

Starting Church Planting Movements In Difficult Contexts

Model 2 Using The Chronological Storying Approach

Lesson One

Lesson 1: Introduction

For the past fifteen years my wife and I have served the Lord on the large island of Mindanao in the Southern Philippines. The Philippines is across the South China Sea from China. It is just north of Indonesia, the largest Muslim populated country in Asia. The island of Mindanao is the largest island close to Indonesia and the majority of the people are Muslims, some very fanatical Muslims. Because most Filipinos are Christian, there has been an armed rebellion by the Muslims on this island against the government that the military is trying to put down. The conflict has resulted in thousands of people being killed by rebel bands who claim to be fighting jihad in the name of Islam.

We serve among a tribe called the Maranao. The Maranaos are the largest Moro (Muslim) and cultural minority in the Philippines, numbering more than 840,000 in the late 20th century. They live around the edge of Lake Lanao, located at the Islamic City of Marawi. A famous Maranao poet, **Datu Tingcap G. Pandi**, said that the word “**MERANAO**” is a

compound word composed of “**MERA**” which means “**peacock**” and “**NAO**” which means “**awake**”. In other words, “**meranao**” means “**an awake peacock**”.

Perhaps this is related to why they are known for their brasswork, fine mosques, rich clothing, exotic dances, and love for music. Usually artistic, the Maranao lavish effort on elegant pageantry and celebration. Their festivals are rich in vivid hues of red and purple seen on bright banners and intricate silk malongs on both men and women.

Through various trials connected with our church planting efforts among the Maranao God has chipped off some our rough edges and helped us prioritize what is important. There are very few things in this world that are eternal. There are really only two: the Word of God and the souls of men. We have been called of God to invest our lives as stewards of the whole Word of God as we allow ourselves to be used by Him to draw men unto Himself.

As I have analyzed church planting efforts in the Philippines and other parts of the world, there have been very few that offer a complete package of ministry as our Lord has directed us in Scripture. I cringe when I hear church planters claim that they are planting a church every year. I wonder what essential elements of discipleship have been skipped in order to make such claims.

Looking back over our modest church plant among the Maranao Muslims in the mountains outside Iligan City, God has taught us some specific lessons. Did I understand the church planting process when we arrived on the field in 1985 in our mid-twenties? No. Like

most of us, God used other church planters, trial and error, and many hardships to help us plant an indigenous, self reproducing church in the midst of a Muslim community that had never heard of nor seen a truly Christian community.

It is my prayer that this church-planting model can be used to help you plant self-reproducing churches among the least-reached peoples of our globe, for the glory of God.

Stages of Church Planting

There are 7 stages in church planting under this model. These include: first, your own personal preparation for church-planting, secondly, doing survey of the area and people where church-planting will occur, thirdly, making contact with the “man of peace,” fourth and fifth, proclaiming the truth of the Gospel through the teaching of Bible using stories until those who hear become obedient disciples, and sixth and seventh, training leadership and in the process empowering them to multiply church following the leading of the Holy Spirit.

Preparation

Survey

Contact

Proclaim

Disciple

Training Leadership

Empowerment

There are three key ingredients largely missing from traditional church planting models. This statement doesn't mean that there are not books written on these issues, or that these principles are not ascribed to, but after observing many church planting efforts, talking with

mission executives, and networking with others, I have found these principles lacking in many church planting efforts.

The first key ingredient, lacking in many church-planting efforts, is carefully planned discipleship of those saved in the ministry. Paul, the apostle, was very careful to disciple new believers. First, he trusted the Holy Spirit to lead and guide them, then he disciplined by teaching them, writing letters, sending Timothy, Titus, or others to do follow-up with them, and disciplining them as necessary.

The second key ingredient, lacking in many church-planting efforts, is a failure to be involved with the people in their communities. Believers and churches have often failed to be true salt and light among the unsaved in their communities. They have become isolated groups where the majority of believers have no significant involvement with even one unsaved person, let alone with the community as a whole. The church has relegated the responsibility of ministering to the real needs of people to government agencies, which have largely failed to fulfill this task that God has given to the church.

The third key ingredient, lacking in many church-planting efforts, is a failure to establish church-planting movements focused on reaching the least-reached. The least-reached are those who do not have the opportunity to attend an established church in their own language and culture. Most church planters are far more comfortable in their own language and culture setting and are not willing to make the efforts needed to go to an unreached people group, find out how to be able to live among them, learn their language and culture, do the research necessary to help them apply the Bible in their own setting, and live and work in those difficult contexts to disciple a church into being.

A second contributing factor to the failure to establish church-planting movements is the lack of commitment to make disciples, work themselves out of the job of church-planting through developing local leadership so that one can continue the movement by going to new areas to do church-planting. Churches should invest the best resources, including their most mature leaders, in bringing the gospel to the least-reached.

The purpose of this short course is to help church planters, pastors, missionaries, and any other disciple of Jesus Christ to use these three key ingredients in their church and their church-planting ministries. It will seek to give them guidelines for discipleship of those saved in the ministry, help them to be involved in their communities through appropriate holistic ministries, and help them to establish church-planting movements focused on reaching the least-reached. This model assumes that you have already taken the course on Chronological Bible Storying. If not, you will have a hard time understanding the guidelines given here. Please study the methods and processes for teaching through the Bible. This course will then explain how it can be used to both evangelize and discipline in difficult contexts.

Stage One--Preparation: Living in Light of God's Priorities

Our Mission

A mission statement tells you a lot about a person or an organization. It tells you its heart beat. It explains the source of its passion. Every since I have heard about least-reached people I have been consumed with spending my life, time, money, career, etc., in bringing the gospel to them and planting a church in a language group that has never had a church before. The mission statement of our sending agency "is to glorify God by partnering with the body of Christ to establish and equip churches, proclaiming the gospel, primarily in the least-reached Buddhist, East Asian, Hindu, and Muslim communities worldwide." This was Paul's goal as

well in Romans 15:20, “So I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man’s foundation.”

Question: Do you have a personal mission statement that makes clear what the Lord is leading you to do and what you expect the outcomes of your calling to be? For example: God has called me to lead people to Christ within a Muslim context and to see churches established where believers become strong disciples of Jesus, witnessing and leading others to Christ, and reproducing into new churches.

Becoming a Disciple of Christ

I grew up in a non-Christian home. Yet, because of the influence of a Christian grandmother, my parents faithfully dropped my brothers and sisters off at a local church. Each week we faithfully attended the children’s program that the church ran. Through the years we never attended services. I trusted Christ as my Savior when I was seven years old during one of these children’s evangelistic and teaching classes, but because of my surroundings, never really got serious with God.

In our family, the rule was we had to go to Sunday school until we graduated from high school. Then, each of us had the freedom to continue going to church or not. My brothers and sisters all decided to stop attending church at this time, but my decision to trust Christ was real, so I continued to go to Sunday school, while I struggled to determine what kind of man I was going to become.

During my senior year in high school I did what all my other friends had been doing for years - I started to drink and go to parties. I had my limits of what I would do - I never smoked or took drugs - but I did do some pretty stupid things that I am not very proud of. By the time I graduated from high school, I went into the trades. I was a gifted furniture maker and got a job making circular staircases out of wood. I was from a good, hard-working family, and never considered going to college. No one in my extended family ever went to college. We just

worked hard, drank a bit on the weekends, and looked forward to two weeks of vacation a year. I was becoming what I was raised to become, a hard-working, somewhat moral, blue collar worker who liked to have a little fun - except, unlike others that I knew, I was feeling guilty.

When I turned eighteen, I did what all kids did from my area. I went up to a bar and got thoroughly drunk. I thought this was proof that I was becoming a man. The next morning, my mom said something to me that changed my life. She said, "You're late for work!" Then, with disappointment in her voice, she said, "I expected this kind of behavior from other kids, but not from you." God used my mother's words to let me know that I wasn't becoming the man that He wanted me to be. He was preparing me for a major turn of events that would shape my life and eventually lead me to the mission field.

During the next month I met a girl who I would date for the next three years. Looking back, I am not sure she had truly trusted Christ as her Savior, but she knew the gospel, was involved in her church, and was the most spiritual person I had ever had a friendship with. This relationship was the second catalyst that God used to get me to serve Him. I was immature and ignorant of many spiritual truths, but having a serious relationship with a young woman I admired caused me to want to grow up and become a disciple of Christ. It may not have been the best reason, but it was what God used to get me to start to follow Him.

In the fall of 1977, I immediately approached the church leader responsible for teaching Bible to the children and applied to be a teacher. I quickly found out that the kids knew a whole lot more than I did. I had a great time doing these ministries. We did special activities, I visited my kids in their homes, and began to learn how to disciple children. Next, I heard the pastor talk about evangelism. I had never heard about evangelism before, but he told me that there would be a new class starting in January and that I should attend. His wife was my trainer

and for the next four months I learned how to share my faith. For the next four years I continued serving as a Sunday school teacher and an evangelism trainer. I also disciplined those who had trusted Christ on Monday nights, got involved in a Bible study for singles, became a big brother for a young fatherless boy, and regularly visited shut-ins like my great, great aunt and my grandmother.

During the day I continued to work at the stair shop, became a journeyman carpenter and developed my wood shop at home. Life was great. I loved my job, girlfriend and especially all, the various ministries that I was involved in. While hand carving the railings for various circular staircases I had a lot of time to think. God began putting in my mind thoughts about ministry. I used to think, “As beautiful as these stairs are, they are going to fall apart in about one hundred years. Wouldn’t it be better if I spent my time serving in God’s kingdom?” God was preparing my heart to hear my first mission’s message.

A Covenant With God

In early 1980, after I was engaged to my girlfriend of almost three years, the leader of a mission group came to speak at my church. It was my first missions conference and would prove to be a pivotal night of my life. He explained about the great needs around the world and that God has commanded us to make disciples of all nations. I don’t believe I received any particular call. I just thought, “Oh, followers of Christ are supposed to share their faith with people from all nations, not just here in my hometown.” Then I thought, “But God, I am engaged to be married, I have a career as a stair builder, and I am the only one in my extended family who is saved. Who will share Christ with them if I go overseas?” As I wrestled with these things, God gave me the peace to go forward with the commitment to check missions out. I went up front, talked to the missions leader and got information about their ministries.

In the next months met my very first missionaries, who had just graduated from the missionary training program and were going to the Philippines on a two-year team. I promised to pray for them every day and wrote them faithfully over the next two years. That summer I also went to the church library and checked out a book on missions. The book I grabbed off the shelf was about the Yali of Indonesia. On the island of Papua in Indonesia lived the Yali, a tribe of cannibalistic warriors who called themselves “lords of the earth.” In their remote mountain-walled valleys, no one dared challenge their authority, yet they lived in perpetual terror and bondage to the kembu spirits they served. When missionaries Stanley Dale and Bruno de Leeuw, two remarkably different men with a single heart for the Yali people, dared enter this rugged and unforgiving land, they little knew what awaited them. Both were killed by Yali warriors, riddled with arrows. Yet, through their deaths the Yali came to know the love of their Redeemer.

The book had me in tears as I read it on vacation. I paced the beaches of a local lake in total disbelief as these missionaries gave their lives for the sake of the gospel. I wondered, “God, is this the life you are calling me to?” I shared my reading with my fiancée, but she was unreceptive. She envisioned us living our lives together in the city, where I would build a wonderful home, raise a family, and hopefully become wealthy. We discovered that we were on different paths. A few months later, my fiancée broke off our relationship. Although I was devastated, I knew exactly what God was telling me. He was making it clear that He wanted me to dedicate my life to missionary service. God and I had just one more issue to discuss before I would sign up for missions.

My greatest concern for going to the mission field was not money, career, or the many changes that would await me - it was my family. I was the only person who knew the Lord in

my whole extended family. So, God and I had a talk. I told the Lord, “I am willing to go anywhere you send me, but if I go, who will witness to my family?” Then, during this very sacred time of worship, the Lord promised, “If you obey me, I will take care of your family.” So I submitted to the Lord, told Him ok, and our deal was set.

Over the years God and I have been faithful to this covenant. Very soon after that, my mother and father came to know Christ as their Savior. Then my sister trusted Christ a year before we left for the field. When we finished our first term of service in the Philippines in 1990, my other family members still did not express an interest in spiritual things. Yet, my faith in God and our covenant never wavered. During our second term in the Philippines, I continued to make my family’s salvation a matter of daily prayer. The day we arrived back home from the Philippines I told my Father that I was praying all throughout the previous 4 years for a family Bible study to materialize. He remarked, “I don’t think anyone will come.” By January of 1996 the Lord had done His work and each family member agreed to come to the study. During the three evangelistic Bible studies (when more and more of the members of my extended family came), I was able to lead my brothers, their wives and all of my older nieces and nephews to Christ. God is good. He is worthy of praise!

Preparing for the Field

Now that God and I had our covenant, I was ignorant enough to believe that I could just go to the mission field. Then one of our elders at the church told me that I needed to formally study the Bible and that I should apply to go to school. The summer before I went to Bible school I went on my first of three missions trips. On one of these trips I went to Australia where I met my future wife. Neither of us was looking for a relationship, but when we returned home from Australia we saw each other about once a month. During this time we did research

on unreached people groups, we prayed much about where we might go, and looked at possibilities and problems in getting into cross-cultural missions within another country.

In 1983 I went to my church's seminar called "New Peoples' Orientation." I wasn't quite sure where in the Muslim world God wanted me to serve, so I asked the leader of our network's missions efforts where he needed me the most. He suggested the Philippines, so I became an appointee to work among the Maranao, on the island of Mindanao. Later that summer, my wife and I went to the program for training in Muslim evangelism. Here, we also did our first ministry together among Muslims. Then we spent the next year in preparation to go to the Philippines.

As a result of our commitment to obey our Lord's command to make disciples of all nations, my wife and I went to work and live among the Maranao Muslims in 1985. We began our ministry studying the dominant language of Mindanao, Cebuano, and moved to Iligan City in 1986. In order to plant an indigenous church among these people, we studied the language and culture of this Muslim group for two years. This study formed the nucleus of information that guided us during our initial stages of the church-planting process.

Questions for discussion:

1. How did you come to Christ?
2. What has been the most important process that has helped you to grow as a disciple of Jesus?
3. What are the 7 stages of church-planting?
4. What are the 3 major hindrances to effective church-planting?
5. How has God been preparing you for cross-cultural church-planting?
6. What do you see God's priorities in your life to be?

Lesson Two

Survey: Involvement is the Key

The first stage in the church-planting process is to survey prospective areas for ministry. During this stage, we seek to find unreached communities that demonstrate the best potential for starting a church and spreading the gospel to the rest of the community (Acts 13:14; 14:1; 16:13,14). It is critically important that we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in identifying the community we are to go to. God knows the hearts of men and women. He knows what is happening in the heavenlies. We must follow His leading. We find this in the life and ministry of Paul. In Acts 16:6-10 we read:

Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, after they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

Paul tried to go into the province of Asia but was stopped, then to Bithynia but again was stopped. Then by vision, the Holy Spirit showed them that they were to go to Macedonia. There in Macedonia the Spirit led them to a “woman of peace” who became the springboard for the planting of the church. It is very important that we seek the Holy Spirit to lead us to the man or woman of peace through whom we can reach out to the community.

Once we know where God wants us to go and have identified the man or woman of Peace through whom the message will go into the community, we must minister to our target audience in culturally sensitive ways. Paul did this as expressed in I Corinthians 9:19-23, where he testifies, “For though I am free from all, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the

more. And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews;... To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some..." In order to do this, Paul studied his host culture and used the information he discovered to communicate the gospel. Read how Paul did this in Acts 17:22-31 when he used the people's worship of the unknown god to talk about Jesus. As we survey new areas, it is important that we begin language and cultural study in order to communicate Christ in the most effective means possible.

Cultural study

Why is it so important to study culture? First, because communicating to people requires an understanding of their cultural ways of processing information which is based on their ways of viewing and understanding life and on their belief systems. Unless you understand how people relate to one another you may not even have the chance to present the Gospel.

For example, two young women went as missionaries to the country of Bolivia. They chose a small village in the high mountains as their center for ministry. They found that people were polite to them, were shy but willing to communicate with them, but seemed to be resistant to the Gospel. They served for two years without seeing any fruit and eventually left to go to the city of Cochabamba.

About this time, in the city of La Paz, a young missionary had a ministry visiting patients in hospitals to share the Gospel. He made friends with a man from the small village that the two women had served in. He would visit him in the hospital ward, bring fresh fruit or candies, read to him, and share the Gospel. Eventually his friend, the patient, accepted the Lord. After

he was released from the hospital this man invited his missionary friend to visit him in the village.

At the missionary's first visit to the village he was given a feast and most of the men of the village were invited. There the man told of his time in the hospital and how the missionary had befriended him and cared for him. He also explained the Gospel message he had heard and had responded to. Then he announced that the missionary was his village guest and under his roof.

The missionary stayed for several months and in that time found such responsiveness to the Gospel that not only was a church planted in that village but also several were started in surrounding villages.

What was the difference? Why was there no fruit after several years of effort by the two women and a church planted with a few months by the young man? It was because the young women had never been invited into the village. They were outsiders. They did not belong under anyone's roof. So, people were polite to them but did not listen to them. They had not studied the culture and so never understood this essential way to become part of the people. The young man was invited by a member of the village and the village was publically informed that he was under the roof as a guest. This opened the whole village to him. He was not an outsider. Such a simple thing made all the difference in responsiveness to the Gospel. This is a cultural barrier that hindered or allowed the Gospel to take root.

Another reason for understanding culture is that how the church expresses itself will be in culturally acceptable forms. Churches in China will function differently from those in Jordan or in Indonesia because the contexts are so very different. For example, in China families may sit

together for worship, in Ethiopia the men may sit in the front and the women and children in the back. Why this difference? Each is influenced by the cultural expectations of that culture.

One of the objectives for cultural understanding is so that we can become like them and communicate the gospel in their own language and culture. Just as Jesus became a Jew through the incarnation, so we too must become like a Maranao, a Chinese, a Mongolian, an Egyptian, etc. as much as possible. It is common that when people from a country and culture go into a new cultural context, they tend to look for fellow countrymen and fellowship together with them rather than making friends with the local people, going out of their way to relate locally. Try to break from this habit.

Yet another reason for cultural study is for discipling believers so they live as people of God in their cultural context. Every culture has things in it that are good and that the Bible affirms as good. For example, the Bible affirms that marriage of man and woman is good, and every culture has such marriage. Every culture also has things that are neutral. The Bible doesn't say there should be a feast at a wedding. Yet most cultures celebrate by feasting. The Bible is neutral about whether the wedding feast should include bread or rice. Both are good and it is up to local people what they eat. Finally, there are things that in every culture are evil. For example, the Bible would forbid Christians to sacrifice to idols or the spirits when they get married. These are cultural practices that Christians would have to change to conform to Biblical standards.

So the missionary needs to study the Bible and the culture to identify those things which are positive and good, those which are neutral, and those which are evil and forbidden by the Scriptures. This is so that in discipling believers the missionary can develop a curriculum for teaching the Word of God that speaks to the issues in that culture.

What is the best way to do this? Ideally, this is how this works. The missionary knows the Word of God but doesn't know the culture. The local believers know the culture but may not have any knowledge of the Word of God. Both the missionary and the local believers have the Holy Spirit to guide them in thinking through how to live out the Christian life in that context.

The missionary and the local believers sit together to discuss an item of culture. Let's use the example of funerals. They discuss at length what takes place in funerals, the activities and behaviors, then discuss why these things are done. This is to understand the worldview and religious beliefs, which motivate activities and behaviors. The activities, behaviors, and beliefs of funerals they have discussed are identified either as good, neutral, or forbidden by the Bible.

The missionary is able to use the Word of God to help new believers understand why things are not Biblical based on the standards of the Word of God. It is very important to understand that the missionary, as an outsider, is not telling them these things are bad. He or she is opening the Word of God, and allowing the Word and the Holy Spirit to speak to them about things that displease God and that need to be changed.

Once areas that need to be changed are identified new believers then can discuss how to make changes in those areas that will be acceptable in the culture (as far as possible since changes will likely be resisted by the culture). For example, instead of offering sacrifices to the spirits, believers might decide to have a feast where they invite their neighbors, talk about the life of the deceased, how he or she came to Christ, how it transformed his or her life, freeing from fear of the Spirits and giving hope and eternal life. The Gospel can be presented and God

honored through a special ceremony as the loving God with Whom the dead person is now living.

To help you do cultural study in an organized and purposeful way for discipleship, you can make use of the following chart, the *Cultural Discovery/Curriculum Development Chart for Church-planting* chart. This chart is designed to help study specific cultural areas in order to determine normal behavior in the culture you are ministering in.

The Cultural Discovery/Curriculum Development Chart for Church-planting

CULTURAL DOMAINS	CULTURAL NORMS	FELT NEEDS	BIBLICAL NORMS	CULTURAL NORMS GOOD, NEUTRAL, OR BAD (UNBIBLICAL)	NEW CULTURALLY AND BIBLICALLY ACCEPTABLE NORMS
Daily Events:					
Special Events:					
Religious Events:					
Family Life and Kinship Relationships					
Community Life, Relational, and Social Interactions					
Music and the Arts					
Law, Justice, and War					
Other areas					

Notice that down the left side you will see areas of culture that can be identified, such as daily events, special events, religious events, family life, community life, music, dance, the arts, law, expectations, justice, war, etc. The top column names indicate what you want to study about that aspect of culture. The first column helps you look at what the culture believes and how it lives out these beliefs and activities (called Cultural Norms).

The second column tries to understand the felt needs of the people are related to these cultural beliefs and activities. For example, a culture may believe in and practice ancestor worship. Why do they do this? What are the felt needs that cause them to believe and practice ancestor worship? If a culture practices killing female babies after they are born, why do they do this? What is the felt need that allows this practice to continue?

Thirdly, what does the Bible say about the cultural practice? What are the Biblical standards? Based on this understanding of the Bible, then fourthly, is the practice good, neutral, or biblically unacceptable? Finally, in conversation with local believers, how do they see changing a practice so that it comes in line with Biblical standards and truth but yet is also acceptable within the culture and society (alternative practices).

Let's talk again about how this process works. As you live among a people, you will be observing and participating in many things. These include everyday, habitual events, such as preparing food and eating together, building or repairing homes, working in gardens, keeping things clean, going to school, community activities, etc. These also include special events such as feasts, fasts, births, weddings, birthday celebrations, anniversaries, coming of age ceremonies, funerals, etc. Then there are the religious events, such as going to the temple, church, mosque, or other place of worship, sacrifices, prayers, witchcraft, ceremonies, etc.

You will study family life (husband and wife, parents and children, extended family relationships, authority structures in the family, etc., as well as the community dynamics—leaders and their authority, the relationships of men and women in society, groups and the bonds and requirements that hold groups together, social pressures to fit into the molds and requirements of the groups, issues of shame, etc. Somewhat linked with this are the unwritten and the written codes or laws that govern a people and a society and what happens when laws or expectations are broken. You will write down what you learn about these practices by observation, by participation (if permitted), and by discussion with local people. You are trying to understand what the cultural norms are.

Some cultural domains are habitual. They are rituals that are used every day. This includes habitual routines for waking up, eating meals, having snacks, cooking, doing laundry, cleaning, child rearing and discipline, worship of a creator God, manipulation of the spirit world, other practices relating to health and well being, farming, marketing, problem solving, decision making, conflict resolution, etc. Other cultural domains center around special events such as weddings, births, funerals, including death anniversaries, rites of passage, religious ceremonies, school opening and closings, market day, national and religious holidays, etc. Observing and participating in these habitual and special events in any culture will provide a wealth of information for discovering the cultural norms of a society.

Studying cultural domains begins with observation. It is important that observations are made without judging what is taking place. In these early stages, we should simply write down what we are empirically observing. As we observe a cultural domain over and over, by observing many different people doing the same thing, patterns will begin to emerge. It is from these patterns that cultural norms can begin to be discovered. It is usually during the

observation stage that simple vocabulary and language skills are learned in each of the various cultural scenes or domains.

