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Chapter 1

Knowing God

This chapter is about leadership based in a relationship with God. The fundamental premise is that the body of Christ should be pressing ahead to know God more fully. Added to this, true leaders should lead in the press to know God. The thesis is that a person's primary qualification for leading in the church is his personal depth in relationship with God.

The true Christian life begins by being reconciled to a peaceful relationship with God the Father, through Jesus Christ by the working of the Holy Spirit. From that day forward, growth is a product of knowing, obeying and experiencing God in ever greater measures. A person begins as a babe, protected by the church around him. He finishes out front, crucified with Christ, that others may live.

To lead is to know God

One key method of leadership is by example. Paul said, "Follow me, even as I follow Christ." If the leadership of a church is to guide the flock in "knowing God," they must first know Him.

In finding men to lead others, current leadership must seek those who exemplify a life of knowing God. This presents the question: What does the life of one who knows God look like?

"And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do *exploits*." Daniel 11:32 (KJV)

"They profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." Titus 1:16 (KJV)

God's men are active and holy

The life of a man who knows God is exemplified by strength and action. Throughout the Scriptures, God's men engage the society around them by bringing His will to bear on the current situation.

When the children of Israel are in Egypt, Moses meets God in the bush and returns to lead his people out of bondage. When the Philistines attack the Israelites, Gideon leads his army to defeat them. Joseph is there to feed God's people in the midst of the famine. Abraham leaves a whole culture behind to establish a family and lay foundations for a nation.

New Testament figures are men of action as well. Having received the broad mandate of spreading the Gospel, they figure out how to structure the churches, travel miles to other countries, feed the fatherless and widows and generally establish the kingdom.

In addition, these men who knew God do not deny Him by the way they live. In contrast,

they live holy lives worthy of God.

So, the man who truly knows God lives an active and holy life.

However, this active life does not begin with action. Instead, it begins by being acted upon. The active ministry of the man of God is the result of that man's time relating with the Father and allowing Him to discipline him into His image. A mistake often repeated by young men in the Bible is wanting to lead or run before they have the character or message.

An obvious example is in I Samuel 18. Ahimaaz, a young man on the front line of battle, wants to run back to Jerusalem to give a message to King David. He is allowed to run but arrives with no message for the king. A short while later, Cushai arrives and gives King David a full account of the battle. Many young men want to run but have not finished the battle in order to have a clear message to give.

This brings a qualification to our statement on a man of God living an active life. Yes, men of God live an active life. However, all men who live an active life (even if it is religious) are not men of God. To further clarify the point of activity—men of God are active in true works of God that result from knowing Him and responding to His desire.

Are you ready to lead?

For a person seeking to step up into a deeper level of service, this prompts the question: Is his life full of works that reflect the very life of God? If the answer is yes, then that person is eligible for consideration as a greater minister, servant or leader in the body. If the answer is no, the leadership track remains closed. He must go back to square one and get to know God.

The best advice for a person who has come to the point of wanting to move ahead in leadership, yet realizes that he is not ready, is: forget about being a leader. Flee from this desire to lead and realize it is at the root of the problem. Find a mature Christian and say, "Please, I am full of myself. Help me get set free so that I can know God." If that minister does not know how to respond, find an older Christian who can.

The modern trap

Suppose, on the other hand, that a man has found the great joy of a life emptied of self and wants God to use him in a greater way for His glory. He can take the next step in Christian growth. Traditional churches have directed people with a greater desire to serve to a Bible school, a seminary or some extra-local training camp. This is unfortunate because the real message is not learned in an ivory tower or contrived situation. The real message comes through living life with all the restraints and requirements of those one desires to serve.

Many who have become ministers skip the formation of a life with God and become purveyors of a philosophy they have never lived. The people of God work, pay tithes, deal with broken cars, have tight budgets, face non-Christian bosses and are exposed to other hardships of the world. The only Christianity that works is a Christianity that works in the home, in the neighborhood, on the job and in the marketplace. The only way to learn how to apply Christian principles is to live a real life.

So arises the current dilemma. Many who have felt a deeper call to serve have thought they should go to a place other than the church for further training. Others, who have not felt called to traditional ministry see no way to "become a minister."

Through this modern trap, an indispensable step in Christian growth has all but been destroyed. Though not given a name in the New Testament, the dynamics can be seen in several places. One place to look would be the section in Paul's letter to Timothy where he describes the qualification for leadership:

"Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a

drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil." 1 Timothy 3:2-7 (ESV)

Reading through this section reveals a step of intermediate discipleship where a man has learned how to live his life in relation to his wife, boss, neighbors, money and God in a way that shows God's righteousness and love. Comparing similar Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:8-13, Titus 1:7-9) describes a man who has stepped up to care for others without any special designation of a minister.

Another view appears in Hebrews 5:

"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, ¹³for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. ¹⁴But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil." Hebrews 5:12-14 (ESV)

Here the Scripture describes people moving on to be teachers of others based in the time they have spent living the word of God which they have heard. Having heard and walked in God's ways, they should go on to teach others. This is not a qualification for bishops or elders, it is a general admonition to go on to teaching others after learning the basics of living God's way.

After the basics—Intermediate discipleship

To repeat this principle or stage of Christian growth, "All Christians should move on to teaching and caring for others after they have learned to walk the basics of Christianity." Moving on to structural leadership should only follow a period of time in which people have adequately demonstrated their ability to teach and care for others. For the sake of expediency this period of growth will be referred to as intermediate discipleship.

This term presumes two previous stages of growth: 1) initiation and foundations, and 2) basic discipleship.

Initiation and foundations is the period where a person first receives the Gospel and then learns the basics of Hebrews 6:1-2. Basic discipleship is the phase in which a person learns to pray, study the Scripture, become integrated into the church and branch out in evangelism. During this period of basic discipleship, a person should also establish a Kingdom lifestyle. Relationships, work and play habits must adjust to the rest of the body. At the same time, the themes of God's character begin to come to bare on the disciple.

Following these stages, a person moves on to care for others by helping them come through the first two stages. It is important to note that the conforming to God's character that begins in these phases will continue throughout the believer's life.

That others might live

So, a disciple comes through the first two stages to begin what is called intermediate discipleship. As explained, a person must first know God before beginning to teach others. What is wonderful about taking responsibility to care for and train others is that it serves an

even greater good in the disciple's life. It is not just becoming productive; it is the next step in coming to know God more fully!

By offering to care for the sheep, a disciple puts himself in the position to meet with God in jointly working on behalf of another person. One of the most beautiful aspects of the only true God is that He laid down His life for the sheep. At first, the believer receives this life laid down. Then, he begins to live it. In time, he matures to a place where he joins with Christ in pouring out his life so others might live.

At first blush, caring for others may seem simple. In many places it is staged as learning some material and teaching that material in a class on Sunday mornings. While this type of teaching can serve some good, it is not biblical discipleship. Biblical discipleship is when a person comes to the place of maturity that he is willing to give up his life, not for Christ in general, but for members of Christ's body specifically.

Having committed himself to serve others, the believer is pressed to come to know God's grace in ever increasing measures in order to live the life of the cross on behalf of others.

Taking up discipleship; forgetting the American dream

A simple example illustrates what it takes to live the life of the cross:

Kevin and Beth had been members of First Church for thirteen years. They attended regularly, paid tithes and were involved in many programs.

In a time of renewal, the number of new believers increased drastically and the pastor needed to recruit more disciplers. Kevin and Beth, being such good members, were at the top of the list.

Right off the bat, the "good Christian" couple saw this as an opportunity to serve and responded to the invitation for training. Shortly into the sessions, they were given responsibility to make sure Tom, a new convert, and his wife, Julie, were being disciplined.

The first visit was great. It was one of those crisp fall afternoons and Kevin volunteered to grill. The extra time allowed Beth to do some "special" preparations inside. The couple spent time explaining to their four children how important it was for them to "be hospitable" to this new family.

