, etc. One million people a year die from heart disease. Adrenaline, above even poor diet, is the primary cause of high cholesterol levels (diet = only 13% of cholesterol levels). Ulcers, panic attacks and anxiety are often symptomatic of a failure to give the body and mind proper care.

1 Corinthians 4 tells us to keep our eyes on Jesus for the final approval of our ministries in proclamation of the Gospel and in leadership. Proper diet and exercise are part of avoiding the stress that comes from dealing with crisis people, deadlines,

conflicts, etc. Many self-sacrificing pastors know how to die to self; but do we know how to live for Christ just as effectively?

One of the concepts that really convicted me for personal and emotional health is the concept of the Sabbath. Some say there were six days of creation. I am convinced there were seven. On the final day, God created rest. Just like the other six days, when God put wonderful things in this world for our enjoyment. He knew that as managers, we had the potential to overdo things as well. So He created rest. Could the abuse or neglect of this gift be a sin against a creative God?

Remember:

The key is balance. If you excel in spending time at home with family, but your ministry declines or does not grow as a result, you are out of balance. At the same time, if your area of ministry grows, but your family feels neglected, then you are also out of balance.

I realize there are seasons (i.e., Summer Camps, Christmas programs, etc.) when you may be weighted a bit more toward one area than the other. That simply means you must take time for the other areas more heavily at a later date.

Christ alone needs to be in your grandstand, not others. Effective leadership starts on the inside. Before you can hope to lead anyone else, you must know yourself. Knowing who you are involves Personal Leadership. Ken Blanchard wrote, “Leaders often have an incorrect view of success in today’s world. They think success has to do with performance and the opinion of others. Scripture teaches us that ultimately we are created to please God.”¹⁵ Church Board members, the Lead Pastor, or people in your ministry area are not the ones we are trying to please.

I am convinced that if we find balance in these F.O.C.U.S. points of our life that we will find ourselves pleasing God and not man. This will bring fulfillment of your call to ministry and minimize frustrations.

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” - Philippians 4:4-7.

Staff Report Forms

F.O.C.U.S. Goals

Starting: April 1, 2006

Goal/Well-Developed Discipline Target: April 1, 2007

Name: _____

These goals are used at the end of the year during review times as a part of the process of the Pastor with the Church Board. This is a starting point. As you have more items to list, than space provided, please attach any necessary pages.

Remember to make your goals S.M.A.R.T (see attached):

Specific
Measurable
Attainable
Realistic
Tangible

A. Family First (spouse, children, extended family, parents, etc.):

1)

2)

3)

4)

B. Objectives in Ministry (numeric, program, ministry goals):

1)

2)

3)

4)

Please attach additional ministry objective pages as needed

C. Communication and Connection with People (connections to the lost, church leaders, other staff, etc.):

1)

2)

3)

4)

D. Underneath the Surface (Your Personal Walk with God):

1)

2)

3)

4)

E. Staying in Shape (physical, educational, emotional growth):

1)

2)

3)

4)

Make a copy of these for yourself. We will be reporting on progress of these goals monthly with your accountability (dyad) partner; quarterly to your supervisor; and yearly as a part of your annual review.

Dyad Partnership Accountability Questions

The goal is for you to go over your F.O.C.U.S. goals with your partner(s) – maintaining a level of accountability on a regular basis for accomplishment of your goals. Here are a couple of questions, if needed, to help move you that direction:

- 1) Are you caring for your family in a way that honors God? Describe that to me.

- 2) Are you working as “unto the Lord” – honoring Him with your actions and attitudes at work and with your workmates?

- 3) Are you taking time to communicate in an effective way with those inside and outside of your ministry area? Do your volunteers and people affected by your ministry know what, where, when, how, and why about your plans and programs?

- 4) Did you have your devotions yet today? How have you done this week? This month? So far this year?

- 5) Are you exercising regularly? How about your eating habits?

- 6) What do you need to do to accomplish the goals that you are not? Is there any way I can help?

Close by praying for each other.

All program, purpose, and management staff need to report to Room 213 by 10:30 a.m. for Teambuilding Training. Any others that would like to be a part of the training are invited!

Creating S.M.A.R.T. Goals

From Paul J. Meyer's "Attitude Is Everything."

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Realistic

Tangible

Specific - A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. To set a specific goal you must answer the six "W" questions:

*Who: Who is involved?

*What: What do I want to accomplish?

*Where: Identify a location.

*When: Establish a time frame.

*Which: Identify requirements and constraints.

*Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

EXAMPLE: A general goal would be, "Get in shape." But a specific goal would say, "Join a health club and workout 3 days a week."

Measurable - Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal you set. When you measure your progress, you stay on track, reach your target dates, and experience the exhilaration of achievement that spurs you on to continued effort required to reach your goal. To determine if your goal is measurable, ask questions such as.....How much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished?