Part of understanding the cultural norms is understanding the reasons and needs behind these norms. Why do people do what they do? Each normal, cultural practice fulfills a need, even the harmful, unbiblical practices. If the need is not identified and included in the planning for biblical alternative ways of living, the new practice will not take hold because the felt need is not met.

The next stage, in determining the norms of a culture, is to actually participate in each of the habitual and special events of the culture. Our participation in farming among the Maranao is a good example of taking cultural study to the next level. Here we begin practicing what we think we have observed. Usually, the ability to laugh at ones self is a key personality trait needed during this process. Whether it was chopping wood, washing clothes, pounding rice, scorching my tender feet on the dark soil as I planted corn, wearing a malong, exposing myself inadvertently while taking a bath (no big deal to them) or learning to cross the river, each activity showed me what I understood and what I didn't understand about the host culture. These experiences were a wealth of information and became the basis for long discussions during our language and cultural study.

The next step in this process is that the church planter, together with local believers, should compare the cultural norms of the host culture with what the Bible says about the behavior or belief (the biblical norms). Some norms of the host culture must necessarily change because the attitudes expressed and the behaviors displayed are clearly unbiblical.

Many other cultural norms of the people are good, others are neutral, neither good nor bad, but just different than what we from the sending culture are used to. These aspects of the culture must be preserved as cultural norms in order to plant a truly Maranao, Mongolian, Chinese, Egyptian, etc., church. One mistake missionaries have often made in going to new cultures is bringing in their own styles of life and worship and presenting these as the proper way to do things, thus causing the church to be identified as foreign.

As we determine which elements of the culture are contrary to Scripture, and therefore need to be changed by the local believers, we must necessarily begin planning and preparing to replace these normal cultural practices with workable equivalents. Each normal, cultural practice fulfills a need. If we take a normal practice away, because it is sinful, demonic, or harmful from a biblical perspective, we must, with godly wisdom, and in conjunction with the new believers, find a new way of fulfilling the essential need, but in a godly way.

This approach in doing cultural and biblical study forms a foundation for curriculum development for the emerging church. This curriculum must accurately teach the Bible from its historical context and communicate biblical truths (which are greater than any culture) with examples from the local culture. This curriculum, along with careful Bible teaching and facilitating, should cause the hearers to think and eventually determine a new biblical way of life that is essentially localized, such as Maranao, Albanian, Kazahki, Bulgarian, Russian, etc., but in its godliest form.

It was from this base that we began to fill notebooks according to the *Cultural Discovery/Curriculum Development Chart for Church-planting*. We wrote out the cultural norms, studied the Bible, compared the two and began the process of determining the cultural norms to keep, the cultural norms that needed to be replaced with dynamic equivalents and

helped the emerging church to meet the real needs of the people according to their own language and culture. This process still goes on. After 15 years we are still making adaptations to our ministries, our methodologies, our worship forms, our decision making processes, etc., as we meet and submit to believers, and sometimes unbelievers, in order to plant a truly Maranao church.

The Maranao World View

The Maranao number around one million people and center around Lake Lanao, located on the island of Mindanao, in the southern Philippines. The Maranao are solidly Muslim, who hold to a form of folk Islam. Maranaos believe in one god, Allah, a strong, sovereign, monotheistic deity, who controls all things. He determines each person's ultimate destiny and must be followed in a legalistic fashion according to the teachings of the prophet Mohammed.

Although Maranaos believe strongly in the Islamic religion, they still maintain their ancient animistic world view. The Maranao seeks to manipulate the spirit world (demons) in order to maintain a level of health and prosperity. These spirits are manipulated through various means.

One way they manipulate these spirits is through special ceremonies. A Maranao favorite is the playing of the kolintang, a large brass instrument similar to a xylophone, over a period of days in order to please the spirits. Maranaos also manipulate the spirits through the use of artifacts. Maranao children and adults often wear amulets to keep away disease. They also build spirit houses and they offer food or goods to a good or evil spirits in order to manipulate them.

The Maranaos also use various incantations to manipulate the spirits. Many Maranaos have the power to use special Arabic words whispered into a glass of water, which is then drunk

by a sick person in order to bring about healing. Another form of incantation is when the spirit healer spits on someone's head and whispers special words through a loose fist, in order to bring about the desired result. The Maranaos also use animal sacrifice, mainly chickens, to manipulate the spirits. And finally the Maranaos use various forms of divination to contact the spirits in order to discover what the spirit wants. One method of divination often used is when a witch doctor balances an egg on a sick person's stomach in order to determine their sickness and its cure. Another form of divination is when a witch doctor will let the spirit control their bodies so that the demons speak audibly through the witch doctor to those who seek their services.

The Maranao are commonly known for a certain cultural characteristic known as *maratabat*. Maratabat is cultural pride. It is rooted in their belief that the Maranao are descended from superior Malay stock and that they possess a superior religion - Islam. This belief of superiority can be observed during many cultural gatherings like: funerals, weddings, and the crowning of a sultan (king), where the genealogy of the host family is recounted and the glories of the prophet Mohammed are extolled for all to hear.

Maratabat also manifests itself in the Maranao's desire to have smooth interpersonal relationships. Serious consequences result when a Maranao is offended by another. If the action is serious enough, a feud is often the result, with the possibility of the warring parties continuing the feud for generations. During a feud, property is destroyed and people are killed on both sides, with the boundaries of the feud extending to the third or fourth cousins of the original parties, including all the relatives of those who have been hurt by the feud. It is not uncommon for a family group to be involved in more than one feud at a time.

The economic system of the Maranao is built on the belief of limited wealth in the world. They believe that one person's prosperity is another's downfall. Therefore, the haves have no problem in asking the have-nots for their possessions, because they believe that the goods of the wealthy are rightfully theirs to begin with. Coupled with this belief is the system of "otang" (borrowing and lending) in the Maranao culture. Relationships are built on this system of borrowing and lending in order to keep individuals dependent on one another. In the otang system debts are not quickly paid off, and once a debt is paid, money, goods, or services are quickly borrowed again by one of the parties in order to keep the relationship alive.

The social structure of the Maranao is held together judicially, through the various sultanates, and religiously through Muslim priests called imams. Law and order is maintained through the various sultans, or kings, living in specific geographical areas.

These sultans are appointed initially because of their being the head of leading Maranao families, but then are confirmed as effective leaders through their ability to solve various social problems - especially the negotiation of the settlement of feuds. The imam, along with the regular mosque attendees, or jumah, is responsible for planning the various religious activities of the Maranao community. The most important events are Ramadan (the holy month of fasting), Mohammed's birthday, Kapagarowak (Muslim day for remembering the dead), and various activities surrounding the pilgrimage to Mecca, including Id al Adha or feast of sacrifice.

The Maranao Community

The Maranao community's strongest bonds are Islam, the family's maratabat (pride) and the family's joint service to the spirit world. These forces combine to maintain consistency and social order among the Maranao. Yet, these qualities have caused the Maranao to be generally

suspicious toward outsiders, resistant to change and have a tendency toward isolationism. All these combine to make a church planter's job a formidable task - one that must totally rely on the sovereign hand of Christ to build His church among the Maranao.

A Matter of Approach

The church planter's first job is to understand these cultural distinctives and use an approach that lessens these suspicions, that takes into account the solidarity of individual Maranao communities, and that understands the individual decision-making process of each Maranao in the context of his group.

Western cultures tend to value efficiency, analytical thinking, and self-sufficiency. If a Western missionary builds his church-planting strategy around these values, he may tend to race from one village to another sharing the gospel with as many people as possible, use convincing proofs to demonstrate the obvious superiority of Christ, and attempt to persuade the Maranao to forsake their families and make individual decisions to accept salvation. Although this strategy sounds biblical at the outset, it fails to take into account these very important cultural distinctives of the Maranao. The likelihood of planting a church that continues is much reduced. Therefore, a holistic approach of trust building through relationships is essential in order to win the Maranao to Christ.

A simple illustration will make this point. When Maranaos first gave their testimony of why they accepted Christ, it was expected that they would give some theological explanation for choosing Him. Instead they recounted how Christ had met their needs, comforted them when they were lonely, and how He showed them His love through us, His servants. When asking one Maranao man to accept Christ he said, "If I turn my back on Islam I will be ostracized from my community, my family and friends. If I make this decision, will you stand with me?"

Building Incarnational Relationships

Suspicion of others, especially outsiders, isolationism, family pride, group pressure, resistance to change, and ignorance of biblical Christianity all combine to make church-planting difficult among the Maranao. How can these things be overcome? They can be overcome through incarnational relationships with individuals, and through incarnational relationships with the groups that these individuals come from. Then, as these relationships form, communication takes place and the beginnings of a new group of disciples of Christ begin to appear.

What does incarnational mean? Christ left the glory of heaven and became a man, living as a servant, and dying human death. This is referred to as incarnation. The missionary who is incarnate does not just come for a short visit. He enters the community to live among them, to become like them, to be recognized as one of them.

Building personal relationships among the Maranao is a difficult task. One of the key elements in building relationships with them is taking the time to share common experiences. Entering a joint project together, sharing a meal, empathizing with those who are sick or hurting goes a long way to overcome suspicion and begin to build relational bridges. Yet, it is important to remember that relationship-building takes time. Maranaos in general have never been able to trust anyone. In a culture that places a high value on shrewdness, it will take a Maranao a long time to understand that the church planter is genuine. Therefore, he needs patience and must be prepared for disappointments along the way, as he moves through the process of truly becoming a friend of the Maranao.

Another key element in building personal relationships with Maranaos is a proper understanding of, and involvement in, the otang system (borrowing and lending). This is especially difficult since the church planter may be seen as a member of the “haves” and the

Maranao is often a member of the “have nots.” How can the church planter enter into a reciprocal relationship if he is consistently the lender and the Maranao the borrower? There are no easy answers to this question, yet the church planter must seek other ways to borrow from the Maranao by seeking assistance in non-monetary ways. If he is successful, this can develop into a healthy co-dependency and result in a trust relationship.

The church planter's relationship with the group that his individual friends belong is vitally important, especially when the church planter's friend becomes a seeker, or more importantly, a believer. If the church planter has been successful in building a relationship with all the groups he is working with, suspicions will be lessened and these relationships will act as a partial hedge of protection for the seeker or the new believer.

One of the best ways to build relationships with the Maranao is through joint, grass roots community development projects, where the funding is local and the motivation for the project originated with the group. In this process the church planter doesn't have all of the answers, or all the money, which greatly aids the development of a reciprocal, co-dependent, cross-cultural, relationship with the group. In this process, the church planter must be careful to include all the members of the group in this relationship building process and not just those who are sympathetic to his Bible teaching.

Who we are always communicates more clearly than what we say. This is why relationship building is so important to the communication process. Yet, beyond these considerations appropriate communication techniques must be used in order to clearly present the gospel.

Maranaos are concrete and relational thinkers. Concrete means that they are oriented to teaching that has its roots in life. They do not learn by abstract teaching. Because of this

fact, biblical stories, problems, and parables are presented first to the audience, and then the group discusses the potential lessons of the story, especially as it relates to the gospel message. Dramas, object lessons, pictures, are all used to illustrate the biblical stories so that a proper understanding may result.

They are also relational learners, which means they learn from the personal relationship and the passion, life experience, and testimony, behavior, and practice of the teacher. Who is teaching and the social context in which teaching takes place is very important. Therefore, one way to contextualize the gospel message into the Maranao context is by incorporating the art of vocal debate used at important gatherings or celebrations. The object of these artistic debates is to extol the glories of the key families represented at a gathering, whether it is a wedding, or the crowning of a sultan. In these debates, one person is employed to extol the dignity of each of the families represented at the gathering. Then, as the evening progresses late into the night, each debater takes turns to outsmart and outperform his opponent. Thus, the gospel could be contextualized using this cultural form by extolling the excellencies of Christ, above all others, through musical debate. An argument similar to the book of Hebrews could be used in this presentation. Finally, an invitation to attend a chronological Bible study could be used to close the program.

Assignment: (Note that this assignment may take several hours)

Under your teachers leading, please break into teams of 4. Identify an area of Chinese culture, such as a funeral, and do the following:

1. List all the activities that happen at a typical non-Christian Chinese funeral.

2. For each of these activities, explain why they are done. What is the world-view and belief system behind those activities.
3. What are the felt needs in those activities?
4. Which of these activities are good?
5. Which activities are neutral (where the Bible doesn't speak to them)?
6. Which activities does the Bible condemn for a Christian to participate in? Which activities would a Biblical world-view require change in?
7. For those activities that require change, what would a practice look like that meets the felt needs, the cultural expectations, and the biblically acceptable standards?

Share your findings with the others in the class.

Lesson Four

Contact: The Art of Building Relationships

Jesus gives the perfect methodology to approach communities, build relationships and get involved with people. He gives this instruction in Matthew 10:1-23 when He sent out the twelve and in Luke 10:1-12 when he sent out the seventy. Although these trips were months apart, Jesus gives basically the same instructions to His disciples.

The Temple Isn't the Center of Ministry

The first thing we notice is that Jesus sent His disciples out. “He sent them out in pairs to every place where He Himself was going to come” (Luke 10:1). The obvious part of making contacts is that it takes time out with people to determine where the Lord is working and where He desires to plant a church.

Some ministries focus on inviting people to church, to a meeting, to a special event, etc., when they seek to evangelize someone. If the person they invite doesn't come, they conclude that they must not have been open. They don't even consider ways to build relationships with unsaved people in order to prepare them for the eventual sharing of the gospel. They have a “temple mentality.” Their ministries are centralized around the church and not centralized around communities in need of Christ.

In the Old Testament, Jews were required to travel to Jerusalem three times a year. The main reason God commanded them to go to Jerusalem was because of the temple. Although God is everywhere, He especially dwelt in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle that Moses built and in various temples beginning with Solomon's temple. So, Jews traveled to Jerusalem in the

early spring for the Passover, in late spring for Pentecost, and in the fall for the Feast of Booths, including the Day of Atonement. In those days, if people wanted to get near to God, learn the truth about God or seek Him, it was necessary to go to Jerusalem. God dwelt there and God commanded the Jews to go there.

In the New Testament, beginning on the day of Pentecost, everything changed. The promised Holy Spirit came and lived in all believers who had trusted in Christ (John 14: 16,17; 16:6,7; Acts 2:1-13). The curtain in the temple separating God and man was torn from top to bottom as Christ gave His life on the cross. This earthly temple was no longer necessary. Christ presented His blood in the true temple in heaven and we as believers are counted as righteous before a holy God. Because of His holiness, we as believers are now the temple of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 27:51; 1 Corinthians 6:19; 12:13). Why did God do all of this? Why did He abolish the former temples and make us His temple? His strategy moved to the next level. Believers, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, are to go out into communities and be where God is working among people.

There are all types and giftedness of believers, church workers, leaders, missionaries and pastors (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11). Because of this people make excuses for not ministering out and among the unsaved. They essentially say, "My gift is to work near the temple". They spend most of their time, energy, money and spiritual giftedness among believers - among the already convinced. Instead of obeying Christ's command to use their gifts of mercy, service, teaching, giving, prophecy and faith among the all peoples of the world, especially the least-reached (Romans 15:19-21), most of their acts of kindness, mercy, grace, faith, prophecy are among nice people - their friends at church.

This happens on the mission field too. When we began ministering among the Maranao in the mid-eighties, there was a push by a few mission groups to plant churches among some of the thirteen Muslim people groups in the Philippines. Understandably so since there are not many churches that have been planted among these people. The fear of persecution and failure, language barriers, misunderstandings, inexperience (we were all new missionaries), and centuries of neglect combined to make church-planting among Muslim Filipinos very difficult. On the other hand, missionaries struggled with getting out in the community, learning the language, making friends and getting involved. Some had an “us and them” mentality.

They thought if they could just last living in the same neighborhood with these Muslims, if they could just force themselves to have an outreach three times a week, maybe God would be gracious and work among the three to four Muslims with which they spent most of their time. Then they spent the rest of their week in meetings, working around the house, doing errands, working on the correspondence course, doing a needed literature project, answering e-mails, and working on the computer. Some missionaries got overly involved in work and ministries that did not require much time with people because they just weren’t used to ministering in communities. Their churches back home didn’t do it and so they consequently didn’t know how to do it either. They could give a message about it, diagram how it should be done and even critique another missionary, but getting out there was just plain tough. In short, doing survey work isn’t really about fancy demographic surveys, careful planning and entrance strategies; it is mostly about just being out with the people. In fact, getting out there is so tough our Lord specifically asks us to “beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest” (Luke 10:2).

Anywhere but the wolves!

So where does our Lord ask us to go? In Luke 10:3 our Lord states, “Go your ways; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.” So there you have it. We are not to spend our time with friends, believers or people who are nice to us; we are to spend our time ministering to and loving wolves. Loving our enemies is the Christian way. And you can’t love your enemies from a distance. You have to get right with them, learn their real needs and be God’s answer for those needs. In order to do that we have to be in their midst a lot.

Jesus spelled this out a little more clearly in Matthew 5:38-48:

“You have heard that it was said, 'AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.' But I say to you, do not resist him who is evil; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone wants to sue you, and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. And whoever shall force you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR, and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax-gatherers do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Everyone wants a perfect ministry. To be a success. In this passage Jesus tells us how - to be perfect just like the Father, he tells us to love our enemies. The norm for our day is to love those who are nice to us. Christians do this. People who drink in the bars do this.

Muslim rebels and bandits do this too. I had a rebel one time tell me that he thought he was going to heaven. He figured he was a pretty good guy. Sure he killed people, stole land, crops, farm animals, etc., but hey, he was poor, his kids needed food and he only had killed “bad” people. He was nice to me though. He warned us a few times when some of the other rebels in the area wanted to make us a final exam project for their training center. You see, it was only *natural* for him to help us. I had helped him when his kids were sick. He was doing what all people generally do - they help their friends.

Jesus tells us to be perfect. He asks us to put our love in high gear. We are to love those who persecute us, steal from us, borrow from us and sin against us. Jesus tells us to live among wolves because it is the only place where we can really demonstrate genuine Christian love. Loving our friends isn’t necessarily Christian love, loving our enemies is. It hones our personality, causes us to rely on God, and makes us into the people that He can really use. (Read Romans 5:3-5; 1 Peter 3:13-17; 4:12-19). None of us can pass the test of prosperity and come out loving God. We need trials, difficulties and getting betrayed a few times, while loving our enemies, in order for God to take the rough edges off our personalities and make us into disciples of Christ. We need the wolves’ work in our lives in order to help us please God. Every true believer who invests His life among the wolves, not only is refined on earth in order to become an effective minister, but will also be exalted someday with our Lord. This should make living among the wolves very attractive.

“Carry no purse, no bag, no shoes”

Next Jesus gives a very interesting command. He tells us in Luke 10:3 to “carry no purse, no bag, no shoes;” At first glance it looks like Jesus is asking His disciples to make a vow of poverty as He sent them out.

Certainly, believers should strive to live on less in an effort to invest their resources in eternal things, but as we look at this passage more carefully we can see that Jesus' command set the stage for a ministry of involvement. Actually, the things Jesus asks His disciples not to bring were necessities. We would consider taking only what the disciples was commanded not to take as packing light. Yet, Jesus commanded them not to bring such necessities in order for them to develop reciprocal relationships with those they were seeking to bring to Christ. We will see how this plays out after we observe other key commands in this passage.

The next command that Jesus gives his disciples is, "Greet no one on the way". This command is significant because so many of us get side tracked in fulfilling the Great Commission. Our main ministry on this earth is to make disciples. As we discussed earlier, it doesn't matter what we do professionally, whether we are a missionary, plumber, business manager, consultant, teacher or computer programmer, we are in these positions to make disciples of those around us. There are absolutely no exceptions to this rule.

Yet, Jesus knows our weaknesses and that is why He commands us to, "Greet no one on the way." This problem is especially acute for those whom God separates for overseas service among the least-reached. Most whom God burdens for such a ministry have never even gone to reach unreached people near at hand. Even fewer make missionary service a career and less than 1 percent of those whom God specifically separates to minister cross-culturally actually serve God as missionaries their whole life. Why? Most people get distracted with the things of life: paying off loans, acquiring a home, having children, getting swallowed in a career, health problems, exchanging a life-time commitment of missionary service for short-term missions

outreaches, becoming missions mobilizers, etc. They stopped along the way. This is why Jesus tells us not even to greet someone along the way. He knows man's nature. He knows how easily we get distracted. So He commands us to go to the least-reached of our world, enter their households, get involved in their lives and by no means get side tracked by stopping along the way.

Finding men of peace

The next two commands are central to surveying where God would have us minister as we seek to plant churches. Jesus says in Luke 10:5,6, "And whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house.' And if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him; but if not, it will return to you." The first thing we need to do as we survey where to plant churches is to enter households. The reason for this is that God usually works along family lines. (See Mark 5:19; Luke 19:9; John 1:41,45; John 4:53; Acts 2:46; 10:44-48; 16:15,30-34; Romans 16:15; 1 Cor. 16:19; Philemon 1:2).

As we enter households of relationships we are looking for one primary thing – a man or woman of peace. A man or woman of peace is someone who is open to spiritual things. One with whom the Father is working (John 5:19,20). He is being convicted by the Holy Spirit of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11). A man of peace is someone whom the Father is drawing to Himself (John 6:44). So as we enter households in various communities, even among least-reached communities, we are looking for where God is working. We are looking for those open to the gospel, to those who have a soft heart toward spiritual things. Then, once we find a household where God is working we are to stay there and live among them. We join God in the work that He is doing. We follow Jesus' example in John 5:20,30, "For the Father

loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; ...I can do nothing on My own initiative.... I do not seek my own will, but the will of Him who sent me.”

What do we do if no man of peace is there in a village, neighborhood, or city block where we are seeking to plant a church? Should we continue spending time with families where everyone is closed to the gospel? Jesus tells us not to. He tells us that if a man of peace is not there we are to go out of that city and shake the dust off our feet in protest. We know that God desires all men to come to Him in repentance and faith (2 Peter 3:9). He is not willing that any should perish. The gospel is for the whole world (Mark 16:15). But, not all men are open at the same time. God is sometimes at work in Nineveh and not Jerusalem (Jonah 1, 3). God sometimes wants to work in Macedonia and not Asia, Mysia and Bithynia (Acts 16:6-10). He will eventually work in these places (Acts 18), but it is according to His timing. Now this doesn't excuse our tendency to work among the EASY people of the world.

Only half of 1% of church spending is among the least-reached people of our world. If what we give our time and money to is an accurate measure of what we consider as important, missions among the over 3 billion people of the world with no gospel witness in their language and culture isn't very important at all. Christ commanded us to go to ALL nations (Matthew 28:19). We should be seeking to plant churches among every least-reached people group in the world. But, then, among these peoples, we are to seek men of peace, dwell with them, and make disciples of them.

In our ministry among the Maranao we continually practiced the above principles as we sought to plant a church among them. The Maranao are a resistant people group. We ministered among them for 6 years before we had our first real convert. In those initial years we

had no idea where God would begin to plant His church among the Maranao. But during these six very difficult years, we wasted very little time arguing with Muslim teachers, priests or missionaries. We spent our time with people who were moving forward with the true and living God. In those and subsequent years we never lacked opportunity to share the gospel. We always had more ministry opportunities than we had time. We looked for men of peace, found them, and dwelt among them. This is the most important aspect of the survey process. We must discover where God is working and then spend time with those people. This leads us into the next stage of church-planting - people contact.

Development of Trust Relationships

Development of trust relationships with people is essential during the contact stage of church-planting. Once the Lord directs the church planter to reach a specific geographical area (Acts 16:7-9), he now begins to contact people from this area in order to deepen his cultural study and to begin seeking out those who the Lord is specifically working in to bring to Himself (John 6:44). Some of the ways by which this has been done was by entering households (Luke 10:1-11; Acts 16:1,2), talking to people on the street (Acts 3:1-3), visiting places of worship (Acts 13:14; 14:1; 16:13,14), visiting seats of government (Acts 17:22) and entering by a host of other circumstances (Acts 28:30). During this stage the church planter seeks to enter into reciprocal relationships with the people where he is meeting their real and felt needs. He also opens himself up to them by allowing them to meet some of the church planter's needs (Luke 10:3-7; Acts 14:7-9).