That evening the kids played games, the food was great and Tom's wife, although not a Christian, seemed to enjoy herself.

The following day was Saturday. Tom called Kevin around 8:00 in the morning. He began by explaining that he and his wife had stayed up until three in the morning talking. Beth, who could hear the conversation was excited, knowing that Julie had enjoyed herself. Both Kevin and Beth anticipated the rest of the conversation. They were sure that Julie would be the next to be baptized.

However, that is not where the conversation went. Instead, Tom recounted a three hour argument that ended with Julie sleeping on the sofa. Julie wanted nothing to do with Tom's newfound "holy schmoly" friends. She had told Tom that she had not married a preacher and didn't want to sleep with one.

Tom asked for advice. Kevin did not know what to say. So, he invited Tom over for lunch, where the two of them, along with Beth, prayed and asked the Lord for guidance. All three were at a loss.

Thus began the arduous journey toward discipling Tom. By the end of one year, Kevin and Beth's family had been turned upside down. They had to cancel the trip to Grandma's for Thanksgiving, because Julie had left Tom with the kids on the Wednesday before. Christmas was totally rearranged as well to provide a place for the new family to have a "safe" celebration.

One of the biggest strains on Kevin and Beth was orchestrating fellowship times that included the children. Their teenagers were involved in sports and arts and were often gone

when they wanted to eat with the Klines. This left Marsha, their nine-year-old homeschooler, with the two Kline boys, eight and eleven, and Karla, a fourteen-year-old in full youth culture mode.

These times were especially hard on Beth. She had been so careful to protect Marsha from the world. The first big blow came when the Jackson family was sitting around the table for a Saturday lunch. The discussion came up about why Karla dressed the way she did. Marsha was proud to have the answer, "Because it makes her sexy!" In the next few minutes, the family discovered that Karla had given Marsha a lesson in how to dress so that boys would "like you."

By February, the Jackson's realized that they had bitten off more than they could chew. They met with the pastor and explained that the Klines were so different and had so many problems that it had totally disrupted their family. They wanted to find someone more like them to disciple and pass the Klines to someone "more able."

Instead, the pastor ruined their life. He explained that the church was full of new people and most of them had similar problems. He mentioned how the Breathitts had lost several pieces of jewelry to the teenage son of the family they were working with. The Carlucci family had even ended up with lice.

Leaving the office, Kevin and Beth felt trapped. They had worked so hard to develop a good Christian life. They had protected their family, been good neighbors, worked hard and were seen as good members of the community. Now, the Klines were affecting every aspect of their lives, right down to a big spot in the middle of the driveway from Tom's leaky transmission.

The Jackson family struggled for the next few weeks trying to figure out how to keep their lives together. In the end, they discovered that "keeping their lives together" was their problem. While listening to the pastor preach one morning on how Jesus had left the comfort of heaven to live as a man among men, both Kevin and Beth began to cry. They realized that they had been living the "American dream," instead of the crucified life. At the altar together, they gave up their right to what they had called peace. They decided that true joy was not in a peaceful family game night, but in being used of God to extend His care to a hurting family.

It was two years before Julie came through. Beth had thought her own repentance would have caused God to move in Julie's life soon after. It didn't. However, Beth did find the grace to stick with Tom until Julie opened her heart one day about how she had been raped by a cousin when she was nine years old. That was a door of opportunity but another long lesson in the cost of discipling others. Only after a roller coaster ride of nine months did Julie finally repent and determine to follow the Lord.

Choosing the interrupted life

The Jackson's experience only touches on the difficulty of giving up life to minister to others. There is a huge difference between offering services at a meeting once a week and giving away one's life to another person to help them see Jesus.

It is a key lesson at the intermediate level of discipling. A new believer learns the love of the Father as others live for him. However, the time comes when the maturing believer must get to know the Lord more fully by participating with Him in dying for others.

When a disciple is confronted with this truth, two roads split before him. One road is the path of happy Christianity, full of concerts, devotionals, coffee and good friends. The other is a life interrupted, which looks to the joy of heaven and participates and comes to know God in what Paul calls "the fellowship of His suffering."

So, this is where choosing to serve others actually helps the discipler come to know God in a completely new realm. When a young couple has their first baby, many new thoughts flood their minds. As they begin to care for that child, they all of a sudden understand more fully the

sacrifice and love of their own parents.

Similarly, disciples come to greater truths by caring for others. Many of those lessons have to do with who God is and how He treats all of His children.

A huge step

The discussion of these pages assumes that the reader has been founded in Christ, disciplined in the basics and is now concerned with moving on to care for others.

Understand, this is not a step into full-time ministry or even a place of special ministry reserved for good Christians. It is simply the next step in growing in Christ. All Christians should join the team in caring for others.

Next, it is not just a step in religious progression. It is growth in God and learning who He is by participating with Him in His work.

Finally, what comes to light about God in this step is how He loved so fully and poured Himself out for a people so distant yet so dear. Christians can do the same by seeking His grace.

To commit to this end will ruin your life.

Chapter 2

A Value Based Model

Knowing God through serving others is the theme of intermediate discipleship. This chapter deals with understanding and relating to others what is valuable to God. Many programs move people through levels of Christian information, but true growth comes when disciples understand and own the values behind that information.

This chapter, written at the beginning of the twenty-first century, must offer a backdrop to what it explains. Before discussing some of God's values, attention must first be given to the difference between "success driven" and "value driven" approaches.

Success vs. values

Currently, the word success, in some variation, embodies a great value among popular culture. However, success, as a value, is like a chameleon. While the construction of the Twin Towers in New York City was a success to the architect, its destruction was a success to Al Qaeda. The meaning of a word varies depending on who uses it.

Christian success is particularly variant. While large churches deem themselves successful, they violate some of the very values of Christianity. A simple example is marriage and divorce. One fast growing church prides itself in its divorce recovery and singles ministry. They have effectively ministered to hundreds of people through their divorce recovery class and sent them on to the singles' ministry where they meet another divorced person and re-marry. The remarried couple, with their blended family, then joins the various sports and entertainment ministries of the church. They become "happy" Christians.

Happy is the key word. Happy equals success. The church produces literature with pictures of happy people on the front and boasts of all the "fun" activities and services offered by the church. The people of the world, of course, want to be happy and visit this "happy" place. The music is geared to be "exciting" and "relevant." A bulletin describing how the church is centered around the needs of the community convinces them that this church has something to offer. They begin to attend, and before long, they too are happy and successful.

One thing is missing from this frequent process. God values some things that don't play into this concept of success. Surely God wants his children to be happy. As a matter of fact, scripture says, "Happy are the people whose God is the Lord (Yaweh)." But this is a different kind of happiness. It is a happiness based in eternal values. Ultimately, however, man's happiness is secondary to God's glory. So here's the rub. The church perceived as successful because the church is growing with happy people, may not be successful in terms of true Christian happiness and God's glory.

As a matter of fact, it is becoming more difficult for biblical churches to explain Christian success because many super churches have convinced people that successful Christianity is their brand of Christianity. Churches built on biblical values must compete with churches who, in effect, say, "Look, you can have all the joy the world affords and heaven as well." Suppose a non-Christian is presented with these two approaches. Being carnal, where

will he first attend? Having attended that type of church, he may become convinced of its true Christianity. Now should he attend a church built on Biblical values, he would most likely see them as unsuccessful.

The church must maintain God's values, numbers are not the end

So, the key to a biblically successful church is building on the things that God values. The number of people who attend, the general financial state of members, or the smiling faces cannot be the true measure of success. Success is knowing God and building His house according to His will.

What often clouds the issue is a desire for numerical growth. Can the church's success be measured by numerical growth? Not necessarily. It is the place of the church to proclaim the truth of God's word and lay their lives down for the people of the community. This does not necessarily mean that the community will decide to follow God. In one place, God's church will grow quickly. In another, the same church may not grow at all. There are many factors that play into church growth.