Attainable - When you identify goals that are most important to you, you begin to figure out ways you can make them come true. You develop the attitudes, abilities, skills, and financial capacity to reach them. You begin seeing previously overlooked opportunities to bring yourself closer to the achievement of your goals.

You can attain most any goal you set when you plan your steps wisely and establish a time frame that allows you to carry out those steps. Goals that may have seemed far away and out of reach eventually move closer and become attainable, not because your goals shrink, but because you grow and expand to match them. When you list your goals you build your self-image. You see yourself as worthy of these goals, and develop the traits and personality that allow you to possess them.

Realistic - To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective toward which you are both *willing* and *able* to work. A goal can be both high and realistic; you are the only one who can decide just how high your goal should be. But be sure that every goal represents substantial progress. A high goal is frequently easier to reach than a low one because a low goal exerts low motivational force. Some of the hardest jobs you ever accomplished actually seem easy simply because they were a labor of love.

Your goal is probably realistic if you truly *believe* that it can be accomplished. Additional ways to know if your goal is realistic is to determine if you have accomplished anything similar in the past or ask yourself what conditions would have to exist to accomplish this goal.

Tangible - A goal is tangible when you can experience it with one of the senses, that is, taste, touch, smell, sight or hearing. When your goal is tangible, or when you tie a tangible goal to an intangible goal, you have a better chance of making it specific and measurable and thus attainable.

Intangible goals are your goals for the internal changes required to reach more tangible goals. They are the personality characteristics and the behavior patterns you must develop to pave the way to success in your career or for reaching some other long-term goal. Since intangible goals are vital for improving your effectiveness, give close attention to *tangible* ways for measuring them.

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END NOTES

Chapter 1

- ¹ These groups are outlined by available resources on the denominational Evangelism website at www.NazEvangelism.org.
- ² The first edition of the E-Summits called *Missional Hearts* is also available from Evangelism Ministries.
- ³ Matthew 16:18
- ⁴ From Matthew 28:19-20 to Acts 1:8 and many more.
- ⁵ Revelation 12:7
- ⁶ Colossians 1:20

Chapter 2

- ¹ Judges Chapters 6-8
- ² Judges 6:34
- ³ John Lloyd Ogilvie, *Lord of the Impossible* (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 1984), 109
- ⁴ For the full story behind this innovative ministry see GROW Magazine, Winter 2006.
- ⁵ E. Stanley Jones, *Abundant Living*, 82
- ⁶ Metis is a French word from the old Latin word ‘mixticius’ meaning “mixed” and is the official name designating a person of mixed blood – usually Aboriginal and European.
- ⁷ Judges 6:22-24
- ⁸ In Canada, Aboriginal or Indian people are often referred to as ‘First Nations’
- ⁹ Exodus 17:10-13
- ¹⁰ This strategy is available on-line at www.NewStartUSA.org.
- ¹¹ Judges 8:1-3
- ¹² Judges 6:24

Chapter 3

- ¹ 1 John 1:1 (NIV)
- ² 1 Corinthians 15
- ³ Acts 4:31

⁴ *Evangelism Explosion*, D. James Kennedy,

⁵ Joshua 24:15

⁶ *ABC's of Evangelism*, Stan Toler,

⁷ Available for orders at www.StanToler.com.

⁸ Acts 1:8

⁹ Acts 5:42

Chapter 4

¹ Most materials were developed by the staff of Newark Church of the Nazarene, with additional resources used by permission from the Ginghamburg Church.

² Additional resources and membership class materials can be ordered from Newark Church of the Nazarene's website at www.NewarkNaz.org.

Chapter 5

¹ John Denney now serves as District Superintendent for the Southern California District.

² All the names in this chapter have been changed to protect personal identity.

³ Matthew 25

⁴ Philippians 2:3-4

⁵ Sample worship cards are included in the appendix as the last section in this book.

⁶ Matthew 5:16

⁷ The story in Luke 5:10

Chapter 6

¹ Isaiah 54: 2-4 (NKJV)

² Matthew 9:37-38

³ Matthew 25:45

⁴ See chapter in *Missional Hearts* for a complete description of a First Impressions Team. The resources are also available on the Evangelism Ministries website at www.NazEvangelism.org.

⁵ Sample follow-up letters for first, second and third time guests are available for a free download on the Evangelism Ministries website at www.NazEvangelism.org.

Chapter 7

¹ Matthew 18:19 and Acts 12:5-19

² John Maxwell

³ Proverbs 29: 18 & Genesis 11:6

⁴ Harriet Du Autermont

⁵ John Maxwell

⁶ Ephesians 3

⁷ Harry S. Truman

⁸ Ephesians 4:12

⁹ Ephesians 4:3

¹⁰ Matthew 28: 18-20

¹¹ Psalm 118:15

¹² Philippians 4:4

¹³ 2 Corinthians 4:8-18

¹⁴ Hebrews 12:1-2

Chapter 8

¹ These are not their actual names, to protect their privacy.