Our objectives during this stage are threefold. First, once we enter the households of men of peace, we are to develop interdependent relationships with them. Second, we are to deepen our cultural study and use these notes to form culturally relevant Bible lessons for the

church. Finally, we are to use our cultural understanding, our relationships and our progressing Bible and community-based development curriculum to begin to meet real and felt needs of people.

In Luke 10:4 we already began to wrestle with Christ's command to "carry no purse, no bag, no shoes." We alluded to the fact that Jesus gave this command in order to help us develop interpersonal relationships with men of peace. In verse seven, after we have determined what households in the community are open to the gospel, we are commanded to "stay in that house." While we stay in the home of a man of peace, we are to continually eat and drink what is set before us. We are to bless them and they are to bless us. Then again in Luke 10:7, just so we understand, Jesus commands us again by saying, "Do not keep moving from house to house." Jesus repeats Himself because He knows our tendency for superficiality in relationships. He wants us to spend the time in these households in order to bring about true change and transformation. Plus, He wants us to be there long enough to discover the networks of relationships of men of peace throughout the community. One man of peace will always lead to more as long as we hang in there to discover who they are.

So, as we stay in the households of men of peace, we are to eat and drink whatever they give us. We, on the other hand, are to heal those who are sick and tell them about the kingdom of God (Luke 10:8-9). They provide something for us and we provide something for them. This is the basis for interdependent relationships. This would have been impossible had the disciples brought their own money, clothes and shoes. Sure, as missionaries they would have been in the position to bless those whom they were called to reach if they brought everything they needed, but they would have remained aloof, disconnected and not part of the community. But, if while they offered services they, on the other hand, depended upon the community to meet

some of their needs by allowing themselves to be blessed by the people, they would necessarily become part of the community. And as members of the community, they are in the position to implement real and lasting change.

When we began to minister among farming communities outside of Iligan City we really were not sure at all how God was going to plant His church among these Maranao farmers. Being from the city, I had no training in agriculture or community development, or in medicine. Initially, we just wanted to share the gospel with these people and had no major plans for developing the community.

Then we started spending time with these farmers. We asked them to participate in Bible studies. They were moderately interested, but claimed they couldn't because of their having to go to the forest logging. They had for a long time reverted to logging in the forest because they had no plow or water buffalo to clear their land in order to feed their families strictly through farming. We didn't have a solution for our friends at that time so we began to work with them on their farms in order to understand their predicament. We took our shoes off and began to haul wood, tear out shrubs to prepare the fields for planting, plant corn, weed, fertilize, sweat, and continually prayed for a good mix of rain and sunshine in hopes for a good harvest. I was optimistic and started asking my new friends how much corn we could expect from our hard labors. Their answers were guardedly optimistic. I was confused. The lessons were just around the corner.

Then we started observing the leaves of our corn turning yellow; some fields slumped over because of strong winds and rain, others the rats started to eat. They showed me how corn borers began to eat the inner stalk of the plant, the root damage from the rain, and the places where the rats had eaten our crops. I was devastated. I had never worked so hard and received so

little. Yet, for me it wasn't a life and death issue. I had a regular income from our supporters to live on. For my new friends things were much more serious. They feared whether or not they would break even and just be able to pay their expenses for fertilizer, seed, and insecticides. They had already had lost hope of having any money left over to feed their families. We prayed to God that He would show us a better way.

These problems revolutionized our discussions at noon and in the evening. They began to teach me the ins and outs of farming. They leveled with me concerning the difficulties, pests, etc., and taught me the best way they knew how to plant crops on steep hillsides in the mountains. I began asking questions, studied their culture, learned how they sacrificed to the spirits before they cut a field, planted, weeded and harvested it, we began thinking of ways to improve their situation and finally we began tapping resources of anyone who had experience in tropical agriculture.

Jesus' point was when we establish interdependent relationships with men of peace we don't come with all the answers, we arrive at answers together. (a person don't know everything) .

In this interdependent relationship with my Maranao friends, I helped them by allowing them to help me. They had to show me how to farm, to struggle, to sweat, to lose investments so that I could relate to them, discuss with them, and come up with mutual solutions in order to bring about a better physical, emotional and spiritual way of life for the Maranao. This was involvement. This created understanding among the people and myself. This developed relationships that will last a life time. This built trust relationships essential for the church-planting process.

Getting Involved Incorporating Biblical Solutions:

Study #1: Community Development in Agriculture and Medicine

Two significant and necessary aspects of our ministry have been our agricultural and medical work. The Maranao manipulate the unseen spirit world in every aspect of agriculture such as clearing, planting, weeding, and harvesting. For poor, rural, farmers using amulets, charms, having spirit houses, offering food to the dead, and tossing coins in the river are common ways the Maranao manipulate the unseen spirit world. Manipulating rain clouds (ancestors) by whispering an incantation so the spirits pass another way, staying away from forbidden practices like traveling alone or not sitting in a doorway while pregnant and going to a quack doctor, faith healer or an expert in divination are just some of the other ways the spirits are manipulated in order to remain healthy or get cured from a sickness. The surprising thing is that these things actually work- at least temporarily - while Satan traps his prey.

It is easy to determine that these demonic activities are wrong. But, it is also wrong to tell these folks that they can't go to the faith healer or sacrifice to the spirits before they plant. Their real needs of food, shelter, and health must be met. It would be unfair to say, "Go to the expensive doctor in town," or "Buy more fertilizer at \$10.00 a bag," as a solution to manipulating the spirits. We had to provide a real solution to meet these real needs. Each solution had to be one that they could afford and manage themselves. If we had failed in doing this, the people would be forced to become hypocrites by obeying the Bible while with us and secretly manipulating the spirits when we were not around.

In the area of agriculture, after we observed and participated in various projects, we brought our friends to the Mindanao Rural Life Center, run by the Southern Baptists, and learned how to use SALT, or Sloped Agricultural Land Technology. At the center we learned how to

plant hedgerows to help stop erosion on hilly soil. These hedgerows also provided free organic fertilizer by cutting and placing them on the soil. This also reduced weeding and drying of the soil as the decaying plants act as a mulch to protect it. We also planted fruit trees and began raising Nubian goats and Barbados sheep. This diversification gave us the needed income to support the needs of the farmers during four years of low corn yields. Currently, these projects are self-sufficient, run by the Maranaos themselves, provide a better living for those involved, and support two full-time Bible teachers.

A comprehensive health care program was also necessary to free the Maranao from their fears centered around health issues, sickness, and death and their daily practice of manipulating the spirit world. We began to answer this problem by learning about some of the helpful and inexpensive ways for treating sicknesses with herbal medicines and by learning about existing government vaccination, prenatal, and T.B. programs. Next we studied some of the basics in tropical medicine and learned how to use *The Village Health Manual*. Over the years we had plenty of practice with patients lined up on our porch each morning and afternoon and eventually our patient load grew to over a hundred a week. This ministry was a help, but not a solution to the Maranaos real needs in the area of health care.

Our prayer was that we would be able to train our Maranao and Cebuano friends to run their own clinics in the mountains. After years of prayer and preparation, our first clinic in Tablon opened in 1998. The clinic is run by believers who have come to Christ over the years. Each worker gives his or her time for free as a ministry to the community. They know how to give a physical exam, do simple lab tests, prescribe medicines, prepare them, instruct the patients in their own language how to take care of themselves, and run the business aspect of the clinic. Now, instead of going to a faith healer, or neglecting their sicknesses until the patient is near

death, people in our villages can go to one of two clinics that offer free care and sell good medicines at a fraction of the cost of medicines sold in town. The clinic ministry is effective, easily available, affordable, and is completely self-sufficient. And because the people who work in our clinics also know how to teach the Scriptures, they also minister to the spiritual needs of our patients.

Study #2: Contextualizing worship forms.

The contextualization of Muslim forms of various Islamic practices such as washing before prayer, prayer five times a day, removing shoes in church, praying in the Muslim fashion, fasting, remembering the Sheep Feast, etc., is not actually contextualizing the content, but the style of our witness. A famous missions teacher once stated that a style that is out of keeping with the culture does the kingdom a disservice because the foreign form can drive people away from the Gospel.

Since the early 1980's, debate has gone back and forth over the validity of using Islamic forms and reinterpreting them with biblical meaning. When the issues first were presented back in the early 80's, many seasoned missionaries among Muslims strongly objected to the use of "Isa" for "Jesus" and the use of "Followers of Isa" for the term "Christian." Today, these substitutions are being widely used and have proved to be logical and acceptable forms of contextualization.

Missionaries are still experimenting with the possibility of using some of the Muslim forms in Christian worship. Some of the most common and harmless forms of contextualizing the gospel are the simple substitution of western forms of worship for eastern and more biblical forms. The only time shoes are mentioned in the Bible connected with worship is when God Himself commanded Moses to take off his shoes because the place on which he was standing

was holy ground (Exodus 3:5). Taking shoes off for worship is biblical and helpful in understanding the holiness of God. Also, there is nothing biblical about sitting on benches or chairs. In the Maranao context, not all homes even have a chair in them. It is natural for Maranaos to sit on the floor and harmless to make such a neutral substitution for corporate worship. Worship forms such as using a gong to start worship time, using a variety of prayer postures found in Scripture (e.g., kneeling, standing, prostrating, sitting), chanting similar to the Jew's worship in the Old Testament, are all acceptable and valuable.

In our own church-planting efforts, the believers initially didn't want anything to do with many of the above forms of worship. We were only able to introduce spontaneous prayer, Bible reading, teaching, singing, a common confession, and the Lord's Supper. Our meetings were largely informal. After they had been saved for a number of years they had the opportunity to worship with another newly formed group of Maranao believers who used some of the more eastern forms listed above. After our worship we discussed their experience. They now saw these forms as a positive thing. The formality involved, according to them, helped them to worship. We are also investigating some forms of Maranao (pre-Islamic) music, instruments, and dance to incorporate into their worship times. We are moving slowly, deliberately letting the believers decide which forms of public worship are helpful for them and which ones are not. It wasn't until after six years of using more informal worship styles that the believers decide to begin using a call to prayer, bowing in worship, wearing malongs and head coverings and chanting Scripture. It was not that we were not open to implementing these things earlier; the Maranaos themselves were not ready. So we waited for their initiative and direction to begin these forms in their own way and time.

Other forms of Islamic practices are more difficult to contextualize. The reason for this is the essential differences between Islam and biblical Christianity. In Islam, spirituality is expressed outwardly and publicly whereas in Christianity spiritual disciplines are more private and internal.

Inner spirituality is an essential part of biblical Christianity. We pray, but not publicly for man, but privately in devotion to God (Matthew 6:5-6). We don't use meaningless repetition as in Islam (Matthew 5:7), we pray according to the Spirit and biblical patterns (Matthew 6:9-13; Romans 8:26-27). We don't fast publicly, as the hypocrites do, who judge others who don't fast as irreligious (Matthew 6:16; Romans 2:1-16). But we fast privately, calling on our God to bless our world (Matthew 6:17,18).

Therefore, in light of the above evidence, substituting public Islamic forms for clearly private biblical forms would be difficult at best. One of the distinctives of Christianity is that it is not a religion, but a relationship. It is first an internal faith, with outward fruit (James 2:18). If we cannot substitute these public Islamic forms of faith, then what public forms of Christianity can we demonstrate to our Muslim friends? Here are just a few: loving one another (John 13:35), loving our enemies (Matthew 5:44), contributing to the needs of the saints (Romans 12:13), practicing hospitality (Romans 12:13), never taking revenge (Romans 12:19), always answer evil with good (Romans 12:21), and having a gentle, humble, servant spirit like our Lord (Philippians 2:1-11).

It never ceases to amaze me, especially when we have just begun to practice outwardly contextualized Islamic forms, that Muslims for a long time have often told me, "You are a good Muslim. You practice the true form of Islam." This gives us something to think about.

Study #3: What happens when they die?

This is a very basic question, and for believers the answer is obvious. Believers go to heaven when they die. But what about other believers who are forced to observe demonic cultural practices to maintain harmony with the majority community when a believer dies? Sacrificing to the spirit of the dead people is very important to the Maranao. Can the practice of sacrificing to the dead, death ceremonies, and death anniversaries be contextualized and used for a believer who has died?

At the outset some observations need to be noted. First of all, it is clear that, until the Lord returns, believers will die and some form of mourning and remembrance will need to be instituted. Second, since it is clear that we shouldn't use our own forms for remembering the dead, what forms should we use? And finally, many of the practices the Maranao use to remember the spirits of dead people are clearly satanic. Because of this, these practices carry with them a certain measure of spiritual bondage similar to the use of amulets, charms, and fetishes. Thus, special care is necessary when instituting various forms connected with remembering the dead, so that there is no possibility for continued bondage.

The Maranao believe that the spirits of dead people remain on earth for 103 days after the death of an individual. According to Islamic and animistic tradition the body is cleaned thoroughly by four leaders of the mosque led by the imam (Muslim priest). This is done usually in a small room, or portion of a room where temporary curtains are hung, so that the evil spirits cannot see the dead body. Once this is done, the body is prayed over and wrapped in a white cloth. Often, a handwritten notebook of incantations and prayers of a shaman is used for this, rather than the Koran. Then the Muslim faithful will gather in the house and begin their first round of many of praying the "karikor." During this time the men wave a coconut shell with burning incense in it over food offered to the spirits. At the same time, they chant over and over

again, “God is Great,” as they wave their heads in a rhythmic fashion. This is followed by the meal, where it is believed that the spirit of the dead person has spiritually eaten the food as the men, or “joma,” eat. After this, the body is loaded on a covered stretcher and hand carried to the grave sight.

The grave itself is simple. The hole is exactly as long and as deep as the height of the dead person. Once the initial hole is dug, a small side area is dug (2' x 2' x the length of the body) at the bottom of the hole. The large cloth covering the stretcher, not the body, is removed and held above the body as it is moved. As the body is placed in the grave the imam prays again while others shake the four corners of the cloth held above the grave. Then part of the grave clothes are removed from the body and attached by stakes to the walls of the grave covering the small side room where the body is placed. Next, boards are placed diagonally in the grave, and various male onlookers put dirt on top. A tree is placed to mark the grave, and the imam pours water over the seedling and prays a prayer. The imam will visit the grave site for the next seven days and repeat his prayers.

The “karikor” is repeated daily during the first seven days, every Friday, and every tenth day until the 100th day death anniversary. On the 103rd day the spirit is believed to leave the earth. It returns at least twice yearly, during the 27th day of Ramadan and on the person’s death anniversary.

For the first seven days various relatives and friends visit the family of the dead person day and night. Some bring financial help, many just eat. The death of a loved one usually

means financial hardship and a large debt for the family to have to pay back. Even if the family felt that they could not afford to spend money on the person while he was alive, by buying medicine or going to the hospital, great expense is made to help the dead person go to paradise and demonstrate to the dead person that he is not forgotten. Also, if these traditions are not carried out, the family fears that the spirit of the dead person will return to curse or haunt them.

Socially, the death of a loved one is a very important time. It is a time when relatives see one another, when special readings are made from the Koran and sometimes the kolintang (a musical instrument) is played to appease the spirits. At night the young people get together to play games and socialize, and the men will play chess, while the women cook and serve food.

Obviously, there are elements here that can be contextualized and others that cannot. This is especially difficult while the believers are still a small minority, because they presently have little influence on how the dead are remembered in the midst of large extended families.

Certainly, many of the social aspects of gathering, singing, playing games, showing hospitality need to be included in the death of a believer. Also, practices of burying the dead person immediately and not using a casket and chemicals like the Catholics, whom they consider godless, can be preserved.

Yet other things must be changed. But in order to make informed, insider decisions on such issues, committees of believers will need to meet and discuss each and every practice. They will have to pray over each and decide which elements must be thrown out, which ones kept, but with new meaning, and which ones can be kept at face value. Also, careful considerations need to be made concerning the large debt that families incur when a loved one dies. With godly wisdom and insight, this very important cultural event can be used to better

integrate the believing Maranaos into their communities, to provide an arena for witness, and most importantly, can provide an atmosphere where the family can properly grieve the loss of a loved one.

Assignments:

Discuss:

1. What are the greatest personal dangers that a missionary faces that will keep him from being able to start an on-going church planting movement? Look at Luke 10:1-11 for your discussion.
2. Why is building trust relationships in the community so important? How can this be done? Again use Luke 10:1-11 for this discussion. Come up with some unique ideas on how to build trust relationships.
3. Go back in the video and look at Studies 1 (Community Development in Agriculture and Medicine), 2 (Contextualizing Worship Forms), or 3 (What Happens When They Die) and talk about how the speaker tried to help believers move beyond their cultural and world-view limitations to living as biblical believers in their context.
4. Are you conscious of any worldview conflicts between life in your community in China and a biblical worldview? Choose one of these and discuss how it might be possible to live more freely in a biblical worldview in your home community setting.

Lesson Five

Proclaim: Trust Relationships Develop into Bible Studies

Our Educational Ministry: The Chronological Teaching

You have already had a course on using the Chronological Teaching Method. We also have used this approach as a basis for developing a Bible teaching curriculum unique for the Maranao people. The following are the six phases of the Chronological Teaching Method that we have incorporated into the church-planting process. In the next Lessons I will explain how these phases form the basis for the educational ministry of the church and how they are incorporated into the proclaim, disciple, train leadership and empower stages of church-planting. Here is a modification of the Chronological Teaching Method that I have developed for the Maranao Church.

Phase One: Studying Genesis to the ascension of Christ, slowly revealing the gospel as the message unfolds.

Phase Two: Studying Genesis to the Ascension of Christ, studying the “shadows of Christ,” that is, those things in the Old Testament that point forward to Christ and the person of the Holy Spirit.

Interviews: Meeting with each individual student and determine if he has trusted Christ as Savior and truly repented of all the former things he used to trust in.

Phase Three: Studying the Book of Acts, emphasizing the mission and formation of the church, body life, church function, spiritual warfare and the history of the first century church.

Phase Four: Studying the epistles from Romans to Revelation.

Phase Five: Training the emerging church leadership to write their own curriculum using the Old Testament and the Gospels.

Phase Six: Teaching the elders how to preach expository messages from the epistles.

Proclaim

The next stage in the church-planting process is proclaim. Through the preaching of the Word, the convicting work of the Spirit (John 16:8-11; Acts 1:8), and the testimony of the church planter (Matthew 5:13-16), members of the target audience will begin to be open to the gospel.

The lifestyle of an evangelist

An important fact to remember as we seek out men of peace and live among them fits Jesus' admonition in the Sermon on the Mount that we are to be "salt of the earth." We are to be like salt, making the unsaved around us thirsty. Salt was chosen as a metaphor because it has to be potent (that is really taste like salt) and must be applied into the food to be effective. Left in the cupboard it does not have effectiveness. A famous teacher has stated that there needs to be "potency" (saltiness) with "close proximity" (be near unbelievers) and with clear communication in order to have maximum impact. In order to reach people we need to invest the time and energy necessary to build no strings attached relationships and demonstrate true Christian love and compassion.

It is important to build “no strings attached” relationships where we can have honest conversations about God with people. We need to have enough free time in our lives to follow God’s leading when He invites us to minister to someone else. A key verse in this study is John 5:19, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for what ever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him;” Believers must be sensitive to the Father’s working in the life of an unbeliever. Then, when we see God working, we need to drop what we are doing and minister to that person in order to bring him closer to trusting Christ as their Savior. These opportunities abound. The problem is that most Christians are unavailable. They are too busy, too scheduled, and too inflexible to take advantage of the opportunities God gives us. Being an effective witness costs big time. It takes time and energy, reading and studying, money, the risk of embarrassment, rejection, or persecution and above all, it just plain complicates your life to share Christ with others. We must allow our lives and schedules to be interrupted in order to come along side and do what the Father is doing. We must understand that some of the most significant ministry opportunities take place in the interruptions of life.

A few years ago, a believer was bemoaning the fact that he was having trouble starting Bible studies among the Maranao. We prayed for this request over a long period of time. Then after our Maranao camp, the Maranao driver who took us was curious about the Scriptures. He had observed our believers over the years, saw our excitement at camp and requested a Bible study on Sunday afternoons. The brother who had been looking for a Bible study was present and I suggested that this driver was an answer to his prayer. I, along with most others present, were already teaching a number of Bible studies on Sundays. But, this brother refused, because

he already had a previous commitment. A commitment that could have been reshuffled. He missed God's opportunity. He misunderstood that most significant ministry opportunities take place in the interruptions of life. He was unavailable. He still doesn't have his own evangelistic Bible study. Why didn't God answer his prayer? The answer is obvious. As for the Maranao driver, one of our teachers who understands the necessity of taking up opportunities, added to his already busy teaching schedule and began leading the driver and his wife toward an understanding of Christ.

Our sole purpose of remaining on this earth is to glorify God through the making of disciples. Sharing Christ with the unsaved is the first step in this process. If we neglect this we have ignored one of the most fundamental works that God has prepared for us to do (Ephesians 2:10). Many believers will be sadly disappointed when they do not hear, "Well done, good and faithful slave; you were faithful in a few things, ...enter into the joy of your master" (Matthew 25:21,23), because they have been unfaithful in sharing the good news. We must become high potency and high proximity Christians if we are ever to hear the words, "Well done!" from our Lord. Our job is to make disciples of people from every language group in the world. But, if we are not sharing our faith at home, crossing an ocean will not help us share our faith more consistently. We all must become accustomed to share our faith in a style that fits each one of us individually. This is the essential first step in becoming disciple makers. Sharing our faith regularly is the only way we will ever hear, "Well done,...enter into the joy of your master" (Matthew 25:21, 23).

Authenticity is one of the most key ingredients to becoming a high potency Christian. In directing us to be salt and light Jesus was pleading with His people - then and now - to live in a way that would draw people to the Father. For us to be authentic believers we need to be

transparent, forthright about our failures, and live our lives with genuine conviction on how a relationship with God can and does make a difference in how we live our lives.

A second key element is being compassionate to the needs of others. If we don't have love we quickly become a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. One of the key elements needed for a believer to be compassionate toward others is to have the security of a close relationship with God. To be a channel of God's grace we must be a regular recipient of God's grace. We must be utterly convinced, by faith, of God's loving, shepherding care over us. As we grow in this realization, it frees us up from selfishness and allows us to be compassionate toward others. We can give our time, energy, skills and possessions to others because we are utterly convinced that God will meet all of our needs. This is what Jesus meant in Matthew 6 when He told us to be anxious for nothing. Only in this context will we have the capacity to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness.

As believers we ought to be different than people in the world. Holy, yet rubbing shoulders with the ungodly. Jesus walked alongside the sinner and was approachable. He touched the sinner and allowed the sinner to touch Him (Mark 1:40-45; Luke 7:36-50). He accepted people as they were. Jesus could keep that delicate balance of expressing love and truth without crushing people. Jesus' lifestyle and life was marked by a deep love for God, His neighbor and Himself. His obedience to the Father's will demonstrated His love and devotion. In order to be examples to the lost, His values must be our values.

We also ought to be transparent about our fears, inability to answer all questions, and our awkwardness in sharing our faith with those we are attempting to lead to Christ. Unbelievers appreciate this transparency and it allows us to share with them almost anything we want out of

the Bible as long as we share it in a sensitive way. Therefore, it is not our techniques, but our authenticity that God uses to draw people to Himself.

In addition to having high potency, believers must also have close proximity to unbelievers in order to lead them toward a trust relationship with Christ. We should involve others in our everyday activities and take time to talk with people we see every day but don't have a relationship.

Jesus was sensitive to the whole person. He met the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of those he met on the road of life. He was profoundly committed to setting people free and making them whole. He cared deeply and was not afraid to show it.