The important point is that the church must maintain God's values as they structure to reach a community. While the body may take on different activities and forms, each step must be taken with a view to what God Himself likes and desires. If a church is not growing, they may consider restructuring to be more available to the community. However, growth cannot be the end. Growing in God must be the final goal.

The better working definition of success for a church could be, "finding and doing God's will according to His desire or what He values." With this definition in mind, some important values can be considered and observed from the scriptures. Each reveals a little more about Who God is. Building out of His values communicates Who He is.

The following list of values is not exhaustive. It will inevitably grow longer as the reader comes to know God. In one sense, Christian growth is adding daily to understanding Who God is and what He values. The values discussed are gleaned from several years of church life at the end of the twentieth century. They may not all be the primary values of God. They are values that needed primary emphasis in the church during those years. The need for emphasis may have been due to the state of the culture or the state of the church at large. At any rate, all of the values discussed are important and should be considered in ministering the life of God to others.

Knowing God

The first value to consider in ministering to others is emphasized in the first chapter—knowing God. This value is closely related to other values important to church life. Unity, relationship, the function of church are all closely related to this value. In one sense, all that God values is related to knowing Him.

Glaring Biblical evidence of this value is in John's Gospel:

"And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." John 17:3 (ESV)

Eternal life, as described in this verse, is knowing God. True understanding of eternal life revolutionizes the instruction and knowledge of the Bible. It is no longer just how to have a happy life or understanding how to get things done. Instead, it is deepening in knowledge of Him.

The value of knowing God affects every phase of biblical growth. It changes salvation from just being delivered from hell to being translated into a relationship with God as Father.

Knowing God as the goal of devotional life makes all the difference in the world.

Prayer is no longer just a means of transaction between man and God. It is a place for man to come to know the Father and His heart. Reading the Bible is no longer just a Christian duty or a way to get answers. It is also a place to know more fully Who He is and why He does things a certain way. Church membership is no longer just His will. It is learning to live His corporate life with others. As the Christian grows and begins to reach out to others, it is more than just the right thing to do. It is God's very heart for the lost being extended.

So, as the preceding chapter describes, intermediate discipleship is a place to get to know Him better (specifically through laying one's life down for others) and to impart Who He is to others in the church's care.

Fatherhood of God

One cannot read the Bible very long without seeing that God deeply values His relationship with His sons. On one level, the story of the Bible is the story of God the Father raising His sons. It is almost as though that is where He has focused His attention.

The climax of understanding the importance of fatherhood comes in the relationship defined between Jesus and God. Over and over, Jesus refers to God as Father. At His baptism, God spoke over Jesus, "This is my beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased." The whole book of John gives special insight into how Jesus lived an express life of sonship with the Father. He constantly makes statements such as, "I and My Father are one," "I only do what I see my Father do," and "In my Father's house are many rooms."

This relationship of fatherhood is extended to all Christians and is emphasized in the epistles of Paul. While God is the Mighty One, Creator and a host of other things, Paul most frequently refers to Him as our Father. Jesus first gave insight into this relationship when He taught His disciples to pray, "Our Father." Not only was God the Father of Jesus, our relationship to Him is seen most clearly as Father.

Now, God's fatherhood carries many implications for the Christian and church. Notice how the great desire of the Old Testament patriarchs was to have sons. The whole crux of Abraham's life was whether he would have a son. From that point on, every leader desired a son.

This reflects one of the motivations of fatherhood. Fathers pour their lives into their sons. Fathers rule through their sons. Fathers' desires are to their children.

Fatherhood played out in the church means a structure where fathers pour their lives into their children. In the eternal view, a man's life does not end with him but carries on through those he disciples as biological children or converts. God began by working through others. Men of God continue that work by participating with the Father as He gives His life through them to others.

Further study would reveal the unique nature of a father's love, protection, provision, discipline and position. The intermediate disciple should be aware of these aspects of the Father and look for them in daily Bible reading.

Oeness

While fatherhood is an imminent value of God, His oneness is extremely mystical. However, a comprehension of His transcendent oneness gives structure to the way life is lived in the earth.

The oneness of God is an often discussed and at times debated aspect of how He functions. Basically stated, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are so intimately and thoroughly one that it boggles the carnal mind. They have such harmony in purpose and character that only their functions differentiate between them. What they do, they have always done in perfect agreement. It is a perfect triangle of love. They have always enjoyed this relationship. It was only momentarily disrupted, in a sense, when the Son died on the cross.

There is nothing God values any more than this unity. The great mystery of this unity is that He wants to bring man into this very unity. Jesus, prays in John 17:

“that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”
John 17:21 (ESV)

Jesus, Who enjoys perfect unity with the Father, prays that His disciples would enjoy the same unity with the Father. While man is not God, he can experience absolute oneness with God in purpose and character.

Of course, when it comes to discipling others, part of the process is leading new converts into oneness with the Father. This absolutely changes the discipling process from one of learning how to act to becoming one with the Father. The goal is changed from acting right to being right.

In His prayer, Jesus extends the idea of unity between the disciples and the Father to unity between the disciples. It is an extension of the same value. It can also be expressed as a different value--relationship.

Loving, Committed Relationship

While God has always enjoyed relationship with Himself, He must restore man's ability to relate to his fellow man. God greatly values this effort and gives much time in the Word to describing how these relationships are to be governed.

There are three scriptures which press this point of relationship home:

“And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.’” Matthew 22:37-40 (ESV) “If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing well.” James 2:8 (ESV) “If anyone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.” 1 John 4:20 (ESV)

Together with loving God, loving one another is the commandment on which all of the Law and Prophets hang. In addition, loving one's neighbor is called the royal or “preeminent” law. It is the primary law. Finally, man cannot say that he loves God if he does not love his brother that he can see.

The nature of this love is expressed in Jesus' prayer, that His people may be one.

Agreement is a continued theme in the Bible and the work of the church is dependent on agreeing.

Over and over in the Gospels and epistles, the Holy Spirit inspires the writers to record God's heart and methods for maintaining unity.

Much is written about how to deal with differences, offences and shortcomings in oneself and others. All of these instructions have to do with helping the church live out God's value of relationship.

Ephesians 5 and 6 are prime examples of scriptures that talk specifically about relationship. The end of chapter five explains how a man and his wife are to be one. The beginning of chapter six describes God's structure for oneness in both family life and on the job.

Earlier in the book, beginning in chapter four, Paul describes the dynamic of the church that results in the oneness of the members. This, too, can be seen as an extension of the two values of oneness and relationship. For the purpose of this explanation, the church will be seen as another value of God.

Church

While oneness is expressed by God in the way He functions, the church expresses the same value structurally. God desires specific forms of relating and knows that a particular structure of community supports that value. All of the principles that the Father desires to be enacted for the furtherance of his oneness are expressed through what He calls the church.

One of many scriptures that shows how the structure of “the church” creates a dynamic that results in oneness is in Ephesians:

“from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.” Ephesians 4:16 (ESV)

Simply said, “By remaining in the structure of the body and doing his part, a person becomes more and more related to the people with whom he serves.”

There are many principles that build Christians into a deeper unity. They are incorporated into the structure and dynamic of the church. God’s focus in bringing His Kingdom to bear on the earth is through a structure called “the body” or “the church.” God describes His Kingdom as presented through His church.

Since the beginning, people have not understood God’s values. They have tried to structure what they call churches or other organizations that they think will bring God’s Kingdom. However, many of these well-intentioned believers have created organizations that actually work against what God values.