² Philippians 4:13

³ Cesar Castellanos, *Successful Leadership Through The Government Of 12* (San Jose, California: Spirit Filled Productions, 2002), 12.

⁴ Colin Dye, "Fulfilling The Mandate" G12 Harvest Magazine Europe Edition, Special Edition (2001): 5.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Castellanos, *Successful Leadership Through The Government Of 12*, 43.

⁷ Dye, "Fulfilling The Mandate," 5.

Chapter 9

¹ Zephaniah 3:17

² Isaiah 43:1

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- ³ Psalms 119:57
⁴ Psalms 139:18b (MSG)
⁵ Eugene Peterson
⁶ Heb 12: 2 (NLT)
⁷ Romans 12:1 (NCV)
⁸ Matthew 24:37-40 (NLT)
⁹ Romans 10:13-15 (NLT)
¹⁰ 1 John 1:7 (NLT)
¹¹ Acts 2:44,47 (NLT)
¹² 1 Peter 4:10 (NLT)
¹³ Philippians 2:5-8 (NLT)
¹⁴ Psalm 29:2 (NKJV)
¹⁵ 1 Peter 1:15-16 (NLT)
¹⁶ Hebrews 12:10b-11 (NLT)
¹⁷ 2 Timothy 3:14-17 (NLT)
¹⁸ Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)
¹⁹ James 5:16b (NLT)
²⁰ Matthew 16:18b (NLT)

Chapter 10

- ¹ *The Purpose Driven Church* by Rick Warren
² *The Multi-site Church Revolution* by Geoff Surratt, Greg Ligon and Warren Bird
³ For a more complete description of this plan, see the details on the website at www.NazEvangelism.org

Chapter 11

- ¹ John 15:13 (NIV)
² James 5:16 (NIV)
³ Matthew 9:35-38 (NIV)
⁴ Luke 11:10 (NIV)
⁵ 1 John 5:10a (GWT)
⁶ 1 Thessalonians 1:8 (Message)

⁷ 1 Peter 3:15b-16

⁸ Matthew 28:19

⁹ 1 Peter 2:11-12 (NLT)

¹⁰ Matthew 5:16 (NIV)

¹¹ John 4 (NET)

¹² Psalms 34:8 (NASB)

Chapter 12

¹ Luke 12:48

² Galatians 6:7

³ Romans 13:12

⁴ Mark 10:45

⁵ Henri Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1993), 46.

⁶ Also in Ephesians 5:25 and 6:4

⁷ David Allan Hubbard, "Why We MUST Make Our Marriages Work," *Family Life Today*, Sept. 1981.

⁸ Also in 2 Corinthians 5:18

⁹ Andy Stanley, *Visioneering* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 1999), 38.

¹⁰ Also in 1 Peter 5:2

¹¹ John Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 103.

¹² Also Colossians 1:10

¹³ Archibald Hart, *Me, Myself, and I* (Ann Arbor: Servant Publications, 1992), 10.

¹⁴ Also 1 Corinthians 10:31

¹⁵ Philippians 4:4-7

Evangelism Ministries...

Evangelism Ministries serve to: (1) Provide resources for evangelism and discipleship across the Church of the Nazarene; (2) Network church leaders for effective local evangelism efforts through a variety of ministry tools, including the NewStart strategy and resources, GROW Magazine, training events, Evangelism Summits, and printed resources and websites; and (3) Communicate with clergy and lay leadership in the developing trends for effective evangelism in the Church of the Nazarene across the USA and Canada.

In the reporting years of 2003-2006, the Church of the Nazarene in USA and Canada set new highs in the number of new Nazarenes received by profession of faith, with over 33,000 new members each of those years. The Research Department in Kansas City linked these record numbers of new members over these years directly to the new members added through new churches started across this past decade. Once again, the greatest method for reaching new people for Christ is starting new churches.

A new visibility is being given to ***Evangelism Ministries*** in the denomination. The first two Evangelism Summits have invited leading pastors to share some of their best practices in evangelism and discipleship with the rest of our denominational family. The first E-Summit gathered the presentation papers into chapters for the book entitled ***Missional Hearts: Best Practices for Evangelism*** as a resource shared at the last General Assembly. This book is available upon request by all Nazarene pastors and churches as a leadership training tool.

The second Evangelism Summit held August 14-15, 2006 in Kansas City focused on the best discipleship practices being used by a dozen growing Nazarene churches, and particularly how they are closing the back door. These presentations provide this helpful resource to share with other congregations and church leaders.

Many of these contributors also served as presenters in one of the practical workshops at the M-7 Conference in February, 2007 in Kansas City. Plans call to produce a number of these helpful tools through the Evangelism Ministries website in an audio format. All of these papers will also be available for free downloads to all Nazarene pastors and churches across the USA and Canada on the website at www.NazEvangelism.org.

For further information, please call the Evangelism Ministries offices toll free at 1-800-306-8294