Yet, Jesus is not only our Savior but also Lord of all. Although unbelievers reject Christ for a number of reasons, the heart of the matter is that people reject Christ because they are in rebellion. They believe they are the best at controlling their own destinies. We should talk to seekers of Christ's rule over human life in a way that draws them. We must show our unsaved friends that God's rule of our lives stems from His love for us and His desire for our best. They should understand that following His advice helps us avoid heartache and pain.

It is easy to share the good news, but it is essential that the bad news is understood and accepted before true regeneration can take place. How is this done without alienating seekers? How do we tell seekers about sin and communicate God's love at the same time? This is done by our style of communicating and by the substance of our message. Unbelievers need to see God's effectiveness in our lives. They also need to sense our understanding and sensitivity to the complexities of their problems. We share the message of sin, the cross and God's grace in the context of how we have been set free and how we know that it has the power to set others

free too. Our message acknowledges the problem of sin while at the same time assures us of the possibility of forgiveness.

Chronological Teaching

The church-planting effort among the Maranao is committed to the use of the Chronological Method of church-planting. As outlined above, our version of this method has six phases of curriculum development. Phases One and Two make up the curriculum for evangelism.

Phase One, developed for the Maranao church, is 43 lessons long and teaches the gospel chronologically from Genesis through the ascension of Jesus. Here the unchurched learn the gospel slowly and carefully. During this phase, the church planter will only reveal as much as the passage does concerning the gospel and the coming redeemer. Attached to this course is a text file that gives the outline of these lessons, though you already have something similar from the Chronological course.

About a third of the teaching deals with cultural issues that the seeker must overcome in order to become a follower of Christ. These teaching points are derived from our cultural study using *The Cultural Discovery/Curriculum Development Chart for Church-planting* that we talked about earlier. Each cultural norm of the host culture, that clashed with the biblical norm, must be dealt with in the curriculum. Suggestions for alternative equivalents can also be included in the curriculum, but most of the fleshing out of cultural changes will initially be discovered and be developed by the first set of believers. Also any cultural norms that are neutral or good should be used as examples in the lessons and encouraged to continue to be practiced as normal behavior by the church.

The next series of lessons immediately taught to these seekers is Phase Two. The Maranao version of Phase Two is eighteen lessons long, covering the same material as in Phase One but with a different emphasis. Here the church planter focuses on the shadows of Christ and His fulfillment of God's righteous standards of salvation revealed in the Old Testament. The church planter will also introduce the person of the Holy Spirit during this phase in order to prepare the believer for Phase Three. Please ask your honorable teacher or network leader to print off the text file that is attached to this course called "Prophecies Concerning the Coming Redeemer." This is additional material you can use while you teach phase two of the chronological series.

Phase Two ends with an interview. Here the church planter interviews every student individually in order to determine if he or she has trusted Christ and turned away from sin (including various practices in Islam and animism; Mark 1:15; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 19:18-19). Only those who are saved will move on to Phase Three - the book of Acts.

Often when people are confronted with the Chronological Teaching Method they complain that it just takes too long to get to the Gospel message. In our context we don't interview our students until after Phase Two, which takes about a year and a half to cover in a weekly Bible study. But it is important to remember that our aim in life is to make disciples, not just converts. We are preparing people to enter the kingdom, but we are also preparing them to serve as ministers in God's kingdom too. The Chronological Teaching Method may take a long time, but it deepens people's faith. It gives people a firm foundation to base their beliefs. They understand the general flow of Scripture and can trace the plan of salvation from the beginning. They know the truth well and are not easy prey to falsehood.

Although the Chronological Teaching Method is slow, it is also fast. In most traditional church-planting models it takes years for members to begin teaching the Scriptures. Most believers never get involved in any discipleship ministry. With the Chronological Teaching, believers begin teaching the Scriptures to their friends and relatives soon after they begin Phase Three. They may know nothing of what is found in Romans, Ephesians, etc., but they understand Phase One well. They were taught from Genesis to the ascension of Christ once in Phase One and this material was reviewed and deepened in Phase Two. This review system has two advantages: 1) Individuals who understand the material well and have accepted Christ at the end of Phase One, take advantage of the review in Phase Two and use it to prepare for teaching Phase One to their relatives and friends. 2) With others, who are still confused at the end of Phase One, God often uses the comparisons between the Old and New covenants and Christ's fulfillment of the patterns found in the O.T. in Phase Two to draw these people to Himself.

Going through the two phases so extensively results in the discipling of people while they are being evangelized. Once they come to Christ they are already quite disciplined and understand more than many believers who do not study the Bible in this way.

How do you get Bible studies started?

The most obvious question that most church planters have, especially those who work with resistant people like the Maranao, is how do you get started? In the beginning stages of church-planting, trust-relationships are developed with men of peace. During conversations about farming and medical needs or about family, our cultures, etc., I will often begin to tell a story. I will share with them how we have the Word of God and why God has revealed Himself to us. Then the next time I talk with that person I would remember where I had brought them in the teaching and then give them the second story, then the third, etc. Usually, by the time I

reach Cain and Abel or possibly Abraham, my Maranao friend is usually ready to be invited to a regular Bible study. In the study we would formalize our teaching using the curriculum that we have developed, our accompanying picture scrolls and object lessons.

Getting an evangelistic study started is hard to begin with, but it is even harder to maintain. Most of our earliest studies stopped and started two to three times. Some, once they stopped, never started again. For most seekers there was always tension from their Maranao Muslim brothers who harassed them and yet, still were a source of security that provided for their needs. The Gospel message, especially the deity of Christ, also was a source of tension.

And finally, they had to grow in their trust of me, so that they could leave the security of the majority in Islam and trust Christ as their Savior. So, when Muslim missionaries told them to stop listening to us, when their land was taken away, when their farm animals were stolen, when they were offered a paid position at the Muslim school, when their child was murdered, etc., they stopped studying. In order to win them back, we had to continue to love them, invest our lives in them, so that they would trust us. Then, those whom God was drawing to Himself, would start studying again, until they finally finished Phase One. When our first genuine believers trusted Christ, they didn't praise the great Bible teaching, or the curriculum I spent years developing and writing, they looked me straight in the eye and said, "If I trust Christ as my Savior, will you stand with me?" My answer was "yes," and so was theirs.

Here are the ground rules!

There are some simple ground rules for ministering in a resistant area like the Maranao where the goal is to plant a church. Many missionaries to the Muslim world do not really expect to see a church planted and therefore use methods that are secretive. They don't tell the

host culture their intentions, they hold secretive evangelistic meetings, and allow believers or even encourage them to keep their faith a secret. In other words, they teach their contacts to lie, to be fearful, and to not fully trust in the Lord.

When we arrived in the villages outside of Iligan, on the island of Mindanao, we were up front about our being followers of Christ. We told them that along with the task of studying their language and culture we also were excited to share about our relationship with God. Once we eventually began teaching, we held no secret Bible studies and were open about where we were going and what we were doing. In a village situation, it wouldn't be too long anyway before they discovered what was happening, so we decided to take our lumps up front. We were honest and no village leader could come up to us later and say, "Hey wait a minute, when we allowed you to live here you didn't tell us you were a missionary." They all know from the beginning. They may have persecuted us, but no one ever came up to us and accused us of misleading the people. We were genuine and showed genuine Christian love to each one of our enemies and friends who lived in the villages surrounding our home in the mountains. We were beginning a movement of bold ambassadors for Christ. Our actions, beginning from the first day, were of paramount importance. The eventual believers would follow our example: whether good or bad; bold or fearful; faithful or undependable; loving or self-centered.

How you begin a church-planting work will determine where it will end up. So we taught our Bible studies in an open manner, left our seekers open to persecution and, although we lost many, the ones who remained were refined in God's fire. They are bold. They actively witness and give an answer for the hope that is in them. They are teaching the Chronological Teaching in over 20 locations up and down our river system. They are a movement of God dwelling among the wolves at the gates of hell.

None of this would have been possible had we been deceptive in the beginning. Had we held secret meetings, baptized our believers out of community at the ocean, instead of the local river, or encouraged our believers to keep their faith a secret when they were fearful, there would still be no Maranao church. Therefore, we must be very careful not to teach believers to be fearful. This doesn't mean that no one ever was fearful, we just didn't teach it to him or her. Instead, we would encouraged those who were down, continued to show them a good example, prayed for them, supported them, while keeping our standards high and waited for God's grace to give them the faith to continue boldly in the face of great opposition. This is what is necessary in any ministry that is dedicated to planting churches among our world's least-reached peoples.

Tips for guiding a Bible study

Often, in spiritual conversations with unbelievers, an impasse results when their beliefs differ from our own. The conversation might be encouraging while general or relational topics like work, school, number of children, etc., are discussed. But as soon as the conversation begins to reveal beliefs friction often results. The key to go beyond this impasse is to move the conversation from beliefs to a discussion that helps determine the source of authority behind their beliefs. We should respond to held strongly beliefs by saying, "Wow, you have some pretty deep feelings about this subject. What was it that led you to have such strong convictions?" This helps discover why people believe what they believe. It reveals their source of authority. If we can get the conversation to this level it often breaks the impasse and helps the person see that their beliefs are merely based upon personal opinion. God turning people's hearts to recognize the authority of His word is essential for communicating Christ and bringing about a true reversal of trusting in the wrong things.

A second helpful methodology is to let the Bible speak for itself. This is what we strive to do with the Chronological Teaching. The evangelist is to help the seeker eventually answer two questions: 1) Who is Jesus? 2) What does He want of me? We should invite a seeker to start a Bible study where these two questions are central in their discussions as the person of Christ is slowly revealed. We should give the seeker the opportunity to examine Christ so that the seeker can draw his own conclusions on the question of Jesus' identity. The immediate concern is not to extract agreement or to win arguments; it is to produce understanding. Then the Holy Spirit can convict them of sin, righteousness and judgment and the Bible can reveal the true intents of the heart.

During the Bible study process we should ask good questions. Because Jesus was the foremost Teacher, no one could ask questions the way He could. Frequently with a single question He penetrated to the core of even the most controversial issues. Questions basically have three functions. They can launch a discussion on a subject, guide a discussion, and serve to summarize what has been said. Questions used in any simple inductive Bible study methods are helpful in guiding a seeker to discover for himself what the Bible is teaching him. Asking questions like "who," "what," "why," "how," "when" and "what for," go a long way in helping a seeker develop his own convictions of who Christ is and what He has done for us.

Assignments:

1. Based on Mt. 4:13-15 discuss the concepts of proximity and authenticity in the missionary's life as essential for making disciples that last.
2. Planning Phase 1, the 43 lessons from Creation through the Resurrection of Jesus is fairly straightforward. You have taken this in another course and the outline of this given in text form on this disk, which can be printed for you. However, no outline for Phase 2, covering the 18 lessons showing how Jesus is foreshadowed in the Old Testament and

presenting the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, both culminating in the Gospels.

- a. Working together in groups of 3 or 4, identify 14 stories in the Old Testament that foreshadow Jesus, each of which can become a lesson.
- b. Again, working in groups of 3 or 4, identify enough instances of the Holy Spirit working in the Old Testament and the Gospels to be able to prepare students for the pouring out of the Spirit in Acts lessons.

Lesson Six

Disciple: Tending Sheep and Equipping Ministers

The next stage in the church-planting process is the discipleship of new believers. The objectives during this stage are threefold. First, we want to ground the new believers in their faith. Second, we want to help them begin to practice some of the essential spiritual disciplines such as the early church practiced in Acts 2:42-47. Finally, we want to begin to discover who the potential leadership will be in the church (Matthew 4:18-20; Mark 1:17; John 6:66-68). This stage in the church-planting process concentrates on the building up of the saints and equipping them for ministry. (Ephesians 4:12-16).

Christ's discipleship program

Christ's discipleship program centered around four invitations to his disciples. These invitations marked Jesus' four different periods in His discipling strategy. These periods were designed to produce convictions in the disciples deep enough to sustain them in a lifelong pursuit of the Kingdom of God. These four invitations were: "1) 'come and see;' 2) 'come and follow me;'" 3) 'come and be with Me;' and 4) 'remain in Me'."

The "come and see" period lasted four months. It began with Jesus' invitation to five men to become His disciples through an exposure to the nature of His ministry (John 1:35-4:46). The most beneficial aspect of this ministry is that it allowed the disciples to observe the nature of Christ's ministry before He asked them to make a firm, long term commitment to ministry. They were able to make their decisions based on a solid thought-out process that included

complete information and time. This process gives the new disciple a taste for ministry without giving them too much exposure too soon.

The “come and see” period of ministry should begin to model what the teacher wants his disciples to become. Being a good example is crucial in the discipleship process because it pictures for the new disciple what the teacher is preparing them to be and do. It demonstrates that the best ministry flows out of Spirit-filled daily living. Here the teacher models a flexible style of witnessing, a deep love for all people, especially the unlovely, a firm direction in following the will of the Father and a clear vision of the disciple’s future task of harvesting people whom the Father has prepared.

The “come and follow me” period of ministry was approximately a ten month period of time. Jesus extended His second invitation of discipleship at the Sea of Galilee when He invited them to enter into a training relationship and become fishers of men (Mark 1:16-17). Here His strategy was to show the disciples how to minister as he demonstrated ministry daily with them.

At this stage of the discipleship process it is important for the disciple to know that he will not have to do anything for which he has not been trained. This training process must be based on practicing the fundamental spiritual disciplines of studying the Word of God, prayer, fellowship/worship, and witnessing. It must have clear goals and priorities in order to fulfill the vision of the ministry as well as have the flexibility to minister to people along the road of life. The teacher should model witnessing in everyday circumstances and then give the disciples opportunities to practice sharing on their own. It is important at this stage to critique each ministry opportunity and to pray over each success and difficulty. This happens best in the context of small groups where disciples can learn from each other’s experiences.

The third stage of ministry is the “come and be with me” period. It lasted about a twenty month period. During this stage our Lord gave the disciples special responsibility and authority (Matthew 9:37-10:1). His teaching strategy was to let the disciples do ministry and then deploy them into their own ministry. He sent the disciples out in teams of two. He spent His time explaining, experimenting, and clarifying to them what was on His mind.

There are three levels of commitment for disciples. The first is a disciple who faithfully practices the four basic spiritual disciplines of study of the Word of God, prayer, fellowship and witness. A second is a laborer who is a disciple that has made a strong commitment to reach the world under the supervision of a leader. The third is a leader who is a laborer of proven character that has been recognized as an elder of the church.

This discipleship process should focus on just a few people who have been found faithful in ministry. They should be equipped with key ministry skills and responsibilities, under the guidance of a mentor, and gradually allowed to minister on their own. They should understand the whole discipleship process including practicing teaching others also and they should live their lives in such a way as to help reach the least reached.

In the “remain in Me” period of ministry Jesus gives the secret for fulfilling His commission for us to make disciples. Jesus explained the “remain in Me” period during His last days on this earth. In John chapters 13 to 17 he outlines the way we ought to remain in Christ just as it is necessary for the branches to remain in the vine. He outlines the new terms of the relationship. He instructs the disciples that it is to their advantage that He return to the Father so that He can send the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will dwell in them, lead them into all truth and be the source of power in ministry.

The greatest lesson to be learned from the “remain in Me” period of ministry is that humility is the key to effective leadership. Christ’s example of washing the disciples feet, just as they were arguing over who was the greatest, speaks volumes as to the importance of servant leadership. Leadership is both being and doing. Demonstrating humility and obeying the Word of God is what a disciple ought to do. This can only be done in the power of the Holy Spirit as the disciple daily practices the essential spiritual disciplines of prayer, Bible study, fellowship and witness. We will discuss the “remain in Me” period of ministry when we discuss the Training Leadership stage of the church-planting process later.

Discipling new believers to teach others.

The “come and see” period of discipleship in the Chronological Teaching Method is our Phase One, which is a forty-three lesson survey of Genesis to the ascension of Christ. As discussed in the previous Lesson, Phase One introduces people to Christ in a step by step process of revealing the identity of the Coming Redeemer. When this process is completed our students enter Phase Two of the Chronological Teaching, which is an eighteen lesson study of Genesis to the ascension of Christ. Here students are challenged more deeply concerning the person of Christ as they discover how Christ is fulfilled in the Old Testament and learn about the person of the Holy Spirit. These two phases are our “come and see” period.

Jesus’ call, the second “come and follow Me” phase parallels our interview and teaching of the Book of Acts. At the end of Phase Two in the Chronological Teaching we interview each student individually, asking tailor made questions to determine if the student has truly repented of his animistic practices and his belief in Islam and has trusted Christ for salvation. Then we challenge the students to follow Christ in missions, baptism, the Lord’s supper, worship, prayer, suffering, etc. This challenge comes as we arrive at each subject in the text.

In the Chronological Teaching Method of discipleship, as students discover the teachings in Acts, we challenge these new believers to follow our example and teach Phase One of the Chronological Teaching to other friends and relatives. In order to do this, we have detailed curriculum with accompanying picture scrolls to help the new teachers lead their own students on their journey to discover Christ. We mentor them, critique their teaching, and guide them as they shepherd their students toward Christ. As our students finish Acts and enter Romans, they usually begin teaching their students Phase Two. The most effective teachers will often get invitations to teach new Phase One Bible studies and find themselves teaching a number of days a week. Then, after a period of a few years, these disciples will have studied Romans, Ephesians, biblical eldership, Revelation, etc., and at the same time are teaching various groups in Phase One through Romans. The most exciting aspect of this discipleship process is that these teachers will also begin mentoring their students to teach the Chronological Teaching to others. They will be asking their students to follow them, as they have followed me, as I have followed Christ.

Here's how we got there.

We used the Chronological Teaching from the very beginning of ministry when we arrived in Butuan for Cebuano language study in 1985. I taught Phase One to George, a businessman in the market near our apartment. To the study I brought my English and Cebuano Bibles and did the very best I could teaching George even though we had been in language study for only three months. George and his wife came to the Lord and eventually became an important member of a church in town. When we moved to Iligan in March 1986, we began the process of language and cultural study among the Maranao. Our formal language study lasted until September 1987, when I graduated from the Maranao language program. Our more

informal language and cultural study continues till today. During our language study time I began telling the story of Phase One of the Chronological Teaching to almost every Maranao I met. I would keep track of where each student was in the teaching and continued the story with each one the next time God gave the opportunity. Eventually, I had the opportunity to teach three formal Bible studies. One in Tambakan, a Maranao area in town, and two in different villages in the mountains. During those years, missionary life was a lot of fun. Traveling from village to village, making the Jesus film, showing Genesis Project videos, meeting new Maranao friends, helping people in need, teaching seminars on Muslim evangelism (I was becoming an expert), setting aside a half day in prayer a week, all supported my thinking that life was good.

I am a firm believer that we ourselves are the biggest road block to being used by God to make disciples. God doesn't give us fruit until we are ready for it. As disciples of Christ, we must be abiding in Him. Little did I know it, but during those days of evangelism and discipleship in the early 90's, I had a major blind spot. I was shooting from the hip while I taught my Bible studies. I was teaching good Bible studies, I prepared what I was going to say in the early mornings, but because of a good memory, I didn't write anything substantial down. I took a few notes, stuffed them in my Kitab Indil (New Testament in Maranao) and I was happy doing what I loved - I was out teaching the Scriptures and ministering to the Maranao people.

You see, I absolutely hate working at a desk. I hate writing papers. So, when we needed more formal lessons on evangelism, I asked my co-worker, to go get some training on how to do planning for each phase of the Chronological Teaching. I thought, "He likes that kind of work, let him do it. Besides, I'm more of a people person."

Then in 1991, God started to save a group of believers who would eventually become the leaders of the church. After a period of prayer and fasting, my wife and I approached our team

and asked to move to the mountains and live among and minister more closely to these new believers. Our next step was to try to get these believers to teach the Scriptures. We gave them my co-worker's outline, which was good material, but still none of these new converts was able to use these brief lessons on the Chronological Teaching to teach others. It was just too big of a jump for them.

Just about that time, a missionary couple working among a neighboring people group called the Higaonan, heard about our work and wanted to see what was happening among the Maranao. So they, along with ten of their believers, hiked the twelve hours from their place to visit us in our village of Reloading. Their believers knew the Chronological Teaching much better than our Maranao believers did. Plus, during conversations with our people, they found out that many were still secretly worshiping the spirits behind my back. I was humbled and felt foolish. Everything that had looked good suddenly didn't look so good anymore. We discussed this situation with the ten believers we were trying to develop into teachers and began planning a trip to Kaayonan, where this missionary couple had their ministry, to determine where we had gone wrong.

During the trip the believers in Kaayonan began teaching Phase One to our up and coming teachers. But instead of teaching from haphazard notes, these believers were using curriculum developed by our friends. They had strings with brackets and clothespins on the walls of their meeting hall in order to hang picture scrolls that went along with the Chronological Teaching in order to teach the message of Phase One clearly. Our believers were so excited about this new methodology, they exclaimed, "Why didn't you use the Chronological Teaching when you taught us?" I thought I had. I was beginning to feel worse and better all at the same time.

While our believers were being re-taught, my friend Paul sat me down in his office and enlightened me on my mistakes. He said, “Whatever you teach you have to write it down so that you never have to teach it again.” This revolutionized my thinking. He pointed out that the outlines we were using to try to get our teachers to teach the Scriptures were grossly inadequate for rural farmers to use who were just learning how to read. We needed good, comprehensive teaching materials that wrote out the complete lesson, included the Scripture passages, had accompanying picture scrolls that told them when to open the next one, had review questions and questions at the end of each lesson and adequately dealt with the cultural issues that held the Maranao in bondage. I was shell shocked. I knew my party was over. No more pulling notes out of a bulging Bible when it was time for Bible study. I had to get down to the serious business of curriculum development if we were ever to see the believers teach the Scriptures, multiply themselves and see the formation of the Maranao church.

When we returned from Kaayonan, I had the monumental task of preparing curriculum for the church plant. This wouldn’t have been so bad had I started preparing from the beginning, but I was already three years behind. By this time there were both Maranao and Cebuano believers. I was teaching Phase Four - Romans to our Maranao believers, Phase Three - Acts to our Cebuano believers, plus I needed Phase One lessons in both Maranao and Cebuano so that our new teachers could teach. This meant that I was needing to prepare four, ten page lessons a week, in two languages, plus all of the corresponding scrolls and teaching materials. That wouldn’t have been so bad, but I still had the regular stream of patients on our porch in the mornings, and was teaching my usual eight to ten Bible studies a week. Oh, how I longed for the days when I was still just doing language study!

Times of testing bring a silver lining

God was, is, and always will be, in control. Our beginning to branch out with Maranaos and Cebuanos teaching the Chronological Teaching did not go unnoticed. Satan stirred up various rebel groups in the area to stop the growth of the infant church. Our troubles began in January 1993, when some bandits, living in our area, caught us at a Sixth-Day Death Anniversary in the evening in a village just up from our home in Reloading. Our friends protected us and convinced these men not to kidnap my two companions and me. We were escorted home to Reloading and continued living in the village as if nothing had happened.

Our next period of trouble came in May 1993. I was showing the Jesus Film in Maranao to some friends in the next village who had just finished Phase One, when a messenger of the Sultan's came and told me that rebels were on their way to kidnap my family and me. When I returned home I informed my wife of the trouble. She, in her great efficiency, packed up some necessities, while I had a quick meeting with the Sultan, our father figure, Mipeker Diyanal. When we left we said our goodbyes to a yard full of Maranao friends from our village, not knowing when we would return. When we arrived at our apartment in town, we saw the lights flicker and thought nothing of it. Later the next morning, we discovered the rebels blew up the power lines carrying electricity to the major cities on the rest of our island, cutting power for up to three days. The rebels blew up the tower in anger because we had been tipped off. Since the rebels blew up the tower, the military moved into the area and we were able to return to our mountain home after a two week evacuation.