There are several principles that must be in operation for a church to properly represent God. Here are a few:

First, there must be proper church authority. This authority must be based in both character and calling or gifting. Second, there must be proper ministry. God’s nature is specifically expressed through serving in distinct ways. Just like the authority and structure of a marriage must always follow God’s pattern, the authority and structure of the church must do the same. When the primary community of a believer does not function with proper authority and structure, it begins to take on values that work against God’s purpose.

A third aspect of church has to do with accountability. The scripture is very clear about the importance of members depending on each other. This dependence is both a responsibility and a need. Christians who do not have primary responsibility to the church and who do not believe that they need the church are in direct contradiction to Scripture and, therefore, violate the heart of God.

God established the church as the perfect expression of how he desires his body to function. To leave out or to add on parts not in keeping with His original intent is sin.

One qualification to this value is that the same principle may be expressed in more than one way. These principles may not be violated but they may be expressed in different ways. While one church may call an overseer a bishop, another may call him a pastor. The terms are not as important as what they represent.

So, in discipling others, one must be careful to have and show a love for the church. In addition, it is essential to grow in understanding of why God formed the church as He did.

Brokenness, Christ in You and Servanthood

Three complimentary values are brokenness, Christ in you and servanthood. Brokenness expresses man's death with Christ, Christ in you refers to living the resurrected life, and servanthood expresses the focus of that life in action.

Brokenness

One of the most foreign values to modern man is brokenness. However, God greatly values it. The word brokenness communicates more than sorrow or repentance. It has more to do with becoming absolutely convinced of man's inability apart from God. Unlike repentance, which happens when man realizes how his life has offended God, brokenness grows as he understands more fully how his life has been built in opposition to God.

This concept comes to light as the children of Israel move through the wilderness. God progressively tries them to show them where their dependence has been on Egypt (and by type the world). At the end of the journey Moses speaks on behalf of God,

“And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.” Deuteronomy 8:2-3 (ESV)

God took the people of Israel through a process, specifically pressing them where they would trust themselves rather than God.

Another instance where this shows up is with the prophet Isaiah. After prophesying for some years, he sees God more clearly and cries out, “Woe is me for I am a man of unclean lips.”

The process of brokenness is also expressed in the New Testament in Romans:

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:1-2 (ESV)

While Christians have been born again, there are still areas of their lives where they do not know the life of God and must be transformed.

Like the children of Israel, they come to situations in life that reveal a trust in the old ways. At times, they have a revelation like Isaiah of, “woe is me.” It is the constant battle of the Christian to be daily and progressively renewed in mind and, therefore, actions.

While discipling others it is important to help them grow in ability and practice. However, a person must never be convinced that he has no need of further brokenness or emptying of self. It is through emptying of self that room is made for Christ, who lives in you, to take action.

Christ in You

It is impossible to comprehend God's great love for Christ. He is called, “My beloved.” Even more unfathomable is the fact that Christ now abides in His people. However difficult to understand, it remains a fact--a fact on which life depends. God deeply loves and

values Christ, whose name means His Anointed One.

One of the key concepts of Paul's teaching has to do with the Christian being in Christ or Christ being in the Christian. All activity of the Christian is based in his ability to appropriate the power of Christ living in him. Since the word Christ means anointed, a disciple's dependence on Christ is a dependence on God's anointing in his life.

A broad study of the scripture shows how the Father continually worked and continues to work through the anointing. While much activity for God is described through the labor of certain prophets, scribes and pharisees, none of it pleases God except the part done in Christ. Only the Holy Spirit working through man brings pleasure to God.

Once understood, this value sets a new disciple on the right track—one of seeking the Spirit of Christ as opposed to the old way of doing things. One explanation of this is found in Romans 8:

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,” Romans 8:1-3 (ESV)

This is a matter of faith and choice. One must believe in the Spirit and then act on that guidance and anointing.

Disciples must learn to understand the presence of God in their lives through the indwelling Christ. Out of this, a resurrected life can be lived.

Servanthood

While some do not consider servanthood a basic value, it deserves plenty of ink in the current culture. The key scripture that shows how much God values servanthood is:

“The greatest among you shall be your servant.” Matthew 23:11 (ESV)

Modern man finds Christ's explanation of greatness as completely foreign. Greatness, in the Kingdom of God, is achieved through serving others. Today, man seeks the financial ability to be free from labor so as to have the rest of society serve him. Benevolent service has been reduced to token acts that cost nothing. What God values is His disciples' ability to realize that they have been given a job to do and that there is a limited time to accomplish that task.

Man's current pursuit of entertainment, freedom and leisure poses a stark contrast to how Christ calls his disciples to live. Compare those pursuits to the thoughts of Jesus recorded in Luke.

“Will any one of you who has a servant plowing or keeping sheep say to him when he has come in from the field, ‘Come at once and sit down at table’? Will he not rather say to him, ‘Prepare supper for me, and dress properly, and serve me while I eat and drink, and afterward you will eat and drink’? Does he thank the servant because he did what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty.’” Luke 17:7-10 (ESV)

After a full day's work, the servant's reward is to serve others. True servanthood, and therefore greatness, takes care of others first and then expects no reward.

Knowing God through serving others

Modern culture teaches man that he deserves a break. Modern culture cedes reward for the least service offered. While the servant of Christ finds joy in serving the purposes of God, the modern Christian finds joy in discovering new ways in which God and the church can serve him.

Again, this is one of the values that is difficult to communicate to a new believer. Only time and the Holy Spirit can work this value into the growing disciple's life. A deepening of servanthood is a direct result of growing in brokenness and Christ in you.

The sum of these is love

There are values that stand more obvious than some of these just mentioned. Take, for instance, faith, holiness and grace. However, these values seem to be understood more readily and are worked into the current understanding of life in Christ.

Of course, all of these values can be summed up in God's love to man and man's love back to Him and to his fellow man.

Chapter 3

The Church

In this chapter, the reader comes to know the Father more fully by studying the body of His Son—the church. With Christ as the Head, the members, connected together as each fulfills his specific function, form the body of Christ in the earth. The first part of this chapter considers the body as a whole. The last part discusses more specifically how the work of discipling relates to the larger body.

God’s Workhorse

Foremost in this discussion is that the church is the vehicle for God’s work.

“and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord,”
Ephesians 3:9-11 (ESV)

“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”
Ephesians 2:19-22 (ESV)

These two scriptures make it very clear that the church is God’s channel. He makes known His manifold wisdom through the church, and it is in the church that He will dwell. Most Christians agree on these points. Questions about the church have to do with its formation, operation and structure.

Before moving on from this point, the reader must do something very difficult. He must clear his mind of all preconceived ideas as to what “church” is. A very brief consideration of church history may help the process.

What the Church Looks Like and Why: A Brief History

Church history begins with the book of Acts in the New Testament. In this account, Luke describes the expansion of the church from Jerusalem into various parts of the world. Along with Acts, several letters of the New Testament give insight into what the church was to be. Fortunately, a few histories of the church have remained that give a good picture of what has happened through the church since that time.

The first 300 years found the church establishing forms of worship, structure, and doctrine amid several periods of strong persecution. Around the middle of the fourth century,

Christianity became more accepted by the Roman government. The civil government began to have some say in church affairs. Leadership began to centralize, and soon there was one central Pope.

Although there were political parlays for control of the church, it remained united for the first 1,000 years. However, during this time, the church formed along two lines—east and west. The Eastern church founded its capital in Constantinople (modern Istanbul) and the Western church headquartered in Rome. The differences between the two churches continued and finally erupted in the Great Schism during the 11th century. The Eastern church has remained intact while the Roman Catholic Church produced the Protestant Revolution beginning around the 15th century. The Protestant Revolution continued the split through the centuries. As a result, there now exist individual congregations with no formal ties to other congregations.

The point of this sweeping history is that now, all over the world, churches conduct services and believe differently from one another. Who can say exactly what church is supposed to look like? In Africa, the congregation leaps and dances up to the altar when it is time for an offering. In the Roman Catholic Church, only the priest may touch the communion host. In Chicago, Illinois, a full rock band leads worship.