Then in May 1994, four rebel groups concentrated their efforts to kidnap us. They used the son of a patient of mine to lure me to his village to visit his mother. Rebels were waiting on the path to kidnap me. Fortunately, a hospital emergency arose that morning, as well as friends had come warning me not to go with this man, so that I canceled my trip. With the rebel's plans

being thwarted again, we decided to stay in our apartment in town for a few days. While we were evacuated to the city we began to be followed. Men with t-shirts over their faces were hanging around a church where our daughter was enrolled in a children's Bible study program. By Friday of that week, three car loads of armed men from our villages were sighted at this church and in a neighborhood where we used to live. Saturday morning we left to live in one of the thirteen safe houses we were to live in over the next two months.

After about a month we attempted to contact our believers from a town just east of Iligan, but after a short meeting with the believers we were discovered by our enemies and had to immediately evacuate off the island for the second time. My wife was pregnant with our third child, and we weren't sure when we would return to Mindanao. We prayed God would fill us with the faith to trust Him and believe that this was His perfect way to plant the Maranao church.

There may have been many reasons why God allowed us to pass through these difficult days, but I was certain that one of them was to give me time to write curriculum for the Chronological Teaching. During our evacuation I carried around my Bible, a laptop computer, a printer and other resource material and wrote curriculum wherever we happened to lay our heads. In six months I was able to produce Phase One, Two, Three - Acts, and Phase Four - Romans in Maranao and Phase One, Two, and Three - Acts in Cebuano. We also produced a Maranao hymnal in Maranao and five books on farming. When we finally returned to our home in the mountains in December 1994, I had caught up to where I should have been in curriculum development had I understood how to use the Chronological Teaching Method from the beginning.

Once in the mountains we were able to mentor our teachers in their teaching skills and helped them make disciples. With the curriculum finished in Acts I was able to turn over my

teaching responsibilities on Sunday mornings to one of the disciples and concentrate on developing leadership materials. I still hate writing. But, my greatest satisfaction is seeing fifteen to twenty teachers using good teaching materials as they share God's word in villages up and down our river system. They are teaching good lessons and students are truly repenting of their former beliefs and animistic practices. My disciples, being Maranao, Cebuano or Higaonan, understand the culture much better than I ever could and thus make better teachers. They are working in places that I still have never visited, nor do I plan to. We have shown them how, equipped them, watched them do it and now have launched them out to do the work of the ministry. This is the model Jesus showed us when He trained His disciples.

Believers Gathered

Another significant part of the discipleship stage in the church-planting process is gathering the new believers together for worship, prayer, fellowship and the study of God's word (Acts 2:42-47). In the Chronological Teaching Method, believers gather for Bible study while they are studying the Gospel during Phase One and Phase Two. After the interview, those who have trusted Christ remain in the Bible study, begin to worship, pray, sing, and practice the essential spiritual disciplines outlined in Acts 2:42-47. Thereafter, believers automatically gather together as they begin studying Phase Three. Thus, the formation of the church, that is, the gathering of believers, has begun.

Phase Three is the study of the book of Acts for new believers. This twenty-two lesson series, developed for the Maranao church, teaches church basics such as essential spiritual disciplines, the inauguration of the church, the Lord's table, believer's baptism, the mission of the church, and the basics of how the church functions. It introduces the strategies of the evil one, Satan, and spiritual warfare and lays the historical foundation for teaching the rest of the New

Testament (Phase Four). During Phase Three, believers will begin worship, prayer, singing, giving, and the ordinances, as each topic is introduced in the text. An outline of Phase Three, The Formation, Function and Mission of the Church: The Book of Acts, is also attached to this lesson. Your honorable teacher or network leader may be able to print it off for you.

Phase Four is the study of Romans through Revelations for new believers. Phase Four lasts anywhere from four to eight years. During Phase Four, the church-planting process will move through the Disciple and the Training Leadership stages.

During Phase Four, all three tasks of the church will be in focus. Evangelism will begin as believers grow and take the gospel with them wherever they go (Acts 6:7-8; 8:4,26-27,40). Initial leadership training will begin as teachers emerge and are trained to teach their own Phase One Bible studies.

The saints will begin building one another up (Ephesians 4:12-16) as they pray for one another (Acts 12:5), worship together (Acts 2:42,46), meet one another's physical needs (Acts 2:44,45; 4:32-47; 11:27-30), confront those in sin (Acts 5:1-11), encourage one another's spiritual growth (Acts 4:36; 9:27,28; 11:24-26; 14:22; 15:39) and begin practicing their spiritual gifts (Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4; I Corinthians 12).

Assignments:

1. In how Jesus disciplined his followers discuss the progression and the differences between the 4 invitations:
 - a. Come and see (John 1:35-39)
 - b. Come and follow Me (Jn. 1:43; Mt. 4:18-20)
 - c. Come and be with Me (Mark 3:14)

- d. Remain in Me (Jn. 5:4)
2. Discuss the differences between Phases 1, 2, and 3 in discipling people from a difficult background, such as Islam.
 3. During which phase or phases is evangelism primary? During which of the 3 phases is the church gathered? What kinds of activities do they do during this gathering phase?
 4. Go through the Phase 3 (Acts) materials and plan the teaching of one of the lessons.
Teach this to the others in the class, emphasizing the elements of obedience and walk with God in the lesson.

Lesson Seven

Training Leadership: It's All About Replacing Ourselves

Training Leadership is the next stage in the church-planting process. In order to appoint leaders in the church, it is vitally important that the church planter understands the structure of the church and biblical eldership. Using biblical church structure and leadership principles is crucial to starting church-planting movements.

The Process

The supreme authority of the Church is Christ, who appoints leaders to each local church. This leadership structure is made up of biblically designated officers of elders (also called bishops, pastors, and pastor/teachers) and deacons. These humble servants share the overseeing of the church with the other leaders and are responsible to shepherd God's flock (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2). Each leader must meet the biblical qualifications (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9; I Peter 5:1-5; I Timothy 2:8-3:13) and must be appointed to their office by the church planter or previously established leadership (Acts 14:23; I Timothy 5:22). These men are servants of Christ and have His authority in directing the church. The congregation is to submit under their leadership (I Timothy 5:17-22; Hebrews 13:7,17).

Leadership training begins during Phase Three when those interested in teaching Phase One to unbelievers emerge and begin learning how to teach. In these classes, new teachers will learn how to share their faith, teach in public, answer questions, and deal with problems. Initially, the church planter will sit in on each of the new teacher's classes, make clearer to the

seekers certain points the teacher failed to emphasize, and critique the teacher's performance in the next leadership training class.

The new teachers will also be responsible to help those in their class with various needs. This will help the teacher develop shepherding skills (I Peter 5:2) and help to determine if the individual is qualified to become an elder or deacon in the future (I Timothy 3:1 ff; Titus 1:5-9). The church planter will help the new teachers in handling these various problems and slowly give the individual teachers more responsibility as they become competent.

As the students of these teachers move through the Chronological Method their teachers will grow along with them. When the students graduate from Phase One, the teachers will be responsible to continue teaching them Phase Two. They will, along with the church planter and the other teachers, conduct the interviews and graduate the new believers into Phase Three and continue teaching Phase Four, and so on.

By this time, these teachers will have studied Romans, Ephesians, James, I Corinthians, I Timothy, Titus, I Peter and eventually I Thessalonians, Daniel and Revelation. During this time the Holy Spirit has begun to indicate who the possible elders of the church will be (I Corinthians 12:28). He will single out those whom He has trained and who have been tested (I Timothy 3:4-7,10; 5:22; II Timothy 2:2; I Peter 5:3). The Holy Spirit will also work in the heart of a potential elder and give him the desire to enter this office (I Timothy 3:1). Then, once an individual meets the qualifications of being an elder or deacon, having been examined by the whole congregation (I Timothy 3:1-13; 5:22-25; Titus 1:5-9) and after a period of prayer and seeking God on the issue (Luke 6:12-16), he is appointed to this office by the church planter (Acts 13:23) and/or his fellow elders. A complete outline of the series on biblical eldership can

be found in a text file attached to this lesson. Again please ask your honorable teacher or network leader if they could get this printed for your resource.

Making Sinners into Faithful Men

The Maranao people, like any unredeemed people anywhere, are sinners. In the Maranao culture, killers are rarely brought to justice, disputes are settled by randomly killing a relative of the person another family has a problem with, stealing is often justified if you are poor, or have a good enough reason to steal, and truth is so skewed that absolutely no one trusts anyone else. It is in this culture that we have been called to make disciples of Jesus Christ. It is among these traitorous people that we have been charged with fulfilling Paul's injunction to Timothy, "And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2). This was an impossible task, but we took comfort in Mark 9:23, where Jesus exclaims, "All things are possible to him who believes."

We didn't know all this up front, but we found out later that the believers whom God was raising up as leaders of the church in the Philippines, had raped women, stolen repeatedly, abused their families due to alcoholism, and murdered innocent people. We were horrified at some of the stories we heard. Yet, we were still faced with the command to make these men disciples of Jesus Christ. They needed to become faithful men who would become like Christ and manifest the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him among their Maranao friends and neighbors (2 Corinthians 2:14).

In order to develop leaders who would become the bedrock for a church-planting movement among the Maranao, we needed to incorporate five crucial practices for leadership development. These practices are:

Practice #1 Challenging the Process
Practice #2 Inspire a Shared Vision
Practice #3 Modeling the Way
Practice #4 Enabling Others to Act
Practice #5 Encouraging the Heart¹

Challenging the Process

The fact is among the Maranao people life is unfair, hard, and often cruel. However, when the Gospel entered this culture, lives began to be transformed. Men, who formerly abused children, were now being taunted as infidels by others - even small children got involved in the name calling. Instead of responding with violence, or taking revenge, these men of God took the remarks and considered ways in which to love these children and their parents who sent them to hurl abuse. Others, who formerly sat at sari-sari stores drinking coconut wine each night, now spent their time discussing the Scriptures with their friends, neighbors and relatives. God was doing a miraculous work in the lives of the new believers, but in a culture where life and death issues are often on the line and fatalism is the norm, these men needed to be taught how to challenge the process even further.

We challenged the process in four major areas among the Maranao, that is, in the way people approached God, how they received healing, how they farmed and how they became leaders. When my patient load became overwhelming, I challenged the believers to begin their own clinic. They were reluctant at first, even after four months of training they feared serving at the clinic alone, but God gave them the grace to work outside of their comfort zone. Now they are able to run their clinic without my input. This has given many people in the village the opportunity to receive health care without further subjecting themselves to the power of the evil

¹ John H. Orme, *The Leadership Challenge Workshop*. Cross-Cultural Leadership (Chicago, IL: Moody Graduate School, 2000) class notes

one by going to the local spirit doctor. The believers have gained a new skill and confidence because we challenged the process in the area of health care.

When our initial farming projects failed, I also challenged the believers to think of new ways to farm. Our greatest challenge was to help these believers do long range planning in reference to their farming. They were used to farming crops that were harvested every two, three or four months. Their children often went to bed without supper, so they basically concentrated on tasks to fill their children's stomachs by selling firewood, logging, or stealing. They never needed me to explain the prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread" (Matthew 6:11). Their biggest problem was to think beyond today in order to break out of the cycle of poverty. Thus, it took many years and some hands-on trips across the island, to finally convince some farmers to invest in the future by planting hedge rows to stop erosion. Then it took additional initiatives to get them to plant fruit trees to provide long-term income to put their children through school, and to meet their future needs for when they are too old to do the manual labor required to plow, plant, harvest, process and transport crops. Challenging the process in the area of agriculture is a continual battle, but one that must be fought by the leaders, if the church is to become a dynamic force in the community that brings about a better life for its people now, and in eternity.

Challenging the process is also important with reference to the way Maranao's commonly lead. The leader in the Maranao community is the village sultan, or king, who received his rank based upon his status as the son of a former sultan. Although there is some freedom for the Maranao to choose a new king from another son of their sultan, if the oldest is not worthy, the role of king or leader in the Maranao society is an autocratic post that is fixed within a particular family in each community. Long speeches, expensive celebrations and the praising of the

sultan's family during the coronation of a new sultan all point to the fact that the leadership style modeled by the Maranao is closer to that of the Gentiles than a follower of Christ. How then, in this environment, can a new believer learn how to lead a church? The typical role of a Maranao leader must be challenged so that the biblical model of servant leadership can be displayed. How can this happen? It happens best by teaching what servant-leadership is, by modeling it for the new leaders, by giving them opportunities to put it into practice and by encouraging leaders with each small success at practicing servant leadership.

We did this in the Philippines with those who would eventually become elders. First, we enabled our students to teach the Bible right away. We didn't allow them to learn to be lazy and make the assumption that only professional pastors taught the Word of God. We also put them in positions where they had to lead and shepherd their unbelieving students who had just started studying Phase One of the Chronological Teaching under them. As these new teachers taught, I would encourage each one to be faithful to their students. I modeled for them that they should shepherd their students in such a way as to become disciples of Christ. This presented our teachers many challenges.

Their students realized that these teachers, although having no status in the community, truly loved them. As a result, they would often come to their teachers with impossible demands for help, such as food, employment or needed schooling fees. Sometimes these students arrived at the home of their poverty stricken teacher late at night with various emergency situations stemming from some calamity or threat of persecution.

Encouragement, plus my example, would help them through these times. It was imperative that my teaching matched my behavior so that I could encourage each teacher to follow me as I follow Christ. At first teachers would come to me and say things like, "My

student is having a problem with his son. Could you go and see him? He is sick.” I would answer, “What did I do for you when your children were sick?” He would answer, “Visit them, pray for them and at times supply them with medicines.” Then, I would reply, “Go to the clinic, find out what you need, and do for your students what I did for you.” Admittedly this was a process, I would often have to supply some or all of the money to aid in these situations. But, as our farming goat project became profitable, our teachers would use their salary that was provided from stock and milk sales to give to their students who came with various needs. These men, examples of servant leadership, challenged the process of the leadership structure among the Maranao. They were on the way to become effective leaders for the kingdom of God.

Inspire a Shared Vision

In order to inspire a shared vision, the church planter must communicate a better future for the people he is leading. In Proverbs 29:18 it says, “Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained....” A good vision must affirm the values of an organization as it envisions goals toward a better future. These goals must be communicated in such a way as to motivate the people to work together in order to accomplish a task that could only be accomplished as the result of effective teamwork. Visions are important because they renew organizations, they create energy and they give organizations a reason to keep pressing on.

I believe that one of my giftings is to be a visionary. I love to dream, to think outside of the box, to contemplate a better way to transform the mountain community where we live in order to make disciples of Christ among the Maranao. Unlike most visionaries, I also am a “work horse,” who is highly disciplined and has the energy to carry out the visions that the Lord gives me. My greatest challenge is to inspire a *shared* vision. I am good at inspiring my

vision in others, but it is difficult for me to land with others, because I am so often far ahead in my thinking and planning from others. I am a highly disciplined person that often drives others crazy.

One of the best things about taking time to leave the work for a few weeks every year so that I can reflect on it is that the Holy Spirit reveals the weaknesses in the work. Things that I have taught the believers to do well, have passed on to them, and that they value as important have continued. For example, our goat and sheep project has continued with relatively few problems. They seem to be able to birth, raise, feed, heal, milk and process all our products well. On the other hand, since I was still doing a lot of the marketing, they have struggled selling all the milk that the goats have produced. On a positive note, they are producing more milk than ever before and they are investigating ways to sell it commercially, but marketing the milk is still a struggle for them.

Our clinic ministry also has gone well. This ministry also has a very high value for the believers because it has saved so many lives. The believers have run the ministry on their own for a couple of years, so our leaving the area from time to time to go back home and visit my family has almost gone unnoticed. The church's teaching ministry of various Bible studies in most villages up and down our river system has also continued during our home ministry assignment. But these ministries had long been placed in the hands of capable leaders who I mentored until they no longer needed my vision or instruction to keep going. They already valued these ministries and were competent to carry them out and minister in their communities.

One of the key areas where my absence has left the greatest void is in the area of vision. As outlined in earlier Lessons, we realized the vision together for our outreaches, our agriculture projects and our clinic ministry, but each of these visions had one common origin - me. I have

realized that the believers need to be taught one additional skill - they need to be taught how to dream, and then how to creatively think of ways to make their dreams come true.

One helpful tool to equip the Maranao church to conceptualize and realize their vision is by teaching them about four types of people. Everyone tends to fit one of these types of people.

The first type of person has abilities in carrying out plans and getting involved in new and challenging experiences. This person learns primarily through active experimentation and concrete experience. These people respond to the vision of the team and are able to choose a model or goal for the team to accomplish. These people often are able to state and clarify the vision that the team adopts.

The second type of person who has abilities in observation and reflection. These people enjoy planning and thinking sessions and learn primarily by reflecting on the behavior of action-orientated people. These people are the ones who can take the vision, compare it with reality, and identify the problems that need to be overcome to see the vision realized.

The third type of person has the ability to take the problems, think through ways in which these problems might be solved, and create new models for meeting needs. These people are the ones who can take the problems discovered by the reflective people on the team, consider the various alternative solutions, and create models to test his new theories.

The fourth type of person is the doer of the group. He learns by taking the abstract concepts developed by the reflective people, select a solution and execute it with the help of other practical people on the team. In this way, the vision has cycled to its originators and will most likely be modified again to fit the new dynamic situation. Then the new modified vision will in turn cycle through the above process once again.

The next step to help the Maranao church become a true church-planting movement is for them to identify the strengths of each person in the church from these four types of people and utilize them so that they can discover their own visions and dreams, and carry them out. Like all the stages of the church plant, I am not entirely sure how this is going to play out. I have some additional learning to do. But, I am sure that it is imperative that the Maranao believers learn how to create their own visions and dreams themselves. It is the ability to dream that the church needs in order to remain a young, vibrant, relevant organization that continually remakes itself in order to serve as a change agent in the Filipino Muslim world and beyond.

Modeling the Way

Without modeling leadership is hypocrisy. Over and over, especially when our teachers struggled with doing the right thing, their struggle usually ended with making a good decision because they feared the implications of what a wrong response would be on their students. From the beginning of the leadership training process and especially during the year long study of biblical eldership, we emphasized Paul's injunction in 1 Timothy 4:12-16. Paul admonishes,

Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an *example* of those who believe. Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. *Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them*, so that your progress may be evident to all. *Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching*; persevere in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you (emphasis mine).

Modeling is essential for every leader. We must pay very close attention to our teaching and ourselves so that they match perfectly. Learning is still more caught than taught. Students will learn their leader's bad habits much more readily than their best sermons. For better or worse, our teachers have largely become just like me. They are open about their faith,

continue in the ministry under severe persecution, and are passionate about winning the lost for Christ.

One of the things we generally have not had a problem with is for our teachers to be faithful in going on their outreaches - no matter what the circumstances. The reason for this is that I modeled this for them. It didn't matter if I had a cold, if I was struggling that day with my chronic asthma, if the river was flooded, or if it was raining hard and the path up the mountains was treacherous, I always went to teach my Bible studies. This tenacity almost caused me to drown on one occasion, to have my truck washed down stream on two others, has left me stranded on the wrong side of the river on more occasions than I can count, has left me vulnerable to my enemies, and has left me open to the intense heat of the Philippine sun or heavy rains on a daily basis as I hike from village to village. I admit, sometimes I was crazy to keep going, but I was passionate about teaching faithfulness and the importance of serving others for the sake of the Gospel. When I arrived at the homes of my students I communicated more than just faithfulness too. I was communicating that their souls were precious to me and that if they decided to trust Christ as their Savior - I would stand with them.

I have observed something about modeling over the years. My disciples will take any positive characteristic of mine and improve on it. They are better at raising goats and sheep, they are better teachers, and they are better health workers than I am. On the other hand, they also will take any negative characteristic of mine and make it worse. Sometimes they are not very good team players and have problems with one another. May God give us the grace to take pains with how we model Christ, in order to insure salvation both for ourselves and those who hear us.

Enabling Others to Act

A vital part of the Training Leadership stage of church-planting is when the emerging church organizes, plans, executes, and evaluates its own outreaches (Acts 13:1-3). This process begins early in the church's life when new believers are taught how to ask probing questions to cause spiritual hunger in the lives of their acquaintances. Then, as numbers grow of those interested in hearing the teaching, new Phase One Bible studies are organized and started. It is the elders' responsibility of the newly planted church to train and appoint teachers to these new works (II Timothy 2:2). It is their responsibility to equip the body of believers to do whatever work is necessary to begin and complete this new work (Ephesians 4:12-16). The church planter will still give instruction to the elders at this time, but will slowly give them more autonomy (Acts 20:17-38).

The biggest killers of church-planting movements are usually those who start them. We ministers, pastors and missionaries usually fail by not planning to depart in time from the day we arrive. We also tend to want to control those we are trying to disciple, where we, rather than the Holy Spirit, become the leader in their lives. This is very dangerous because it can be very damaging. God has gifted the body to do the work of the ministry. Each inter-working part of the body of Christ has been given the skills necessary to build itself up in love and make disciples of all nations (Ephesians 4:11-16; Matthew 28:18-20). So when we attempt to over-control and over-manage the believers, or refuse to relinquish ministries or power, we are basically telling God that they need us more than they need Him. A principle to remember is that when we over-manage people, God only gets to use our gifts and abilities. When we empower and release people, God unleashes all His power supplied to the body of Christ to enable a symphony of ministries for His glory. In other words, when we over-manage people,

the ministry can only get as good as we are when we are operating in the flesh, Not very good, is it?

To avoid over-management we must constantly work ourselves out of jobs by giving assignments to people that we have equipped to do them. This means we must show them what to do, do it with them, allow them to do it alone, have them do it regularly with only periodic feedback or input from us and then get out of the way. We also avoid over-management when we give our disciples the authority to accomplish the task in the way they think is best. We must give them the freedom to fail. We must understand that they will learn much more from their failures than from our instruction. We must guard against the temptation of taking away the possibility of their failing in order to protect them.

It is much better to let them fail in an atmosphere of accountability and affirmation, where you are there to pick them up, dust them off, and help them think through what went wrong, than to hold their hand the whole way and then abandon them someday when you can no longer be around.

Leadership that is sensitive to the situation is the best way to enable a disciple to do the work of the ministry. This model helps leaders select appropriate styles of leadership that matches the readiness of their disciples. If a disciple is low in their readiness, unable and insecure, then the leader should adopt a “telling” approach to leadership where he gives specific instructions to the task and gives close supervision. If a disciple is of moderate readiness, unable but willing, then the leader should adopt a “selling” approach to leadership that gives some instructions through two-way dialogue (rather than just telling how). The leader may make the ultimate decision, but allows for explanations and questions as well as discussion, so that the disciple learns through interaction. If a disciple is of a higher but still moderate level of

readiness, that is, lacking confidence because the leader begins to step away, then the leader should adopt a “participating” approach to leadership that is supporting, encouraging, and empowering the disciple to make their own decisions.

The final style of leadership is for those who are able and confident to do the task. Here the leader will adopt a “delegating” style of leadership. He gives or delegates tasks to the disciple with relatively light supervision, focusing on the big picture and allowing the disciple to determine how he will carry out the task. He remains accessible to the disciple if his help is needed.

In each of our ministries among the Maranao we attempted to use this Situational Leadership approach when discipling our believers. In each of our ministries I had to assess the readiness level of each believer in order to determine the appropriate leadership style. In our farming projects, I began by using the selling and participating styles because our people were already farmers and knew much more than I did about farming. In our teaching ministries, I had to move through each of the leadership styles since teaching was totally new to them.

With new teachers, I would literally teach them the lesson. Then, I would immediately have them teach the lesson back to me. I would critique them and then we would travel together where we would team-teach the lesson. Eventually, as my student taught through Phase One, my role would diminish in teaching of the later lessons. When I was confident in the abilities of my disciple to teach, I would look for reasons not to be there.

Then, when others invited the new teacher to teach in another location I would encourage him to go teach his second group of students on his own. This process would continue until my disciple had taught many Bible studies. I wouldn’t usually go to the teaching times but I would observe the students of my disciple. If they were living as they should, I would then

allow my disciple to start a church-planting work outside of our range of regular supervision. I would largely use a delegating style of leadership where I would observe, monitor and rejoice in the ministry that God had given to this new leader. As the church plant progresses, I must become less important and they must become more important, as they are enabled to lead the ministry to the ends of the earth.

Too many missionaries have gone to the field and done the hard work of plowing, seeding, watering, and harvesting. Once the church was growing and developing, they wanted to stay on to be the leader and head pastor. They were unwilling to let the ministry be taken over by the local believers. They wanted to be “chief” but in the long run this hindered the growth of the church and resulted in many fields having strife between the missionary and the local church leadership. History is full of examples of this. Missionaries fulfill their calling when they plant a church that grows under the headship of Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit for multiplication in the local culture. Sad though it may be to the missionary, if he can leave and the work carries on and grows, he has done his job properly under the Lord of the Harvest.

Encouraging the Heart

It is important to celebrate accomplishments regularly. There are many days when life is just plain tough for the Maranao believers. The constant threat of rebels, thieves, feuds, injustices, persecution, and sicknesses from the outside often makes life grim. Plus, the pressures of problems with students, fellow workers and family make all of us a little down from time to time.

On our days of worship we spend a lot of time together talking and encouraging one another. We usually spend the whole day together, laugh, have fun, eat, study, worship and pray. We

also try to do some special events from time to time. Our annual Maranao camp and men's retreat also serve as a great encouragement to the believers. I also try to go out to eat from time to time with each of the leaders in order to encourage them one on one. Since our believers are very poor, these simple treats seem to go a long way in encouraging their hearts. It is also important to give up our own personal schedules when a believer is going through a particularly tough time. Carving out time to listen and be available when someone is going through a crisis is very important - even when no solution is forthcoming. Listening and comforting affirms your love for them and their importance in the kingdom of God.

Challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, modeling the way, enabling others to act and encouraging the heart are five practices that leaders must implement as they equip leaders to tend the flock of God. May God give us grace to make disciples for His glory.

Assignments:

1. What are the biblical standards for church eldership? List these out and discuss how you have seen these in operation in your gatherings.
2. Which of these standards are the hardest to live out obediently in Chinese culture? Are all of these standards of equal importance among leadership in Chinese culture or are some more highly prized than others? If so, why is this the case? Are any of these standards not deemed very important? If so, why?
3. Why is modeling so important in disciple-making?
4. What is the great danger to disciple-making in over-managing and directing others? What is its effect?
5. Why is a missionary to aim to make a new church-planting ministry indigenous where he is no longer needed? What is the best way to do this?
6. Discuss situational leadership... What is it? What is the difference between "telling," "selling," and "delegating" in training people?

Lesson Eight

Empowerment: Getting Out and Moving Toward the Least-Reached

Leadership Taking Over Their Roles

The final stage of the church-planting process is empowerment. It is when the elders (and deacons, if the numbers of the body requires another leader board; Acts 6:1-6) completely take over the role of leading the church. During this stage, the church planter begins Phase Five - training the emerging church leadership to write their own curriculum using the Old Testament and the Gospels. This material will be different than Phase One and Two because it will be taught from a discipleship perspective. Here the church planter will directly work with the leaders of the church who can begin developing their own curriculum. During the Empowerment stage the church planter will no longer have the responsibility of teaching the believers directly.

During this stage the elders will also have their own leadership meetings separate from the church planter. The church planter will monitor the progress of these meetings, but will only give input when asked, or if a situation presented itself that was more than the elders could handle. Eventually, once the elders reached a certain level of competence, the church planter will give more freedom to the elders until complete autonomy is achieved. Once the Old Testament and the Gospels have been taught the church planter would begin Phase Six - teaching the elders how to preach expository messages from the epistles.

Totally Indigenous Church

The final stage of church-planting is phasing the church-planter out the work. During this stage, the church planter will plan periods of time when he will not be with the church or around its leaders. These times will increase in frequency and duration. The church will be firmly planted once the church has a full body of qualified leadership, has a mechanism for sending out its own missionaries and has a part in planting churches worldwide (Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 1:8; Acts 13:1-3; Acts 14:25,26).

Getting out of the way

How do we fulfill the above plan for planting an indigenous church? Jesus gives us the best pattern for discipleship, leadership development, and working ourselves out of a job. After the resurrection, once He had trained the apostles, Jesus did something very significant - He separated Himself geographically from His disciples. He equipped them and got out of the way. Barnabas and Paul modeled Jesus' example in Acts 11:19-26; 13:1-4, when they discipled the believers in Antioch, established elders and left the church in the hands of capable men that they had trained. They repeated this pattern in every place they traveled by establishing elders and moving to new locations to plant churches (Acts 14:23).

In April 2000, we appointed Ciano, Balao and Ebra to be elders of the Maranao church, called the Manga Miyamaratiyaya ki Isa. They not only fulfilled the qualifications of elders, but also had their own mini-congregations that they won to Christ and discipled through the Chronological Teaching Method described above. Through the years they have been taught, tested and trained to shepherd the flock of God by leading others to Christ and discipling them into faithful men who can also teach others. Being appointed as elders was not a popularity contest but a confirmation by their many students affirming that they were ready to enter the office that they had already been living out for many years.

Our next step is do just as our Lord had done and Paul demonstrated, leave to plant more churches and allow the elders to carry out the ministry that God has given them. The new elders must equip their disciples for the work of the ministry. Once their disciples are trained, our first elders will then be freed to continue this church-planting movement to other places, just as we, the original church planters, have modeled.

Missions and church-planting must become a continuation of a movement that began at Pentecost where our disciples need to be trained and multiplied as extensions of the church to new people groups. Each generation of disciples must train their disciples, empower them and then move on to their Judea, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the earth. We must be willing to remain as pilgrims on this earth and move out to new areas and plant churches among the least-reached once we have taught faithful men who are teaching others also in their own Jerusalem. This is the Great Commission. This is what Jesus meant when he said, “Follow me.”

A roadblock to church-planting movements

A roadblock to establishing church-planting movements is the erroneous distinction between church leaders and church members. This clergy/laity belief has been a major contributor to the Church’s failure to fulfill the Great Commission. It has extinguished church-planting movements by the leadership getting comfortable in Jerusalem, by claiming that no one could possibly replace them, and by asking the youngest and most inexperienced to go to the ends of the earth.

The Bible teaches that Christ, as Savior of the body, is the head of the church (Ephesians 5:23). The clear teaching of Scripture is that we each have different ministries, gifts, activities, etc., but the same Spirit, Lord, and God. These manifestations of the Spirit are given to each

one for the profit of all (I Corinthians 12:1-7). We are all baptized into one body, with Christ as the only head, with all of us as many members of His body. The hand, the foot, the ear, and the eye are all useful and no member of the body is more useful than another. It is God who sets these members just as He pleases for the effective working of each individual part so that the body of Christ can grow (Ephesians 4:16).

With the above being true, what then is the leadership structure of the Church? In 1 Corinthians 11:28 Paul tells us that God has appointed first apostles, second prophets, third teachers and after that workers of miracles, etc. Ephesians 4:11,12 we read, “And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.” These verses tell us that some will be appointed leaders in the church. Although that it is true - each one of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ’s gift to minister in the body - some extra grace is given to some men in the body who would become apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor/teachers. These leaders then are to train up others in the body to do the work of the ministry. Their job is not to minister, but to train up members to do the ministry that they have learned how to do during their own discipleship process.

How did Jesus call His men? He called them to enter a process. They were called to come and see who Christ is, to come and follow Him, and to come and be with Him. Christ’s leadership style was to continually increase the requirements and commitments necessary to move to the next level of the discipleship process.

When Jesus followed the Father’s directive to train disciples, in order to be certain of who He should call, He spent the night in prayer and fasting. It was the Father who chose and called the twelve to become His disciples (Luke 6:12-13). It is significant that Jesus called more than

one person. He called a group of men. It is even more significant that some disciples struggled with Jesus' leadership structure and wanted to be the greatest of the group. Jesus affirmed over and over that the greatest necessarily must be to be a servant. The greatest, once trained, plan to step out of the limelight rather than and invests his life into the equipping of others for the glory of God.

Paul followed this same example in the book of Acts. In each place Paul appointed elders from those he had been discipling in order to lead the church (Acts 14:23). They were appointed by Paul after a season of prayer and fasting. Paul, along with his leadership team, always called a group of men to lead the church. These men are equal in rank and there is no indication in Scripture that an individual has a higher rank based on pay or on time given to the task. In other words, there is no professional/non-professional distinction among elders. Each elder is an under-shepherd serving as overseers until Christ, The Chief Shepherd, returns (1 Peter 5:1-4).

The leadership structure in the church is clearly elder ruled. To become an elder, one must necessarily be a mature disciple who leads people to Christ and regularly reproduces himself in the lives of others (Matthew 28:19). Next, God will give the disciple a desire to become an elder (1 Timothy 3:1). This is essentially the disciple's call to ministry (Ephesians 4:11). The elders of the church, or the church planter, will then test the disciple over a period of years by training him to minister to those who are multiplying themselves below him (1 Timothy 3:7; 5:21-25; 2 Timothy 2:2). Once the disciple has been tested, meets the qualifications of an elder, and has at least two generations of disciples below him, he can be appointed as an elder after a period of prayer and fasting to confirm the decision and the timing of the decision.

An excellent seven-step teaching method employed by Jesus is: “show the what,” “tell them what,” “tell them why,” “show them how,” “do it with them,” “let them do it,” and “deploy them.”

He instructs us that this training process must take place in the context of small groups where the leader guides his disciples in many different ministry settings. Jesus’ final step was to leave and deploy Himself. He didn’t quit, and then leave, as many ministers do today, but He empowered his disciples and got out of their way so that they could take up the baton of ministry. Jesus never permanently left his disciples, but was always with them by the power of the Spirit, to help them take the gospel to the ends of the earth.

The biblical model is for the elders of the church to launch out from the ministry base to their Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth once they begin appointing a new generation of elders. The twelve apostles did this by replacing themselves in Jerusalem (Acts 8-11). The church in Antioch followed this example by launching Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:1-4). Paul never remained in a church he planted, but always deployed himself to new areas to fulfill the Great Commission. It is significant that he maintained his relationship with the believers in Antioch (Acts 15:28; 18:22) and with all the churches he planted, but he also continually sought new places to preach where Christ was not known (Romans 15:20). Paul also exhorted Titus to practice the same strategy, to replace himself with Artemas or Tychicus in Crete, so that Titus could join him in Nicopolis (Titus 3:12) and eventually move to Dalmatia (2 Timothy 4:10).

Equipping them to replace us

Leaders best lead by example. God’s pattern is that apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor/teachers should lead the way in fulfilling the Great Commission by multiplying disciples

and launching themselves to the least reached. We would do a much more effective job of discipleship if we began with the mind set of equipping our disciples so that they could effectively replace us to free us up to go to new places to start this process over again. The Great Commission is a movement. Our disciples will follow us through great difficulty if we give them a credible example to follow.

What happens if we fail to fulfill the Great Commission?

The first church at Jerusalem provides a beautiful example of how a church should minister to its members and its surrounding community. Immediately upon its inception the early church had over 10,000 members. The Spirit of God now indwelt believers and empowered them to minister to others in phenomenal ways. In Acts 2:42-47 the early church models the essential spiritual disciplines necessary for new believers to become committed disciples. They demonstrated a commitment to Scripture, to one another in tangible acts of self-sacrifice and love, to prayer, to praise and worship and to outreach. It is interesting to note that the outreach of the early church was not based in programs, but in contagious growth, as they lived their lives out in authentic Christianity.

The early church also had its struggles. Satan attacked from without (Acts 3 and 4) he attacked the individual lives of believers causing them to sin (Acts 5), and he made his most severe attack in trying to cause division in the body (Acts 6). The Jerusalem Church weathered these difficulties and is an excellent model to follow for early church development and maintenance. Luke testifies to this fact in Acts 6:7 with his commentary that the “Word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly...”

The hallmark example of what a church should be is found in the Antioch church. It was a church based on elder rule that sent its very best to go to the ends of the earth. It was a

church that considered the Great Commission as a movement and aided in the planting of churches with the same basic philosophy. The Ephesian church is just one of the churches planted that was sold on the principle of multiplication.

The Jerusalem church, however, is a much sadder story. After the early years, the apostles were obedient to the Great Commission, established elders (Acts 11:30; 15:4; 21:18), and, as history tells us, took the gospel to the ends of the earth. But the Jerusalem church, made up of converted Jews, never got over their prejudice to freely share the gospel with people unlike themselves. God forced them out with persecution in Acts 8:1-4, sent them out supernaturally in Acts 8:26-40, and gave them visions in Acts 10 to try to get across to them that the gospel was for everyone. Some, like Peter and Philip, understood, but most of the Jews converted in Jerusalem became a stumbling block for other Christians for generations (Acts 15:1,5; 21:20-26; Galatians 2:11-16; Hebrews 2:1-4; 3:1-6:20,10:19-39). As a result of its disobedience (Romans 15:31), God took His blessing away from this great church. Jerusalem became plagued with famine and poverty that lasted a generation (Acts 11:27-30; Romans 15:26; 1 Cor. 16:3). The city was ultimately destroyed in 70 A.D. The Jerusalem church's mantle was transferred to Antioch. The Christians in Jerusalem were not faithful in bringing the gospel to the ends of the earth so God raised up other churches to fulfill His purposes. The wasted lives of Esau, Ruben, Shebna, Saul and Judas testify to the authenticity of the principle that God will raise up replacements for those who are not faithful in order to fulfill His established purposes.

The lessons learned from a careful study of the Jerusalem church, the church in Antioch, and its daughter churches, especially Ephesus, are quite clear. We must become disciple making churches with a clear vision to bring the gospel to the ends of the earth. A discipling church must have an intentional strategy that has at its core the fulfillment of the Great

Commission. This intentional strategy must be able to multiply itself, especially its leadership, with a deliberate system of accountability. Then, as ministers are trained, the best, tested, and most experienced are mobilized to bring the gospel to the disciple-making church's of Judea, Samaria and the uttermost part of the earth.

Assignments:

1. Discuss the nature of the church where Christ is the Head of the Church and believers are the members of the body. How can this function in the church? What role do pastors and elders play so that the Headship of Christ becomes a reality in the church?
2. Discuss how this fits in with the 7 step teaching method of Jesus below. Give examples of how Jesus did this; how Paul did this with the new churches and with Timothy.
 - a. Show them what
 - b. Tell them what
 - c. Tell them why (Kingdom of God)
 - d. Show them how
 - e. Do it with them
 - f. Let them do it
 - g. Send them out (deploy them)
3. Compare the differences between the church of Antioch and the church in Jerusalem in how they reached out to the world? Which one fit the Great Commission better? Why and how?

THE FOLLOWING IS NOT MEANT TO BE TAUGHT IN CLASS. IT IS MATERIAL THAT CAN BE PRINTED OFF TO BE GIVEN TO THE STUDENTS AS RESOURCES FOR THEIR OWN TEACHING.

Phase One: Building on Firm Foundations Outline
Used by the Maranao Filipinos for Disciple-Making
43 Lessons

Section 1:

A. Lesson #1: The Word of God

1. Who wrote the Word of God?
2. The main message in the Word of God
3. God protects His Word and it is reliable
4. Don't believe those who mock the Word of God

B. Lesson #2: God

1. God is eternal, spirit; He does not have a beginning or end
2. We can only truly know God through His Word. Storytellers don't know about God and His origin
3. God is omniscient, omnipresent, powerful, self-sufficient, loving, and just

C. Lesson #3: Angels

1. Angels are created spirit beings...they are not omnipresent
2. Angels were created holy, are servants of God and do not marry
3. Heaven
4. Man cannot call upon holy angels and they do not enter man to control him
5. Lucifer and his rebellion
6. Satan, evil angels cast down to earth, and the second death
7. Satan's work in the world today. [His main aim is to be worshiped and to have us go to hell. Here many cultural illustrations are inserted to demonstrate the many

ways

Satan has deceived them.]

D. Lesson #4: The Creation of the World

1. The seven days of creation
2. God created everything holy because He is holy.
3. Man was created holy and therefore had a perfect relationship with God.
4. The tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

E. Lesson #5: The Fall

1. Satan's deception of mankind
2. Man's relationship with God was broken. Spiritual death:
 - a. Man's relationship with God was broken
 - b. Man became a member of Satan's kingdom
 - c. Man would die and be separated from God forever in hell
3. Man's attempts at restoring his relationship with God failed
 - a. Good works - fig leaves
 - b. Shifting the blame to others

4. God's mercy, the results of sin on man, woman, and Satan
5. God's promise of the coming Redeemer
6. God's providing animal skins for a covering of their bodies

Section 2:

A. Lesson # 6: Cain and Abel

1. Cain and Abel were born out of the garden and cut off from God
2. God's provision of the animal skin, His way to approach Him, and the character of sheep
3. The two offerings
4. God is merciful. God always is the one to take the initiative in saving man.
5. Cain murders his brother in Satan's attempt to prevent the coming of a redeemer

B. Lesson #7: Seth, Enoch, and Methuselah

1. Adam died according to God's promise
2. Enoch walked with God and was taken from the earth. This action graphically demonstrates God's mercy in removing the barrier of sin and restoring His relationship with those who follow Him His way.
3. Evil spirits do not have the ability to take people from the earth
4. What happens to the spirit of dead people after they die (Luke 16:19-31)
 - a. They are in hell forever in eternal torment
 - b. People in heaven cannot come to their aid
 - c. The spirits of dead people immediately go to their eternal destination at death
They never return to earth. Those who call upon the dead are really communicating with demons
 - d. Departed loved ones, wherever they are, desire you to trust Christ

C. Lesson #8: Noah

1. Man's increasing sinfulness
2. Noah, his faith, the building of the ark
3. God must punish sin because He is holy, but is also merciful and always provides a way of escape.
4. Only one door in the ark and God closed the door
5. All those outside of the ark died
6. Noah sacrificed clean animals to God as a sign of his faith in the coming redeemer
7. God gave Noah permission to eat all kinds of meat.

D. Lesson #9: The Tower of Babel

1. Man did not spread out in the earth
2. God confused the language of men and people developed into different nations
3. The history of Babylon, the beginnings of idolatry and religion
4. There are no good religions. All are false. All are man made and motivated by

Satan

E. Lesson #10: Abraham

1. Idols and idolatry.
 2. Abram's move and God's promises to him, including His promise of blessing the world through the coming Redeemer.
 3. Abram was counted as righteous because of his faith
- F. Lesson #11: Sodom and Gomorrah
1. Lot's salvation and sinful life
 2. God's punishment of sin and His holiness
 3. God knowing the true condition of hearts and Lot's wife
- G. Lesson #12: Isaac's birth and Abraham's sacrifice
1. Abraham and Isaac's faith in God
 2. Isaac's willingness to be laid on the altar
 3. God's provision for a substitute and the ram caught by its horns
 4. God's renewing of His covenant with Abraham
- H. Lesson #13: Jacob and Esau
1. Twins born to Isaac and the rights of the first born son in Hebrew culture
 2. Esau preferred the things of this world over God's covenant
 3. Jacob's dream. This illustrates the renewed communication with God for those who trust in God's promises concerning the coming Redeemer. The ladder also illustrates that there is only one way to heaven.
 4. Jacob's family and return to Canaan
- J. Lesson #14: Joseph
1. The Joseph story - parallels with the life of Christ will be made in Phase Two
 2. God's promise to Judah and the Kingdom of the coming Redeemer

Section 3:

- A. Lesson #15: Moses
1. Israel made slaves in Egypt
 2. Moses' birth and call to ministry
 3. Moses' first visit to Pharaoh and his declaration that he does not know God
- B. Lesson #16: The Passover
1. The first nine plagues
 - a) The plagues as a direct judgment on the Egyptian gods
 - b) The magician's ability to counterfeit the first three miracles, but not the ability to give relief
 - c) Their declaration that the plagues were definitely the work of God
 - d) God keeping the plagues from Israel
 2. The Passover lamb
 - a) The lamb had to be observed for four days to ensure holiness
 - b) God's principle that a lamb could be offered as a substitute for sin as the sinner

- looked forward to the sacrifice of the coming Redeemer.
- c) Putting the blood on the doorposts was a sign of individual faith

C. Lesson #17: Israel's Journey to Sinai

1. The crossing of the Red Sea
2. God's provision of manna
3. God's provision of water from a rock

D. Lesson #18: The Ten Commandments

1. The purpose of a thermometer
2. The holiness of God, the fear of the people, and the border around the mountain
3. The ten commandments. God demands perfection to be saved by the law. If we break
one commandment we break them all.
4. The commandments are like a thermometer. They tell us we are sick with sin, but the
medicine for sin is not the commandments (the thermometer), but faith in the
coming Redeemer.