So, when most people think of church, it brings to mind a particular style of worship, a particular order or lack of order in a meeting, membership, or whatever else was emphasized in the particular church they grew up in or attended last.

For this reason, Christians must learn to get back to the basics. They must seek out the essentials and make sure they attend a church that operates like the early church.

God's purpose in the church has already been explained through scripture. Now consider the three primary aspects of church: structure, doctrine and dynamics.

Structure

The structure of the church is both governmental and organic. Governmental structure means that there is authority in the church that has been vested in individuals. Organic structure means that the various members of the body are shaped together according to their individual characteristics.

Establishing Church Authority: Elders & Deacons

Governmental authority is best understood by viewing the two most obvious offices in Paul's letters: elders and deacons. Elders are responsible for spiritual guidance, while deacons are more given to practical matters. But these offices do overlap in their responsibilities.

A better explanation of these two offices appears in 1 Timothy:

"This *is* a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop (*elder*), he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Likewise *must* the deacons *be* grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless. Even so *must their wives be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the

deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 3:1-13 (KJV)

References to these offices throughout the New Testament present a picture of two groups. One group, the elders, generally governs the teaching and spiritual ministry of the church. The other group, the deacons, cares for the practical matters of daily life in the church. So, in following these two principles, a church should have spiritual authority, based in certain leaders generally called elders or bishops. And there also should be developed responsibility for practical operations in the church.

The Body Builds Itself

The second kind of structure (organic) found in the church evolves from the natural talents and spiritual gifts abiding in each member. Ephesians 4 explains how the church is formed in regard to this principle:

“from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.” Ephesians 4:16 (ESV)

Long lists compile the various functions and gifts each member may have. Administration, prophecy, teaching, mercy and helping are just a few examples. But all the gifts and talents are not listed in the Bible. As church members work together, gifts and abilities emerge as they share their lives and form the local church.

So, the church forms along two lines. Authority based in character gives the final word on doctrine and organization, and the dynamic giftings of the members provide the raw material for the body.

Ministers of Ephesians

Explanation of church structure is not complete without mentioning the gifted ministers found in Ephesians:

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,” Ephesians 4:11-12 (ESV)

These five types of ministers prepare the members of the churches to join together in the vital work of the church. It is beyond the scope of this study to describe how each of these ministers functions. However, a healthy church has all of these ministries represented in some way. (A separate study of these ministries is advised for a different time).

Doctrine

What the church believes is also very important. Keeping in mind the short church history, the many different ideas held about what is the correct doctrine come as no surprise. All of the confusion notwithstanding, an emerging leader must understand that the church has absolute understanding of the Bible and must be aware of the important doctrines. Most churches have some statement of faith.

Almost all Christian churches believe teaching on the following is important: the character and nature of God, Christ, the nature of man, God’s plan to restore man to Himself,

God's eternal purposes and the Bible.

Amid the debate over the particulars of these topics, it is important for an emerging leader to know the doctrine of his own church and to be in general agreement with how the body lives out these doctrines.

Dynamics

The way people live together as they are shaped and function is a general definition of church "dynamics." If the dynamic of the church could be distilled into one term, it would be "loving relationship." Everything about the church functions according to this principle. It begins with God. The Father loves the Son and the Holy Spirit. Next, God loves man (and proves it through offering His Son.) This provides a way back to relationship between man and God. After man is reunited with God, this principle of love begins to flow toward others.

The Bible explains how this life of love should look. The rest of Ephesians 4 gives a glimpse of some of the dynamics of Christian relationship.

"from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

Ephesians 4:16-32 (ESV)

This scripture gives five or six principles of how relationship is to be carried on as believers build their lives together according to their gifts under the authority and direction of church leadership.

Again, this is a very brief listing of the structure, doctrine and dynamics of the church. Understanding this broad formation, it should be obvious that each member must be nurtured and prepared on ever rising levels. To this activity of nurture this study now turns.

Discipleship through Small Groups

The name chosen for this activity is discipleship. An individual begins his faith like a small child. He continues to grow until he becomes a wise, old man in the Kingdom of God. Along the way, deliberate attention must be given by the church to nourish each member.

Discipleship takes on many forms throughout the world. Some churches run training programs, while others attempt to accomplish training through Sunday school. However, the model in this manual is the small group. It is the job of the small group to organize in a way to cultivate its members toward maturity.

When some people think of discipleship, they imagine a one-on-one situation. While this may be a viable model, the small group model mentioned here sees it as the responsibility of the group to disciple members. One person may be in charge of the group or even delegated to make sure a new believer is cared for. However, training is not limited to that one person. If someone is responsible for discipling another, he should use the other members of the group and the ministries of the church as resources.

In daily life together, members should reach out to new believers. The older Christians should establish relationships with the newer ones and guide them in the foundations of the faith (see blue books). Mutual friendship should evolve out of this time together. In the context of love, older Christians should be continually training and deepening those around them to live the life and share their giftings with others.

This ministry between believers should work in conjunction with the authority and giftings of the leaders of the body. As members mature, the leadership should release them to form new home fellowships to reproduce the dynamics that win, establish and maintain new believers.

Here are five areas that serve in developing disciples through a small group:

- A meeting that gives opportunity for believers to gather and edify one another.
- Mobilizing believers to reach others.
- Helping believers to meet in groups of two or three to maintain accountability.
- Helping believers deepen their own personal study, prayer and growth.
- Reproducing mature Christians who can form their own home fellowship to expand the work.

The studies in the following weeks are designed to prepare leaders to accomplish the work of the Kingdom. They will learn how to:

- Gather believers in their homes and facilitate ministry between those individuals.
- Guide believers into forming accountability groups.
- Deepen their personal study and prayer while helping others do the same.
- From this foundation of mutual ministry and growth, reach out as a team to see new converts.

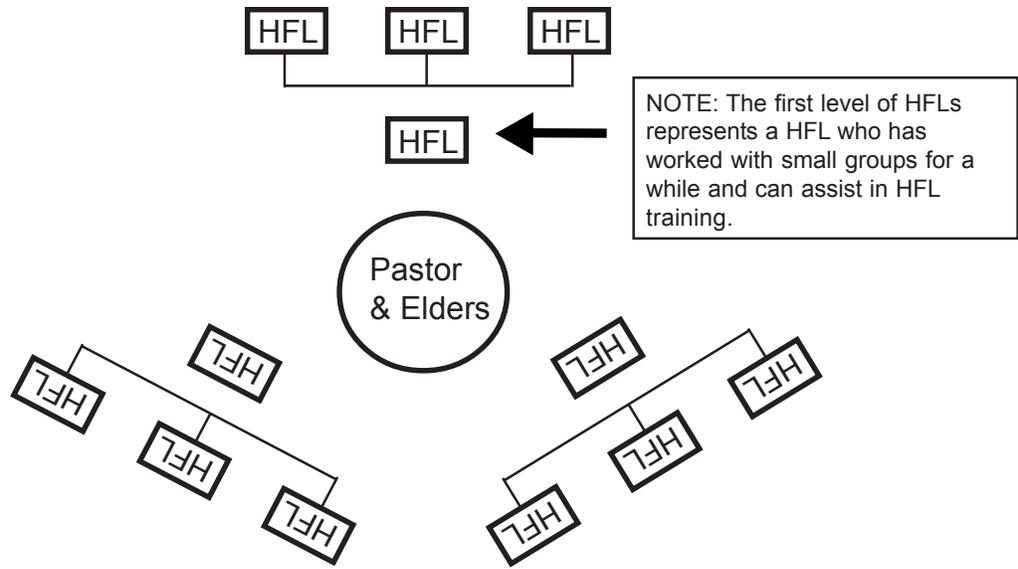
The Bigger Picture--Keep it Small

Though the focus of discipling stays on small groups, there is an overall vision at work. The vision is to have a number of congregations, with around 180 members including children, meeting all over Lexington and the surrounding towns. Once a church reaches that number, another congregation of twenty to fifty people will be planted from their members.

Each congregation will have a number of people equipped to care for the other members through daily living. A congregation of 120 people should have around ten home fellowship leaders with assistants. The pastor of a congregation is responsible to raise up a couple of leaders who have built home fellowships and released other home fellowship leaders.

Figure 3.1: The Home Fellowship Model (See next page)

Knowing God through serving others



Chapter 4

A Discipling Model

“Disciple making involves everything, from preevangelism to leadership training.”
Bill Hull

The process of making disciples can be arbitrarily divided into areas such as evangelism and follow-up which will be discussed in the next chapters. However, the broad idea of discipleship covered in this chapter has more to do with the method than the material or skill covered. This chapter begins with a brief explanation of discipleship as a method, moves to the way Jesus disciplined the twelve and finishes with an explanation of the “church model of discipleship.”

Relationship with Jesus comes first

“Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” Matthew 28:16-20 (ESV)

Jesus, during His last forty days of ministry on earth, gathered His disciples and gave them the above instructions. It is important to note that the people he told to go and make disciples were already disciples. Jesus had lived with these men for three years, and they had become disciples. Although He doesn’t say it here, Jesus probably had thoughts similar to Paul’s future words in mind: “The things you have heard of me...commit to faithful men also.”

From the outset, remember that discipleship as a method of learning or teaching is very different from most modern approaches to education. One of the key aspects of discipleship comes from Jesus’ words to His disciples when He first called them:

“And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach.” Mark 3:14 (ESV)

“That they might be with him” is the principle to Christ’s method. Everything that the disciples learned they learned by being with Him. That is the essence of the method discussed in this chapter. All spiritual, emotional and intellectual growth comes from having a relationship with Jesus.

Discipleship means being together

Now, the method of being with Jesus changed after His ascension. While He walked the earth, His disciples could literally walk with Him. However, after He was gone, they were called to make disciples or make people walk with Christ. It was no longer a walk with flesh and blood, but a walk with Jesus by the Word, Spirit and relating to the other disciples.

There is an important difference between the two walks. Jesus was making disciples through having people follow Him and Him alone. When He passed the responsibility on to His disciples, they were not personally having people follow them as an end in itself. Paul expresses this when he says, "Follow me, EVEN AS I FOLLOW CHRIST." The job of disciples is to be with others and let them see how they follow Jesus.

So, discipleship is growth and education through "being together." As God's people are together with new believers, they use this method of discipleship to help them learn to walk "with them, with Christ."

The training of the twelve

Before moving on to the method used by the church, consider the life of Christ in relation to His disciples. The classic study on this topic is *The Training of the Twelve* by A. B. Bruce, published in 1871. A more recent book is *The Master Plan of Evangelism* by Robert Coleman, published in 1963.

In *The Training of the Twelve*, Bruce details the significant events in the discipling of the twelve. The following discussion comes from Bruce's outline.

It started with a call

The Gospels show that before making disciples, Jesus first called men to Himself. His call was a process, beginning with a revelation of Christ as both the Son of Man and the Lamb of God. After that general revelation, Jesus met the disciples personally and, after a period of time, chose twelve to come and be with Him. Among the first batch of disciples were fishermen and a Publican.

The fact that Jesus chose only twelve carries both practical and spiritual significance. Practically the number twelve is manageable. Spiritually, the number twelve represents foundational, governmental acts of God. Recall the twelve tribes of Israel.

As Bruce explains it, Jesus called the twelve to Himself in order to impart to them what they should be, do, believe and teach. He wanted the disciples to be with Him and take on His way of life.

Walking with the Father

After the call, the disciples spent time hearing and watching Jesus. During the first months of discipling, Jesus gave the twelve special insight and explanation of His teachings. He also took time to answer their questions about the things they saw Him do.

One of the disciples' early lessons was how to pray. Most commentators agree that this is the only thing the disciples ever asked Jesus to teach them how to do. It is thought that they continually saw Jesus spend time with the Father and knew that to be the source of His life. Of course, this teaching is now known by many as "The Lord's Prayer."

Next, Jesus commissioned a broader group of disciples to go out and minister to others. Upon their successful return, the Master took the opportunity to direct their joy toward eternity rather than authority or ministry itself.

Following this, Jesus revealed what true holiness is. By breaking some of the religious rules in order to do acts of love, Jesus helped His disciples see the difference between legalism and true holiness of heart. Most of the rules that Jesus broke were similar to eating with sinners or doing work on the Sabbath. His actions showed that it is more important to do the

loving thing for others rather than to keep a rule.

The next phase that Jesus took His disciples through was the winnowing stage. It climaxed and crystalized the commitment of the twelve in John 6. After a series of miracles, which incited a desire in the multitudes to crown Jesus as King, Jesus began cutting across the grain of selfish intent. He told the people that in order to enter into the Kingdom, they must both receive His life and live like Him. Rather than have a king who would meet their every demand, they would have a God who would change their lives. Many were not ready for this kind of Lord: “and from that day forward, many of His disciples no longer followed Him.”

Calling disciples to live a life of relationship cut across the popular currents of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians (or political activists). In the following phase, Jesus defined the difference between a hypocritical, outward religion and explained the authentic life of God. When He declared, “Beware the leaven of the Pharisees,” He was specifically speaking of covetousness and hypocrisy. However, by implication, he included religion for political or worldly gain.

In short, this period taught true love of people and freedom from the desire for worldly gain. Jesus illustrated this by His actions and then taught by precept when speaking with His disciples.

After this came the interaction with Peter that led to his declaration: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” While the disciples believed this to some degree all along, Jesus wanted to establish the fact that His church would be founded on this greatest revelation. Others saw Jesus as a great man or prophet. It was imperative that His disciples knew and declared Him as God.

The lesson of the cross

Immediately following this revelation, Jesus began to open His disciples to the coming cross and

its significance. From this point until the day Jesus died, He illustrated, taught and prepared His men to understand the significance of the cross and their participation in His death. His teaching included lessons on humility such as servanthood, leading from underneath, temperance in judgement, and other forms of living that undermined exaltation or preservation of self.

Having spent this last period of discipleship preparing the twelve for His death and their future embrace of this life for themselves, Jesus drew them to Himself and prayed over them. Then He performed the greatest act, illustrating His teaching to the fullest. He died on the cross.

In the acts surrounding the cross and following, Jesus taught about eternity, resurrection, and then, finally, commissioned the twelve to carry on the work of being, doing, believing and teaching. They would do this by making disciples like themselves.

To reiterate, Jesus revealed Himself and called disciples to Himself. He next taught them the essentials of walking with the Father and then the lesson of the cross, true holiness and a spiritual life. In the end, He called them to live the life He had lived by continuing to walk with Him through the Holy Spirit as He walked with the Father.

What a wonderful plan for the restoration of man. Though alienated from God for a time, he is now called to walk with the Son of God and be restored to that lost relationship. As a result, redeemed men are called to help others walk with Christ by walking together.

Picking up Jesus' method

Scripture reveals that Jesus did indeed institute the church and call His disciples to reach others. Since Christ's walk on earth, Christians often have come across the need to reconfirm not only His message but His method as well. It is His method of living and teaching that must carry the message.

Jesus lived in a culture familiar with the disciple/teacher relationship. When He called the first disciples to “follow Me,” they understood exactly what he meant.

The Scripture says that they immediately left their nets and followed Him. This indicates not only a heart attitude, but a physical act of being with Jesus. In one sense, this model of discipleship is very simple. One man, Jesus, called others to follow Him. They, in turn, focused their attention on Him and strove to learn of and emulate Him. The questions for Christians today are: How can we be discipled? How do we follow Christ? Should we find another Christian and emulate that life?