E. Lesson #19: The Golden Calf

1. Israel's sin
2. God must punish sin

F. Lesson #20: The Tabernacle

1. The purpose of the tabernacle
2. The wall around the tabernacle - man cut off from God
3. The sacrificial system and the tabernacle
4. The furniture inside the tabernacle and the curtain
5. The day of atonement and the priest coming before God with blood
6. What constituted what was clean and unclean went far beyond just not eating pork

G. Lesson #21: Israel's Journeys

1. Nadab and Abihu
2. Israel did not enter the promised land
3. Moses' sin of striking the rock twice (The significance of this event will be taught in Phase Two)
4. The bronze serpent
5. The death of Moses

H. Lesson #22: Joshua

1. The two spies

2. The crossing of the Jordan
3. Jericho
4. Joshua's death

I. Lesson #23: The Leaders in Israel

1. The period of the judges
2. The kings of Israel - Saul and David
3. David's sin
4. David's desire to build God a house and God's covenant with David
5. Solomon and the temple

J. Lesson #24: God's Prophets

1. The role of the true prophets of God
2. Elijah and Mount Carmel
3. Jonah

K. Lesson #25 and #26: God's Prophecies Concerning the coming Redeemer

1. God's Prophecies Concerning the coming Redeemer.
(A sample chart of these prophecies follows this outline, see p.109)
2. The Situation of Israel at the Birth of the coming Redeemer
 - a. The Roman Empire
 - b. The Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the institution of the synagogues
 - c. The expectation by some for the coming of the Redeemer

Section 4:

A. Lesson #27: The Birth of Christ

1. John the Baptist
2. The angel's visit to Mary - The child would be holy and called the Son of God
3. God is One and the Incarnation. God became a servant and put on flesh. God does
not have children or a beginning or end. (Philippians 2:5-7)
4. Jesus as the Word of God (John 1:1,14)
5. The angel's visit to Joseph - Immanuel and the Savior who will save people from
their sins
6. The birth of Christ

B. Lesson #28: Jesus' Childhood

1. The Shepherd's visitation - the birth of the Savior the joy of the world
2. Jesus' visit to the temple as a baby. The child will be the rise and fall of many
3. Satan's attempt to kill Jesus and the wise men's gifts

4. Jesus in the temple as a boy
- C. Lesson #29 Jesus' Baptism
1. John's Baptism - His warnings to those who don't believe in the coming Redeemer
 2. He will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire
 3. All men will be sifted in a winnowing basket
 4. Jesus' Baptism - God announced for the first time since creation that He was well pleased
 5. The truth about baptism
 6. John's statement that Jesus is the Lamb of God (John 1:29)
- D. Lesson #30: The Temptation of Christ
1. The three temptations and Satan's attempt to give Christ the Kingdom without His having to suffer and die.
 2. Christ did not sin like the first Adam and is the perfect Lamb of God.
- E. Lesson #31: Jesus Begins His Public Ministry (Mark 1)
1. The disciples of Christ (Mark 1:16-20)
 2. The authority of Jesus' teaching (Mark 1:21-22)
 3. Jesus' authority over evil spirits (Mark 1:23-28)
 4. Jesus heals a leper (Mark 1:40-42)
- F. Lesson #32: Nicodemus (John 3)
1. Jesus will be like the bronze serpent
 2. The importance of faith for salvation
 3. God does not except all who call on Him We must approach Him His way (Matt.7:21-23)
- G. Lesson #33: Jesus and the Paralytic (Mark 2)
1. Jesus heals the paralyzed man and forgives his sin
 2. Whoever accepts Christ and believes on Him becomes a child of God. (John 1:12)
 3. Jesus twelve disciples
 4. Jesus eats with sinners
 5. The sign of Jonah (Matthew 12:38-40)
- H. Lesson #34: The Different Kinds of Soil (Mark 4)
- Discuss with the students what the condition of their hearts is.
- I. Lesson #35: The Miracles of Christ (Mark 4,5)
1. Jesus calms the storm
 2. Jesus heals the man with many demons
 3. The authority and power of Jesus was the same demonstrated by God in the Old Testament
- J. Lesson #36: Jesus is the Bread of Life (John 6)

1. Jesus feeds the 5000
2. Jesus walks on the water.
3. Jesus' message as the only source of spiritual life

K. Lesson #37: The Teachers of the Law (Matthew 6; Mark 7)

1. The Pharisees were hypocrites and prayed to be seen by men
2. Fasting
3. True cleansing
4. Jesus declares all food clean
5. The Pharisees problem of exalting themselves (Luke 18:9-14)
6. Jesus' teaching to the Pharisees - The greatest commandment (Matthew 22:35-40)
7. Those who trust in religion will be cursed (Matthew 23:23-28)

L. Lesson #38: Jesus is the Narrow Path Leading to God

1. Jesus is the Door and the Good Shepherd (John 10)
2. Jesus is the Way the Truth and the Life (John 14)
3. The narrow and the wide paths (Matthew 7:13,14)
4. You must think clearly what path you will follow (Luke 14:25-30,33)
5. Building your house on the rock (Matthew 7:24-27)
6. The Yoke of Jesus (Matthew 11:28-30)

M. Lesson #39: Jesus is the Resurrection and the Life (John 11)

1. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead and gives life to all of us who are spiritually dead and believe on Him.
2. Jesus is the Savior (Mark 8:27-29,31)
3. The Transfiguration (Mark 9:2-8)

N. Lesson #40: What Will Happen to our Investments in the Hereafter?

1. The man who loved riches (Luke 12:15-21)
2. Lazarus and the rich man. What happens to the spirit of dead people. All money and effort given to the dead is wasted. We cannot help the dead. The dead cannot return to the earth to torment or reward us. When a person dies they immediately go to heaven or hell. (Luke 16:19-31)

O. Lesson #41: The Last Supper (Mark 14)

1. Jesus predicts His death at least three times (Mark 10:32-34; Mark 14:1,2, 17-21)

2. Judas betrayal (Luke 22:2-6)
3. The Last Supper and the institution of communion (Don't teach in depth concerning communion -wait till Phase Three.)
4. Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane and arrest

P. Lesson #42: The Crucifixion (Mark 14,15)

1. Jesus predicts His death on three occasions (Mark 10:32-34; Mark 14:1,2, 17-21).
2. Jesus' Arrest and trial
3. Jesus judged because he claimed to be God's son
4. The crucifixion of Christ (Luke 23:39-43 also used)
5. Why Jesus had to die
 - a. Sin had to be paid for
 - b. Jesus' relationship with God was temporarily broken as He carried the sins of the world. He became sin, or a snake, for us (bronze serpent).
 - c. Jesus said it was finished
 - d. The temple curtain was torn from top to bottom
 - e. Think about what Jesus has done for you

Q. Lesson #43: The Resurrection

1. The burial of Christ (Mark 15, John 19)
2. Jesus rose from the dead (Luke 24)
3. Why Jesus rose from the dead.
4. Many saw Jesus alive (Luke 24, John 20)
5. Jesus' return to heaven (Acts 1)

Prophecies Concerning the Coming Redeemer

Additional Material for Phase Two

Jesus Fulfills Prophecies:

In his life, death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus fulfilled 300 prophecies, all given hundreds of years before his birth.

16 of these Prophecies:

1. Jesus' birth was unique - He was born of a virgin. (Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:18-25).
2. Jesus' birthplace in Bethlehem was announced. (Micah 5:2 and Matthew 2:1-6)
3. Jesus will be honored by rulers. (Psalm 72:10-11; Isaiah 60:6 and Matthew 2:11)
4. Jesus will grow up in Nazareth. (Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:14,15)
5. A prophet, John the Baptist, will preach prior to the coming of the Redeemer to prepare the way for Him. (Isaiah 40:3 and Luke 3:3-6)
6. Jesus will have a significant ministry in Galilee among the Gentiles. (Isaiah 9:1,2 and Matthew 4:12-16)
7. Jesus will make the blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear and the dumb speak. (Isaiah 35:5,6 and Matthew 11:4,5)
8. Jesus will speak in parables (teach using stories). Psalm 78:2 and Matthew 13:34,35).
9. Jesus will be rejected by the majority. (Isaiah 53:3 and John 8:48).
10. Jesus will be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver. (Psalm 41:9; Zechariah 11:12,13 and Matthew 27:3-10)
11. Jesus will be silent before His accusers. (Isaiah 53:7 and Matthew 27:12-14)
12. Jesus will be murdered on a cross, His hands and feet pierced, with evil people surrounding him, a dry mouth, etc. (Psalm 22:14-18 and Matthew 27:33,44; John 19:17-18,23-24).
13. His bones will not be broken, even though this was a customary method of crucifixion. (Psalm 34:20 and John 19:32-36).
14. Jesus will die in order to pay for the sins of the world. (Isaiah 53:4-6; and 2 Corinthians 5:21).
15. Jesus will be buried in the tomb of a rich man. (Isaiah 53:9 and Matthew 27:57-60).
16. Jesus will come alive again in three days. (Psalm 16:9-10 and Acts 2:29-32).

The Formation, Function and Mission of the Church

The Book of Acts

Phase Three

A. Introduction:

1. The Book of Acts will...
 - a. Describe the coming of the Holy Spirit
 - b. Show the initial spreading of the gospel
 - c. Describe the formation of the church
 - d. Outline the essentials of the Christian life
2. Christ's appearances after the resurrection (Matthew 28:5-20; Mark 16:5-18; Luke 24:13-53; John 20:11-29; 21:1-21; Acts 1:3-12; 1 Corinthians 15:5-7)
3. The promise of the coming Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4,5)
 - a. The Holy Spirit will live in us and direct us to all truth (John 14:16,17).
 - b. It is to our advantage that Jesus returns to heaven and sends the Holy Spirit (John 16:6,7).
 - c. The Holy Spirit will teach and remind us of Jesus' commands, teachings, and His ways (John 14:16,17).
 - d. The Holy Spirit will convict the lost of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11).

B. Christ's Great Commission (Acts 1:8)

1. When the Holy Spirit comes we will receive power in order to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth.
2. Our central role as Christians on the earth is to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20).
 - a. All authority has been given to Christ as victor over Satan and death.
 - b. We make disciples as ambassadors under this authority
 - c. Christ will be constantly with us, even until the end of the age.
3. The ascension of Christ (Acts 1:9-11)
4. Disciples waited in Jerusalem for the coming of the Holy Spirit. We also must pray and wait on God's blessing in the interim periods of life.

C. The Holy Spirit Comes Down Acts 2:1-41

1. The arrival of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-3)
2. The Day of Pentecost (Lev. 23:15-22)
3. The baptism of the Holy Spirit
 - a. The coming Redeemer will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire (Matthew 3:11).
 - b. Believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit at conversion (Ephesians 1:13).
4. All the believers speak in the unlearned languages as a miraculous witness (Acts 2:13).
5. Peter's sermon (Acts 2:14-36)
6. The people repent of their sins and trust Christ as Savior (Acts 2:37-39)

7. All who believe are immediately baptized by immersion (Acts 2:41)
8. The beginning of the Church of Jesus Christ
 - a. God no longer dwells in the temple, we as believers, indwelt by the Holy Spirit
are to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth.
 - b. The division of peoples at the Tower of Babel is now reversed. All peoples
who believe are one in Christ. The speaking of tongues is an

outward sign of

our unity in Christ.

D. Baptism

1. The first baptisms (Matthew 3:1,2,5,6).
2. Baptism is commanded by our Lord as one of the initial steps of becoming a disciple of Christ (Matthew 28:18-20).
3. Disciples are born and made (John 1:35-4:36; Mark 1:16-17; Matthew 9:37-10:1; John 13-17).
4. The truth about baptism.
 - a. The necessity of baptism by immersion and its meaning (Romans 6:1-14).
 - b. Baptism doesn't remove sin - only the blood of Christ takes away our sin (Eph. 2:13; Heb. 9:14; 1 Peter 1:18,19).
 - c. Baptism by sprinkling cannot be found in Scripture. Putting the new believer
under the water symbolizes believer's death, burial, and resurrection in
Christ.
The water symbolizes a grave or dirt (Romans 6:1-14).
 - d. All believers must be baptized after trusting Christ as their Savior. They must
be baptized again if they were only baptized as a religious sacrament as an
unbeliever.
 - e. Baptism does not make a believer a member of a church or any religious
order.
Everyone who has trusted Christ as his or her Savior must be baptized by
immersion.
 - f. Everyone who has trusted Christ as his or her Savior must be baptized by
immersion.

E. The Five Transformational Activities for all Believers (Acts 2:41-47)

1. The Word of God:
 - a. Listening to the preaching and teaching of God's word
 - b. Daily reading of God's word
 - c. Regular studying of God's word
 - d. Memorization of God's word
 - e. The necessity of the application of God's word
2. A consistent private and corporate prayer life (Acts 2:42; Matthew 5:1-16; Psalm 55:16,17)

3. Corporate worship and the breaking of bread at the Lord's table (Acts 2:42; Mark 14:22-23; Luke 22:19)
4. Fellowship of a caring community (Acts 2:44-45)
5. The powerful and spontaneous witness of the body of Christ (Acts 2:46,47)

F. The Three-Fold Attack of Satan on the Church: Persecution (Acts 3,4)

1. A lame man is healed (Acts 3:1-10)
2. Peter's sermon (Acts 3:11-26)
3. Satan's attack (Acts 4:1-22)
 - a. Peter and John commanded not to teach about Jesus Christ (Acts 4:1-10)
 - b. Peter and John refuse to stop teaching in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 4:11,12)
 - c. God protects His people (Acts 4:13-22)
 - d. A model for the persecuted church
 - 1) Give a full report of the situation
 - 2) Search the Scriptures for appropriate promises, direction, and examples of obedience
 - 3) Pray through the Scriptures God has used to give direction
 - 4) Prayerfully continue to make disciples in power and boldness

G. The Three-Fold Attack of Satan on the Church: Personal Sin of Believers (Acts 5:1-11)

1. The generosity of Barnabas and other believers in the early church (Acts 4:32-37)
2. Ananias and Sapphira lie to the Holy Spirit and are judged (Acts 5:1-11)
3. Three teachings to remember:
 - a. God is holy.
 - b. When God begins a new work, he is stricter in judgment
 - 1) Nadab and Abihu (Numbers 3)
 - 2) Achan (Joshua 7)
 - c. We as God's children will be disciplined by the Lord. He disciplines all of His children. He disciplines us perfectly for our good that we may share in His holiness. God does not discipline unbelievers. Unbelievers will be judged eternally in hell.
4. God's discipline of His children (Hebrews 12:7-13)
5. When God's people learn and practice holiness, the Word of God spreads and the body of Christ grows (Acts 5:12-14).

H. The Three-Fold Attack of Satan on the Church: Inner Strife (Acts 6:1-7)

1. Satan takes advantage of misunderstandings among believers and uses gossip to try to divide local bodies of believers (Acts 6:1).
2. United godly leadership is imperative for restoring unity (Acts 6:2,3).
3. Deacons are appointed to care primarily for the physical needs of the church (Acts 6:5-7).
4. How to restore believers who are in sin (Matthew 5:23,24; 18:15-35)
 - a. Beware of those who spread strife and gossip. It is a sin to participate in such conversations.
 - b. Believers must be persistent in forgiving others
 - c. We must follow the biblical guidelines for restoring a sinful brother/sister.

5. Leaders in the church

a. Elders:

- 1) Their work is primarily a shepherding ministry of teaching God's word and prayer.
- 2) Elders are appointed by the church-planting team or the established elder board. These appointments are then confirmed by the congregation. An elder is appointed once a candidate is tested and fulfills the ministry qualifications of an elder. The position of elder

is

permanent unless an elder disqualifies himself (Acts 14:23; 1

Timothy

3:1-7; 5:17-25; Titus 1:6-9).

b. Deacons:

- 1) Their work is to care primarily for the physical needs of the body, but they are also involved in spiritual ministries (i.e. Steven and Philip).
- 2) The elders decide the appropriate time to begin choosing deacons.

They

must be:

- a) Full of the Holy Spirit
- b) Have wisdom to accomplish the task appointed to them by the elders.

- 3) The congregation chooses their deacons and they are confirmed by the elders.

6. The ministry of Steven (Acts 6:8-15)
7. Steven's sermon (Acts 7:1-53)
8. Steven put to death by the hands of Saul's disciples (Acts 7:54-60)
9. Saul persecutes the church (Acts 8:1-4)

I. The Spreading of the Gospel to Samaria (Acts 8:1-38)

1. The Samaritan people
2. The failure of the church to carry the gospel caused God to drive the church forward through persecution (Acts 1:8; 8:1-4)
3. The Samaritans receive the Word of God (Acts 8:5-8)
4. Simon believes? (Acts 8:9-13)
5. The Samaritans receive the Holy Spirit in the same fashion as the believers in Jerusalem (Acts 8: 14-17)
6. Simon cursed for trying to purchase the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18-24)
7. The salvation of a Jewish convert: the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-38)

J. The Salvation of Saul of Tarsus Acts 9:1-31

1. Saul's upbringing in Jerusalem.
2. Saul's persecution of believers (Acts 9:1,2)

3. Saul's salvation (Acts 9:3-14)
4. God's purpose for Saul was to suffer for the name of Christ before the Gentiles (Acts 9:15,16).

5. Things God used to draw Saul to Himself
 - a. The testimony of Steven
 - b. He witnessed the good testimony of the believers he persecuted
 - c. The Holy Spirit convicted him of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11)
 - d. He saw and was confronted by Jesus Christ
6. Saul became a disciple of Jesus Christ
 - a. He spread the Word of God in Damascus upon conversion (Acts 9:20-22)
 - b. He traveled to Arabia for about three years to be taught directly by Christ (Gal.1:15b-17)
 - c. He returned to Damascus to teach and is forced to evacuate over the wall in a basket because of a plot against his life (Acts 9:23-25)
 - d. Saul went to Jerusalem for 15 days to visit Peter and James only. He is helped greatly by Barnabas who defended him and authenticates his conversion.

He is

Acts

not accepted by the church in Jerusalem who feared him (Gal. 1:18,19; 9:26-28).

- e. The Jews attempted to kill Saul and he flees to Tarsus. The Jewish believers finally accepted Saul and begin to glorify God because of his ministry (Acts 9:29,30; Gal. 1:21-24).
- f. Saul continued ministering in Tarsus until found by Barnabas to help in the ministry in Antioch (Acts 11:25,26).

K. God's Word Spreads to the Gentiles (Acts 10:1-48)

1. The prejudice of the Jerusalem Church caused them to fail to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16; Acts 1:8).
2. The Jews' prejudicial beliefs:
 - a. The Mosaic Law must still be kept by believers. Circumcision, although pre-Mosaic Law, was in their minds, one of the foundational outward signs for keeping the law. Gentile believers must be circumcised in order to be saved.
 - b. Gentiles are unclean. Therefore it is unlawful for a Jew to associate with them, enter their homes, or share a meal with them.
3. Cornelius' vision: a man who feared God (Acts 10:1-8)
4. Lessons God uses to prepare Peter for sharing Christ with Cornelius (Acts 10:9-23).
 - a. All food is considered clean and does not defile man (Mark 7:14,15)
 - b. All people who accept Christ as their Savior are righteous based upon the blood of Christ. There is no longer Jew or Gentile. We are all one in Christ (Eph. 2:11-22).

(Eph.

- c. It is sinful for the church in Jerusalem to fail to spread the gospel to the Gentiles and to show favoritism to Jewish believers over Gentile believers.
- 5. Cornelius' family accepted Christ and received the Holy Spirit. These new Gentile converts spoke in tongues and exalted God as a testimony to Jewish believers that God had accepted the Gentiles in the same way that He had accepted them (Acts 10:24-48).

L. The Birth of the Antioch Church Acts (11:1-30)

- 1. Peter rebuked by the Jerusalem church for visiting Cornelius (Acts 11:1-3)
- 2. Peter's response (Acts 11:4-18)
- 3. The beginning of the church in Antioch (Acts 11:19-24)
 - a. The church began through Jewish converts from Cyprus and Cyrene who went to Antioch and shared the gospel with the Greeks also. They, not being from Jerusalem, were not encumbered by the depth of prejudice of the Jewish converts from Jerusalem.
 - b. Barnabas, as an encourager and master disciple maker, traveled to Tarsus to look for Saul in order to develop him in missions and church leadership (Acts 11:25-26).
- 4. Prophecy of coming famine to Judea and the decision of the church in Antioch to send a gift through Saul and Barnabas (Acts 11:27-30).

M. The Suffering Church in Jerusalem (Acts 12)

- 1. James, the disciple of Jesus, is murdered by Herod (Acts 12:1,2)
- 2. Peter imprisoned (Acts 12:3-5)
 - a. The importance of gathering for extended prayer when persecuted (Acts 1:14; 4:23-31; 12:5)
 - b. The need to watch and pray because we are in a spiritual battle (Mark 14:32-36)
 - 1) To watch: We must know the schemes of the devil (Ephesians 4:25-32; 1 Peter 5:6-11)
 - 2) To pray: We must pray about everything (Ephesians 6:10-20)
- 3. Peter released (Acts 12:6-17)
 - a. Why was Peter released and James killed?
 - b. Jesus warned his disciples that some of them would be killed for their faith and some wouldn't (Mark 10:38,39; John 21:20-29).
 - c. Paul's testimony: "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians

- 1:21)
- d. Need for believing prayer (Acts 12:15,16)
- 4. Elders established in the Jerusalem church
 - a. Disciples of Christ still leaders at the church in Jerusalem (Acts 6:1-7)
 - b. Elders had been established by the disciples (Acts 11:30)
 - c. James, the brother of our Lord, assumes the official or unofficial position as the head elder of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17)
- 5. Herod killed by the Lord for persecuting the church (Acts 12:18-24)
- 6. Saul and Barnabas confirmed by the Jerusalem church as missionaries to the Gentiles (Acts 11:27-30; Galatians 2:1,2,7-9).
 - a. Saul explained the gospel that he preached to James, John and Peter.
 - b. Saul and Barnabas were commissioned by these elders as missionaries to the Gentiles.
 - c. Saul and Barnabas returned to Jerusalem (Acts 12:25)
- 7. Book of James was written to the Jews dispersed around the world because of persecution. Time of writing was from 45 to 50 A.D.

N. First Missionary Journey (Acts 13-14)

- 1. Saul and Barnabas set apart by the Holy Spirit to go to the Gentiles (Acts 13:1-4).
 - a. The progression of Saul and Barnabas being commissioned as missionaries to the Gentiles.
 - 1) Saul set apart by Jesus to suffer for His name as a missionary to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15,16)
 - 2) Commissioned by the elders at Jerusalem as missionaries to the Gentiles (Galatians 2:1,2,7-9)
 - b. Set apart by the Holy Spirit to be missionaries to the Gentiles (Acts 13:1-4)
 - c. The importance of prayer and fasting
 - 1) Jesus prayed and fasted before He began His public ministry (Matthew 4:1,2).
 - 2) The believers in Acts prayed and fasted in preparation for the timing of the beginning of the missionary work of Saul and Barnabas. Then they prayed and fasted again to bathe the ministry in prayer before they left.
 - 3) Jesus' teaching on prayer and fasting (Matthew 6:16-18)
 - d. The church's responsibilities in sending missionaries (Acts 13:3)
 - 1) "Laid their hands on them" - Saul and Barnabas were commissioned with the church's authority as extensions of their ministry. They were also confirmed as ready to do the work of the ministry as missionaries.

- 2) “They sent them away” - Saul and Barnabas were supported with prayer and some financial support in their missionary endeavors. Saul and Barnabas were accountable to the church and reported back to the Antioch and/or Jerusalem churches upon their return from each of the three missionary journeys (Acts 14:26-28; 15:3,4,12; 18:22; 21:15-19).
2. Barnabas and Paul in Cyprus (Acts 13:5-12)
3. Paul and Barnabas in Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:13-52)
4. Paul and Barnabas in Iconium (Acts 14:1-7)
6. Paul and Barnabas in Lystra (Acts 14:8-20)
7. Paul and Barnabas in Derbe and their return to Lystra, Iconium and Pisidian Antioch to establish elders (Acts 14:21-23). Upon their revisiting these places they
 - a. Strengthened the disciples
 - b. Warned the disciples that they would go through many trials in entering the kingdom of God
 - c. Established elders in every church (Acts 14:23)
8. The establishment of elders
 - a. Work of an elder
 - 1) Prayer and ministry of God’s word (Acts 6:1-7)
 - 2) Shepherding God’s people entrusted to their care (1 Peter 5:2,3)

- b. The choosing of elders: (For a complete teaching on this subject, refer to the next set of lessons on biblical eldership.)
 - 1) Begin with a prayer and fasting Jesus also prayed and fasted before he appointed the twelve disciples (Luke 6:12,13)
 - 2) The elder or church planter, by the authority of his sending church, prayerfully chooses the men who are ready to be elders.
 - a) Must be tested in the ministry (1 Timothy 5:21,22)
 - b) Must meet the qualifications of an elder (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9)
- 9. Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch and reported to their sending church (Acts 14:24-28)

O. The Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-35)

- 1. A sect of the Pharisees, who claimed to have trusted Christ, believed it was necessary for Gentile believers to keep the law of Moses and be circumcised in order to be saved (Acts 15:5; 21:20; Gal. 2:12).
 - 2. These false teachers spread the above doctrines in the churches established by Paul and Barnabas during the first missionary journey (Gal 3:1; 5:12).
 - 3. This same group of false teachers also spread these teachings to Antioch where they were confronted by Paul. Peter was partially carried away by their teaching and avoided fellowship with the Gentiles after the arrival of these Jews from Jerusalem. Even Barnabas was negatively influenced by them (Galatians 2:11-14).
 - 4. The gospel preached by the Apostles (2:38; 13:38,39)
 - 5. The letter of Paul to the Galatians: Paul wrote this letter to help turn away the Galatians from believing the lies of the false teachers who had arrived from Jerusalem.
- Paul wrote this letter in 49 A.D. He defended himself as a true apostle and proved that he was directly called into the ministry by our Lord Jesus (Acts 9:3-9; 15:16).
- 6. The Jerusalem Council:
 - a. The church in Antioch decided that Paul and Barnabas travel to Jerusalem to settle the controversy (Acts 15:2).
 - b. Pharisees presented their case before the council (Acts 15:4-6).
 - c. Peter confirmed the gospel message and argues that the law is impossible to keep (Acts 15:7-11).
 - d. Paul and Barnabas gave testimony of God's grace among the Gentiles (Acts 15:12).
 - e. James completed the discussion and proposes the following
 - 1) The council confirmed the gospel message testified by Peter (Acts 15:7-11).
 - 2) The council confirmed that the Gentiles do not need to keep the law of Moses or be circumcised in order to be saved (Acts 15:19).