Fortunately, the answers are in the Bible.

Jesus making disciples vs. disciples making disciples

As modern disciples follow Christ’s command, they need to understand the difference between Jesus making disciples and His disciples making disciples. The disciples “learned” Jesus by being with Him. Their own disciples learned Jesus in a different way. Under them, the process was once removed. The result of Jesus’ discipleship was that people adored and followed Him. The result of Christian discipleship is not for the disciple to adore and follow their discipler. Instead, the discipler must bring the new believer to know and follow another—Jesus.

A second difference is that Jesus had all of God in Him. He was all the disciples needed. Modern disciplers have a limited portion of Christ and must work as a body to give the full expression of God.

This transfer from Jesus to the disciples is the foundation for the book *The Disciple Making Church* by Bill Hull. In the beginning of the text, he points out the difference between the accounts of discipleship in the gospels and the model that emerges in the book of Acts. He uses the word *Christocentric model* to describe the method of Jesus in the Gospels. He calls the method in Acts a *churchocentric model*. The next few paragraphs are based in large part on Hull’s book.

Consider the change in focus from the Christocentric model to the churchocentric model found in Acts. The focus was no longer Jesus doing the work but a group of people doing the work. Specifically, the focus changed in leadership, guidance, training, outreach and pastoral care.

Since there was no longer a single leader, the work of leadership went to a group of men leading the church. In guidance, the model moved from Christ’s personal presence to the ministry of the Holy Spirit through the word, prayer and other people. Training was no longer the job of a single Man. It became the task of a group of leaders together with different levels of mature believers. While outreach had primarily centered in the ministry of One, it became the task of groups of people organized to extend the Kingdom. Christ’s pastoral work while on earth was replaced by a multi-gifted body that cared for each member.

Becoming like the early church

If a church is going to be a disciple making church, its general practices and priorities must come into line with those of the early church.

During the last part of the twentieth century, many believers became aware that the particular church they were in did a poor job of discipling believers. For many zealous young men, the answer was to begin “discipling ministries.” While those ministries restored the passion for men to be discipled, they could not have their intended effect. They lacked certain aspects of body life necessary to fully represent Christ. While men from these churches may have imparted some aspects of Christ to their “disciples,” they could not be all of Christ. The very structure of the church as God established it reflects Who God is. One cannot fully know God without being a part of His church. (Of course, this last statement is not an absolute.

Some are in prison or separated from other Christians by different circumstances).

In searching for answers, these churches missed the mark. The answer to true discipleship was not to create discipling ministries but to restructure the modern church into the form of the early church.

The following scripture paints a broad picture of what the practice and priorities of the early church were:

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” Acts 2:42-47 (ESV)

Commitment is the central idea in this verse. It includes commitment to Scripture, to one another, to prayer, to praise and worship and to outreach.

New practices for old priorities

The practices described in Acts outline how churches should structure their daily life. Rather than just offering classes on various topics, the church must structure to get the life of Christ into people. Much of the Bible study and prayer enjoyed only in large services should be happening in Christians’ every day walk, even as new believers eat supper with those involved with the ministry of the church. There should be an awareness of needs in the lives other members and a personal sacrifice to meet those needs. While many churches understand the priority of these areas, it has been difficult for them to structure in a way that practices these priorities.

The model of church that has emerged is one where professional clergy is paid to present programs to educate the people in doctrine and church policy. One of the greatest difficulties in returning to a biblical model is overcoming the patterns that have been set by these modern structures. While the practices in the book of Acts were the natural outgrowth of the presence of the Holy Spirit, modern Christians need specific instruction and guidance to break modern patterns to allow the freedom of discipling outside the church building.

To meet this need, this manual gives specific guidelines on how appointments and meetings in homes can be conducted. Admittedly, these new guidelines are only forms to help break old habits. It is anticipated that after a period of time following this form, more mature believers will naturally flow in daily discipleship.

The people make disciples

The next question is: Who is responsible for making disciples?

The answer reveals the obvious need for a church to be involved in discipling people to Jesus.

First, Scripture directly mandates that every Christian is responsible to be involved in the discipling process. (The discipling process includes preevangelism through leadership training.) More importantly, the church, under the direction of the leadership, is responsible for fulfilling the great commission. When the church works as a team, the work of discipling can take place.

Since every local congregation is made up of different personalities, giftings and social

backgrounds, the leadership of each church must organize the believers into a functioning team to accomplish their task. Leadership must also be attentive to levels of maturity in the body that justify a change in practices or training objectives. They must understand not only the priorities but the practices that best serve their objectives in a specific time and place.

Generally, discipling a person begins with pre-evangelism. That means seeing the people of God in some way that testifies to the reality of God. Next, the gospel must be shared to bring the person to full maturity. If someone decides to follow the Lord, he must be integrated into the church and befriended by someone who will make sure he grows properly. At times proper growth means finding someone to minister to special needs or do special training.

It is impossible for one person to disciple another single-handedly. All members of a church offer their gifts to one another. The body is “fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies according to the proper working of each individual part causing the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”

Increased availability

Working together to make disciples requires great levels of accountability.

At some point in a believer’s growth, he becomes part of a team that *intentionally* disciplines others. More often than not, every man and woman should come to a place of helping coordinate younger believers in walking through their growing relationship with Jesus.

At this level of ministry, a believer is responsible for holding others accountable to growth. In order to do this, he needs stronger accountability himself. This means a deepening commitment and relationship to the leadership team.

Different churches use various methods for training members at this level. Some train them to be home fellowship leaders, some have an equippers class, and others plug members into a Sunday school. The particular method is not as important as whether it follows biblical principle in both practice and priority.

The point of accountability here is not that the leader should hold others accountable. Instead, the leader should willingly make himself accountable to make sure other brothers are cared for.

Closing thoughts

Before closing this chapter, here are a few more thoughts about discipleship.

First, the leaders of discipling churches should understand the broad periods of Christian maturity and know how to move people through those stages. One way to look at these stages is to consider the three stages addressed in John’s first epistle. In the twelfth verse of the second chapter, he begins talking to little children, young men and fathers. With each group he gives earmarks of that stage of growth.

The little children have a relationship with the Father and the young men are strong and fight with the devil through the use of the Word. The fathers have knowledge of things from the beginning. While this scripture was not designed to describe stages of growth and the particulars, it does show that John thought in terms of Christians at different levels.

The writer of Hebrews says at the end of chapter five that his audience should be teachers already but instead are babes. They should be teaching others, but they have not practiced what they have heard. Again, this indicates an expectation of growth to new levels.

A second important theme is the importance of mature leadership in directing the discipling ministry of the church. While young Christians are healthy friends to one another, they need the wisdom and direction of older men in the work of discipleship.

Some of the independent spirits that tried to disciple men in the last century brought much hurt to others. They cannot be faulted in many cases, because there just wasn’t any leadership to be found. On the other hand, having learned from their mistakes, twenty-first

century Christians can restore the practice of making disciples to its proper place through the church under wise leadership.

Finally, it should be stated again. Discipleship is a group effort in helping others follow Christ. If new believers become too focused on one person, it hurts God's purpose.

The particular steps in discipleship used in this model are included in the appendix, where various tools and resources are mentioned. Take time to study the appendix listed under discipleship at the end of the manual.

What's ahead

Other parts of this manual describe the methods used for moving God's people through the various stages of discipleship. Evangelism and follow-up have already been considered.

The following chapters describe specific practices that can be used to further the biblical priorities just outlined. The next chapter describes a general approach to running meetings in the home. Further chapters, along with appendices, explain roles unique to women in discipling, the qualifications and responsibility of home fellowship leaders, how to integrate people from other congregations and ministry to special needs. While these methods support the general model described in this manual, they may not be appropriate in other settings.