- 3) The council asked the Gentiles to adhere to the following practices for fellowship and sanctification reasons
 - a) to abstain from foods contaminated by idols
 - b) to abstain from fornication
 - c) to abstain from strangled food
 - d) to abstain from eating blood
- f. Jesus warns us that many false teachers will arise. We are instructed to test the spirits and determine if they are from God or the devil (Matthew 24:11-13; 1 John 4:2,3). If anyone does not believe that Jesus is the Son of God and/or denies the gospel message of salvation by grace through faith in the atoning work of Christ on the cross in payment for our sins, he is a false teacher. These very clever people and should not be debated or even associated with, but should be immediately kicked out of the assembly of believers (1 Timothy 1:3-11; 4:1-10; 6:3-5,18-21; Titus 1:10-16; 3:8-11). (See the lesson on biblical eldership for a more thorough discussion on this topic and an outline of the responsibilities of elders to protect the flock).

P. Paul's Second Missionary Journey (Acts 15:36-18:22)

1. Paul and Barnabas had a sharp disagreement over John-Mark. Barnabas and John-Mark revisited the churches in Cyprus. Paul and Silas returned to the churches planted in Pisidia and Pamphylia on their way to Asia (Acts 15:36-40).
2. Paul and Silas shared the results of the Jerusalem Council and strengthened the believers (Acts 15:40-41).
3. Paul invited Timothy, a convert from Lystra, to accompany them (Acts 16:1-3).
4. Believers rejoiced in the decision of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 16:4,5)
5. The Holy Spirit closed the door to minister in Asia, Mysia and Bithynia (Acts 16:6-8).
6. Paul in a dream received a call to go to Macedonia from Troas. This is not a call to missionary service. This is simply the way that God used to redirect Paul. The Great Commission is the Church's universal call to spread the gospel to the ends of the earth (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8).
7. Paul, Silas, Timothy and Luke in Philippi (Acts 16:11-40)
8. Paul, Silas and Timothy in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9)
9. Paul, Silas and Timothy in Berea (Acts 17:10-15)
10. Paul in Athens (Acts 17:16-34)
11. Paul, along with Priscilla and Aquila worked in Corinth and eventually are joined by Silas and Timothy (Acts 18:1-22).
12. Paul wrote 1 and 2 Thessalonians in 51 A.D from Corinth
13. Paul returns to Antioch (Acts 18:22)

Q. Paul's Third Missionary Journey (Acts 18:23-21:14)

1. First converts in Ephesus are saved through the ministry of Apollos. Priscilla and Aquila instructed him more accurately on the gospel message. Apollos' believers were only acquainted with the baptism of John (Acts 18:24-28). Apollos leaves Ephesus and travels to Corinth to work in the church Paul planted there (Acts 19:1; 1 Cor. 3:5-8).
2. Paul discovered the believers in Ephesus have not received the Holy Spirit. He instructed them in the truth, lays hands on them and they receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:3-7).
3. Paul established a church-planting school in Ephesus in the home of Tyrannus. This school is instrumental in the planting in churches throughout Asia (Acts 19:8-10).
4. Believers in Ephesus are freed from demonic activity (Acts 19:11-41).
5. Paul sends Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia to make a collection for the saints in Jerusalem (Acts 19:21,22).
6. Paul is confronted with major problems at Corinth while in Ephesus.
 - a. While Paul is in Ephesus from 53-55 A.D. he hears of problems at Corinth.
 - b. Paul writes a short letter to Corinth to address the problems. This letter has been lost (1 Cor. 5:9).
 - c. Chloe's people came and informed Paul in Ephesus that there were divisions in the body at Corinth (1 Cor. 1:11).
 - d. Paul wrote 1 Corinthians in order to address the above issues.
 - e. Paul sends Timothy to Corinth but expected his letter to arrive before Timothy does. When Timothy's was finished, he returned to Ephesus to be with Paul (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10,11).
 - f. Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus arrived from Corinth with questions for Paul to answer. Paul does this and finished 1 Corinthians by 55 A.D. (1 Cor. 7:1; 16:15-18).
 - g. 1 Corinthians was not well received by the church. Paul made a special trip to Corinth from Ephesus to solve the problems. This visit was very painful for Paul. He was not well received (2 Cor. 2:1; 12:14; 13:1,2).
 - h. Paul sends a very stern letter to the Corinthians through Titus (2 Cor. 2:3-9; 7:8,9).
 - i. Paul left Ephesus and travels toward Macedonia in search for Titus. He had a wide open door for ministry in Troas, but chose not to take advantage of the opportunity because of his desire to find Titus and learn the results of the sorrowful letter (2 Cor. 2:12,13).

- j. When Paul arrived in Macedonia, he found Titus and learned that the Corinthians had repented of their sins (2 Cor. 7:5-16).
 - k. Paul wrote 2 Corinthians from Macedonia in response to the good news from Titus in 56 A.D.
7. Paul arrived in Corinth for a three month visit (Acts 20:2,3)
 8. Paul wrote his letter to the Romans from Corinth in 57-58 A.D. He expressed his desire to go to Rome after his distribution of his collection for the Christians in Jerusalem (Romans 15:23-33).
 9. Paul returned to Troas for ministry (Acts 20:7-12)
 10. Paul's message to the elders from Ephesus in Miletus (Acts 20:17-38).

R. Paul arrested in Jerusalem and Taken to Rome as a Prisoner (Acts 21-28)

1. Paul traveled to Jerusalem to distribute aid to the Jerusalem believers (Acts 24:17).
2. Believers told Paul, in the Spirit, not to go to Jerusalem because of the danger (Acts 21:4).
3. While Paul was in Caesarea, Agabus, a prophet, bound him and tells him that he would be bound in Jerusalem and handed over to the Gentiles (Acts 21:7-14).
4. Paul was arrested in Jerusalem (Acts 21:17-19).
5. The Jews plotted to kill Paul and Paul was taken by military escort to Caesarea. He remained in custody for two years under the care of Governors Felix and Festus
(Acts 23:12,16-24; 24:27; 25:10-12).
6. Paul was taken by ship to Rome under Roman guard to appear before Caesar (Acts 27:1).
7. The ship was destroyed in a terrible storm off the coast of Malta. Paul had a healing ministry among the people of Malta. When Paul's party finally set sail, the people of Malta honored him with many marks of respect and provided for all that they needed
(Acts 27:21-26; 28:1-10).
8. Paul was under house arrest in Rome for two years (Acts 28:16-31)
9. Paul wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon from Rome in 60 A.D.

S. Paul's Final Days of Ministry

1. Paul is set free from house arrest probably because the Jews fail to come to Rome and file charges against him (Acts 24:1; 28:30).
2. Paul sent Timothy to Ephesus.
3. Paul went to Macedonia and wrote 1 Timothy in 63 A.D. Paul desired to go himself, but instead instructed Timothy on how to establish new elders (1 Timothy 3:14,15).
4. Paul visited Crete with Titus and left Titus on the island to establish elders. Paul continued on and ministered in Nicopolis and spends the winter there (Titus 3:12).
5. Paul writes his letter to Titus from Nicopolis in 65 A.D. He also sent Artemas or Tychicus to Titus in order to allow Titus to join Paul in Nicopolis (Titus 3:12).
6. Paul sent Titus to Dalmatia and traveled to Troas. While in Troas, Alexander the coppersmith did Paul much harm. This probably led to a sudden arrest in Troas where Paul was not able to get his cloak, books and especially the parchments (2 Timothy 4:10,13,14).
7. Paul was imprisoned in Rome where he expected to die. He wrote his second letter to Timothy during this imprisonment in 67 A.D. (2 Timothy 4:9-13; 16-18).
8. Peter wrote 1 Peter to scattered believers suffering persecution in 64 A.D. He wrote this letter from Rome where he lived since 57 A.D.
9. According to tradition, Paul was beheaded on the Ostian Way, west of Rome.

10. Peter wrote 2 Peter in 66 A.D. to warn believers of the dangers of false teachers.
Peter was also martyred in 67 A.D.
11. Hebrews was written to Jewish believers considering turning away from the faith in
64-68 A.D.
12. Jude, the brother of Christ, wrote this book to strengthen believers and protect them
from false teachers around 70-80 A.D.
13. John, our Lord's disciple, wrote 1, 2, and 3 John in 90 A.D.
14. Revelation was revealed to the apostle John in 95 A.D. Its purpose was to reveal
details of Christ's second coming and the Day of the Lord. It immediately
encouraged believers, who were passing through severe persecution at the end of
the first century.

Church Leadership Training

Biblical Eldership

Phase Four

A. The Character of Elders: Humble Servants: (John 13:14,15)

1. Poor in spirit (Matthew 5:3)
2. Take yoke and learn from Me, for I am meek and humble... (Matthew 11:29)
3. Be last, be a servant, be like a child (Mark 9:33-35; Matthew 18:34)
4. Without ambition, not to lord over (Matthew 20:20-28)
5. No honorific titles (Matthew 23:1-12)
6. The greatest is the servant (Luke 22:24-27)
7. Peter's charge (I Peter 5:3,5)
8. Paul's example (II Corinthians 10:8)

B. Jewish Christian Elders at Work

1. Praying and Preaching (Acts 6:1-7).
2. Administering the functions of the body (Acts 2:42-47)
3. Caring for the practical needs of the body
 - a. Meeting needs (Acts 6:1-7; Ezekiel 34:2)
 - b. Appointing deacons (Acts 6:1-7)
 - c. Praying for the sick (James 5:13-15)
 - 1) More than one elder in prayer
 - 2) Anointing with oil (Zechariah 4:2,3)
 - 3) Prayer of faith (James 1:6,7)
 - 4) Dealing with sin in cases where both spiritual and physical healing is needed
 - d. Collecting money for the poor (Acts 11:27-30)
4. Ensuring doctrinal purity (Acts 15)
5. Providing Guidance (Acts 21:18-25)
6. Paul's message to the elders at Ephesus (Acts 20:17-38)

I & II Timothy and Titus

A. Historical Background to I & II Timothy and Titus

1. His release from Rome and travels
2. The situation in Ephesus
3. The situation in Crete (Titus left behind to appoint elders (Titus 1:5; 3:12,13)
4. Paul's charge to both men, their leadership in each location was temporary and were to
see Paul after I Timothy and before winter.

B. The Character of Elders

1. Paul's testimony of being a recipient of mercy and ministry (I Timothy 1:12-17).
 - a. An elder is humble, he understands from where he came, God's grace upon him, all the glory goes to God

- b. An elder is faithful. He comes alongside God's work for him. A steward must be found faithful (II Timothy 2:2 Expound on I Cor. 4:1,2; Luke 12:42; Matthew 25:14-30)
- 2. Timothy is to also remember his call, to fight to its completion, to keep his faith and good conscience (I Timothy 1:5 and I Timothy 1:18,19).
- 3. Timothy must demonstrate his teaching by a good example. Authority is not rooted in one's position but in being a good example (I Timothy 4:11-16).
- 4. Titus also commanded to be a good example as a prerequisite to being a good teacher, pure in doctrine, dignified, and sound in speech (Titus 2:7,8).
 - a. In speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity.
 - b. He must be a good example by exercising his spiritual gifts.
 - c. We must take pains in these things, paying close attention to be a good example not only for the salvation of those who hear us but also for ourselves.
- 5. Paul's charge to the man of God (I Timothy 6:11-14).
 - a. Flee pride, greed, etc.
 - b. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.
 - c. Fight the good fight of faith
 - d. Take hold of the promises of the covenant loving God.
 - e. Keep all of God's commandments

C. The Qualifications of Elders

- 1. Qualifications (I Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:5-9)
 - a. Above reproach (both)
 - b. The husband of one wife (both)
 - c. Manages his own household well, having children who believe (both)
 - d. Temperate, free from all excesses, not addicted to wine, not loving money (Tim). Free from the love of money (Tim) not fond of sordid gain (Titus)
 - e. Prudent, think of himself with sound judgment (Tim) Romans 12:3; sensible (Titus)
 - f. Respectable, a disciplined and orderly life (Tim); (I Thess. 5:14; II Thess. 3:6-14)
 - g. Hospitable (both) the opposite of hospitality is selfishness and lovelessness; he should not be self-willed (Titus)
 - h. Able to teach (Tim) holding fast the faithful Word, to exhort and refute (Titus)
 - i. Not a fighter (both), not quick tempered, (Titus) uncontentious: a peaceable man (Tim) Titus 3:2; 2 Timothy 2:24,25); gentle (Tim) (Phil. 4:5)
 - j. Just, a man who lives by divine truth (Titus); devout, a man who is devoted to being just (Titus)

- k. Self control (Titus) especially in the sexual area (Acts 24:25; I Cor. 7:9; 9:25; Proverbs 25:28)
- l. Not a new convert (Tim) Must pass through the stages of spiritual maturity of childhood, young men and fathers (I John 2:12-14)
- m. A good reputation outside the church (Tim; Titus 2:5,8; I Peter 2:12,15;3:16; I Thess.4:11,12)

**I will give shepherds after my own heart,
who will feed you on love and understanding. Jer. 3:15**

- 2. Male leadership: The role of men and women in the Church (I Timothy 2:9-15)
 - a. Women's equality with men as persons
 - b. Women's submission in the family
 - c. Women's submission in the body of Christ and fulfillment in the body of Christ
(I Corinthians 14:27-35; I Corinthians 11:7-20; I Timothy 2:13,14; I Peter 3:5,6)

D. The Appointment of Elders (Acts 14:23; I Timothy 4:14)

- 1. Appointed elders in every church
 - a. Believers in the joy of the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:52)
 - b. Believers placed in the Lord's care by prayer and fasting (Acts 14:21-23; Ezra 8:21-23; Acts 13:1-3)
- 2. The appointment
 - a. Responsibility of church planter or other elders (Acts 14:23; I Timothy 5:22; Titus 1:5)
 - b. Desire of the person to become an elder (I Timothy 3:1)
 - c. Meet qualifications before the congregation. (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9)
 - d. Examination: not lay hands on anyone too hastily. We are stewards who must
give an account. Must determine if a candidate is unfit or still immature.
Careful examination needed, good and bad deeds are sometimes easy or hard
to
see (I Timothy 5:21-25)

E. Shared Leadership (Philippians 1:1)

- 1. Reasons for:
 - a. Christ is the head and is sufficient for His people
 - b. Christ consistently warned against pride and self-elevation
 - c. It develops brotherly love, humility, and servanthood.
- 2. Practical benefits
 - a. Sharing the burden (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).
 - b. Balancing weaknesses and strengths - need peers to confront and balance
 - c. Increased participation among all leaders.

F. The Work of Elders: Understanding Elder's Responsibilities

1. Overseers to shepherd the flock of God (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:1-5)
 - a. Shepherding - People need to be...
 1. fed God's Word
 2. protected from false teachers
 3. protected from internal clashes
 4. constantly encouraged, comforted, guided, prayed for, corrected, listened to
 - b. Proper attitudes - manner is more important than method
 1. not under compulsion, but voluntarily
 2. not for sordid gain, but with eagerness
 3. nor yet as lording it over...but proving to be examples (I Peter 2:13-3:12)
 - c. Receive a crown of glory
 - d. Younger men, upcoming leaders, should be especially humble before the elders and work with them
2. Leaders of the church (I Timothy 5:17)
3. Those who care for God's church. (I Timothy 3:1,5)
 - a. Teaching
 - b. Public reading, exhortation and teaching. (I Timothy 4:13)
 - c. Biblical care for the physical needs of the congregation
 - d. The treatment of widows: (I Timothy 5:3-16)
 1. widows who can support themselves (14)
 2. widows supported by their own families (4.8,16)
 3. widows supported by the church (3,5,9.10)
 4. the self-indulgent widow
4. They must correct and rebuke those under their care, but with humility, respect, and love (I Timothy 5:1,2; Titus 2:15) Speak, exhort, rebuke, with all authority. (see 2:11-14)
5. Equip the body to do the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11,12)

G. False Doctrines (I Timothy 1:3-11)

1. Elders should guard the spread of false doctrines
2. Defense against false doctrines
 - a. Divine love working through a sincere heart (cleansed from sin, no bad motives, and filled with the Holy Spirit) leads to a good conscience and a faith that is sincere, deep, and open to close observation, genuine.
 - b. A clear doctrine of salvation without works, the new life, love, and attitudes that helps believers live a moral life in society.

H. False Doctrines (I Timothy 4:1-10)

1. The elders should point out...
 - a. Some will fall away from the faith
 - b. The condition of the heart of false teachers and their motives

- c. Examples of their teaching
- 2. Being disciplined for the sake of godliness guards against false doctrines
 - a. We must be constantly nourished on the words of the faith and sound doctrine
 - b. We labor and strive for changed lives, fixing our hope on Jesus as our example

I. False Teachers (I Timothy 6:3-5; 18-21; Titus 1:10-16; Titus 3:8-11)

- 1. Motives of false teachers
 - a. They consider themselves wise. They have a fascination with empty words (1 Timothy 6:3,4,20,21; Titus 1:10,14). They are especially fascinated with the law, myths, traditions of men and genealogies (Titus 3:9; see Mark 7:8; Galatians 1:14). Everything about them is impure, defiled from the inside out. They deny God by their deeds, they are totally worthless to others' benefit, and are detestable to God (Titus 15,16).
 - b. Use a false godliness, as a means to monetary gain for the sake of sordid gain. (Titus 1:11). This results in a veneer of godliness on the congregation where envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions and disputes are widespread (4,20). This upsets whole families, making them lazy, liars and evil.
 - c. The root of the problem is a lack of contentment, wanting to be rich, thinking that it is an advantage to be rich. This causes evil desires which lead to destruction (Luke 16:11,13).
- 2. How to combat these motives
 - a. Reject such men and their controversies (Titus 3:9,10)
 - b. Combat motives with godliness and contentment. We should seek to know God more, and to be conformed to Him (Philippians 3:10-14). We should not seek after worldly things (6-8). We should fix our hope on God (17).
 - c. We should be rich in good works, ready to share, put our treasure in heaven, and have freedom, love for others, and life indeed on this earth. There is a lot less bickering and quarreling among those who are busy ministering together (18,19). Must be careful to engage in good deeds, meet pressing needs and be fruitful (Titus 3:14).
 - d. We should guard and speak the words of Jesus which is the basis for the sound faith doctrine entrusted to us (3,20 and Titus 2:1). We should be sound in the faith (Titus 1:13).

J. Elders Need to Guard Sound Doctrine

1. Titus 1:1-3
 - a. We are sinners chosen by God
 - b. Truth and knowledge are completely revealed in Christ (Hebrews 1:2: John 1:1,14; Luke 10:22).
 - c. Believers should accept the knowledge of the truth by faith.
 - d. By faith in His power we are sanctified toward godliness.
 - e. We have the hope of eternal life.
2. Titus 3:4-7
 - a. God initiated salvation because of His kindness.
 - b. He saved us not because of our merit, but because of His mercy.
 - c. He justified us by His grace.
 - d. He gave us His Spirit.
 - e. His salvation was complete: He washed us and renewed us by His Spirit.
 - f. Made heirs according to our hope of eternal life.

K. Elders Worthy of Double Honor (I Timothy 5:17,18)

1. Who deserves financial enumeration?
 - a. Those who rule well, managing, guiding, or protecting. Those with greater spiritual interest and greater personal sacrifices.
 - b. Those who work hard at preaching and teaching
 - c. Those who sow spiritual seed have the right to reap material benefits (I Cor. 9:6-14)
2. When does a leader elder deserve financial enumeration?
 A person is enumerated, when his life and ministry meets biblical standards, is an example to the flock, who respects him, and is ministering to the extent that his duties do not allow him to support his family. The congregation and or other elders should be the one sensitive enough to see this need and voluntarily meet it.

L. Protecting, Discipling, and Assessing an Elder (I Timothy 5:19-25)

1. We need to honor our elders (17,18) so we should fear to bring an accusation against them. (Numbers 12).
2. Elders should be confronted, without partiality, with two or three witnesses (Deut. 19:15) - not just one witness who has been talking (Prov. 18:8)
 Some leaders who have been falsely accused:
 - a. Joseph Genesis 39
 - b. Moses Numbers 12
 - c. David I Samuel 24:9
 - d. Christ Mark 14:55-65
 - e. Paul Acts 22:28
3. If guilty, an elder should be severely rebuked. If the sin is grave, and is not beyond reproach, the elder should be removed - not excommunicated (Matthew 18:17).

M. The Elders/Congregation Relationship and Responsibilities: (Hebrews 13:17; I Thessalonians 5:12,13)

1. Elders' Relationship to the Congregation
 - a. equal brethren with leaders and followers (Col 1:18; I Cor. 12:12,13)
 - b. good elders want an educated, involved, and mature congregation (Ephesians 4:1-17)
 - c. the elders are to watch over the souls of God's people - servant leaders. God will hold elders accountable for how they treat His flock (Ezekiel 3:18,19)
 - d. they are to save them from spiritual shipwreck
 - e. never usurp the unique place that Christ and the Father enjoy (Matthew 23:7-12)
 - f. should seek love, peace, and oneness
2. Congregation's Relationship and Responsibility to the Elders
 - a. Congregational Submission - Hebrews 13:17 instructs the congregation to submit, to yield, to give way and to defer to the elders. They must also obey and recognize the authority their elders and follow their instructions. Believers must have the fruit of genuine humility
 - b. the congregation is to make the work of the elders a joy - Not deep sorrow where they long for better conditions
 - c. know the servant leaders among you (I Thessalonians 5:12,13). We should not allow the charismatic loud mouths to rule or take control (I Thessalonians 5:19,20; II Thessalonians 3:6-13)
 - d. should be esteemed very highly by the people (Romans 13:7; I Peter 2:17)
 - e. congregation and elders should live at peace and love with one another (I Corinthians 13:4,6 I Peter 4:8; I Thessalonians 5:13)

N. The Church at Work

1. The church of the Living God is the pillar and support of the truth (I Timothy 3:15,16). Therefore the church must have a common confession.
2. Is a unified, prayerful body, dedicated for the salvation of souls and functions as a peaceful community (I Timothy 2:1-8).
3. The church should have high moral character in all relationships in the body (Titus 2:2-10; I Timothy 6:1,2).
 - a. Older men: Self-control, serious mindedness, sound common sense, and a deep trust in God and love for others. A older man is one who can disciple and has weathered the storms of life.
 - b. Older women: An example to younger women in homemaking. They should

all also be teachers who practice wise conversation and should be moderate in things.

- c. Younger women: They should be taught by older women to be sensible, pure, workers at home - understanding their role in the home and society.
- d. Younger men: Should be sensible.
- e. Slaves: They should honor their masters, be respectful, and serve them all the more because they are believers (I Timothy 6:1,2). They should honor them by being subject to them, by not being argumentative, dishonest, but be faithful in order to bring glory to God (Titus 2:9,10)
- f. We do this that the Word of God is not dishonored, but is adorned it in every way

4. How the church should conduct itself in relation to civil authorities and fellow men (Titus 3:1,2)
 - a. To be subject, obedient, ready to serve in the community
 - b. To consider others as more important than ourselves, to be gentle and uncontentious, we should malign no one
5. The grace of God has appeared. Titus 2:11-15 - Doctrine and duty are inseparable twins!
 - a. Past: Deny godless living and sinful pleasures
 - b. Present: Live soberly to ourselves, righteously to other believers and world and godly toward God.
 - c. Confidently expect the return of our Lord. We live our lives in light of the fact that we will see Him face to face (I John 3:2; I Corinthians 13:12). He is coming back looking for **His** purified people, zealous for good deeds.

O. Deacons

1. The appointment of the original deacons (Acts 6:1-7)
2. Their role as servants (I Timothy 3:10), serving the elders
3. Qualifications:
 - a. Dignified and beyond reproach
 - b. Just, living by divine truth, having a clear conscience, not double-tongued
 - c. Temperate, free from all excesses (like addicted to wine or fond of sordid gain)
 - d. Sound in doctrine - holding fast to the mystery of the faith and the faithful word (Titus) e.g. Husbands of one wife
 - f. Good managers of their own household
 - g. Tested, (not a new convert)
 - h. Good standing in the community (A deacon doesn't have to know how to teach or shepherd the community of God, but should know the Word well)

God is Able to do it! I Timothy 6:15,16 - We become His stewards, not kings. All honor and dominion are His.