Knowing God through serving others



Chapter 5

Reaching the Lost

The work of the church

Evangelism is the work whereby the existing church reaches out to the unchurched and/or unsaved with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

This work can occur on many different levels. The leader who wants to help his group bring others to Christ must be aware of each of these levels and use them all in building his team. While there are other ways to describe these levels, this model views them as 1) the work of an evangelist, 2) the evangelistic event and 3) the witness of the local church.

The specific ministry of an evangelist

The work of an evangelist can only be done by an evangelist. This is one of the ministries described in Ephesians 4:11. Generally speaking, the evangelist has the calling to declare the gospel to both large groups and individuals with special anointing. The most well known evangelist of this type in the 20th century is Billy Graham. He has preached to over 210 million in live audiences in 185 countries and territories. He has preached to millions more by way of radio and television. Another well known evangelist, Jed Smock, has preached almost every day for the past thirty years on over 700 college campuses in all fifty of the United States and in other countries.

While each of the hundreds of modern evangelists may have his own twist on administering his gifting, the biblical markings of the evangelist are seen most clearly through Philip, the evangelist in the book of Acts. His had both an ability to proclaim Christ to and individual and preach to multitudes.

Philip ministers to great crowds in Acts 8:

“Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed to them the Christ. And the crowds with one accord paid attention to what was being said by Philip when they heard him and saw the signs that he did. For unclean spirits came out of many who were possessed, crying with a loud voice, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed.” Acts 8:5-7 (ESV)

Notice the added ministry of deliverance from demons and healing of the sick. Later on in this chapter, the apostles come to help in the ministry at Samaria and baptize the new believers.

Next in this chapter, Philip ministers to a single individual:

“And he rose and went. And there was an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning, seated in his chariot, and he was reading the prophet Isaiah. And the Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go over and join this chariot.’ So Philip ran to him and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet and asked, ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’ And he said, ‘How can I, unless someone guides me?’ And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. Now the passage of the Scripture that he was reading was this: ‘Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he opens not his mouth.

In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth.' And the eunuch said to Philip, 'About whom, I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this Scripture he told him the good news about Jesus. And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, 'See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?'" Acts 8:27-37 (ESV)

Here, God speaks to Philip by the Holy Spirit, and he ministers directly to the heart of the Ethiopian Eunuch.

Working with the evangelist

It is comforting that the "office" of the evangelist is only for a certain number of people. Unfortunately, too many people believe that the only option for evangelism is to do it like an evangelist. This prevents many people from discovering other methods for reaching the lost and can lead to guilt and frustration. Even worse, some people who do not have the anointing attempt to do the work of the evangelist and turn more people off than on to God's truth.

What is exciting is to learn how to cooperate with the evangelist and be involved with his ministry when he comes to town. Evangelists seldom have the time to follow up the people they lead to the Lord. Since their ministry is generally mobile, they are off to another city shortly after a crusade or outreach.

This is where the ministry of a home fellowship can quickly capitalize on the work of another part of the church. Rather than frustrating members of the church by trying to force them to be evangelists, the wise leader helps avail his members to the influence of a true evangelist and share in the genuine fruit.

Practically speaking, the home fellowship leader should always have his members prepared to attend evangelistic meetings and actively pursue new converts. These may be special meetings held by the church or even citywide campaigns organized by more than one church.

Being intentional & reaching out

Another great avenue for evangelism is organizing specific evangelistic outreaches, on a church or home fellowship level. This type of evangelism is intentional and originates with a group of people who believe they need to create opportunity for sharing their faith. Of course, the organized crusade with a visiting evangelist would fall under this category as well, but as a different category it includes innumerable ideas and situations.

If the leadership of a church decides it is time to facilitate an evangelistic outreach, the home fellowship leader should help the people he is working with to participate (unless there is some more pressing situation they need to address or work through).

Churches have many ways of creating an evangelistic outreach. As already mentioned, they may invite an evangelist and hold a series of meetings. Other times the leadership delivers a series of messages aimed at child training, marriage enrichment or job enhancement. The idea in these types of messages is to minister to the body, while creating an atmosphere where a member could bring a colleague, neighbor, family member or friend.

One church hosts a Passover gathering, while another puts on a fourth of July picnic and celebration. Both are acceptable for bringing a friend.

Again, part of the success of a churchwide evangelistic outreach is the participation by all of the members.

This same type of outreach can be created on a home fellowship level. If, in the

process of time, a group of people find that they have exhausted their ministry to one another, the next step is to add new believers. At this point, the leader must help the group determine the best method for them to find those new members. The best way may be for them to follow the pattern of day-to-day evangelism (see below), or they may need to work together help reach targeted individuals.

The joy of teamwork

It is important to see this type of outreach as a team effort. By the definition of team, each member is expected to play different and complimentary parts. As the team lives together, each member's giftings and strengths emerge. It is important that the leader help identify these in an individual and arrange the team to get the best effort from all members. As a strategy develops, it is important to know who can be called on to do what part.

The joy of teamwork is that it gives an opportunity for those who are not as outgoing to play a part in reaching the lost. In this type of outreach, the unity of the body and the love of the brethren is key. From the beginning, all members must realize that their part is important.

As a team begins to organize to reach out in small events, a lot of parts will be put to use. The team will need someone who is good at administrating and strategizing at the beginning. Along the way, there will need to be people who are good at helping and serving. Those who are especially prone to intercession will begin doing their part long before the event happens. At the event there will be the need for hospitality and entertaining, child care, conversation, love, sharing a testimony and actually sharing the gospel. In some types of outreaches, unique abilities or desires like taking a road trip or painting someone's house can also be useful.

The key is that the gifts people have used for ministering to one another can now be energized in reaching out to others. This capitalizes on the spiritual principle Jesus shared:

“that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”

John 17:21 (ESV)

This scripture shows that the love of the body needs to be lived out in front of others so that they can see the difference Jesus makes in friendship, respect and love. The way believers love each other is the greatest tool in this type of outreach. When those in the world see healthy Christian relationship, they know it is the result of changed lives. If they follow through, they will know the difference is due to the ministry of Jesus Christ coming to the earth.

The church as witness

This highlights the difference between the work of the evangelist and the witness of the church. Jesus must have had this in mind when He said, “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” While there is a time for speaking the gospel, the living of the gospel by the church provides a vivid example of what the gospel does in a person's life.

In a broad sense, the “dynamic” of the church (see chapter 3) produces unity, joy, humility and peace. It also facilitates love and concern for others, right reactions to difficult times, hospitality and a submissive attitude. In addition, all of the relationships—family, friends and work—take on the quality of a people who truly love God.

This list is not something that can “be done.” It is what people become as they live out the teaching of the scriptures, in the dynamic of love by the Holy Spirit, in loving submission to the Lord through the church. A team of people cannot get together and say, “Let's act loving

so people will get saved.” The question a leader must ask is this: Does this group of people have a genuine life in Christ that reflects who He is? If they do, then the world needs to see it. If there is still a lot of pride or fear, the leader should concentrate on ministering to those needs before considering outreach.

Here is a question to help determine if the group is ready: Does the life of God flow when the group is together or is it a forced meeting? One way to answer this is to just walk through the list mentioned above with a mature member of the group or even the whole group. Ask if these things are going on among the group. From these answers the leader can capitalize on the groups strength while continuing to work on needs. Remember, if these aspects of life are not present, it is due to a lack of knowing and participating with God. These problems cannot be “fixed.” They are road signs pointing to a deeper need of God.

The process of outreach

If a leader determines that the group he is working with is ready, here is an outline of the process he follows in implementing an outreach: The members should first offer names of people they personally know as a possibility for the gospel. Then they discuss this individual to see what type of event or activity might serve to get this person around the others. After the event has been determined, each member commits himself to play a part.

The event could be a cookout, a trip to the lake, a work day, a trip to the museum or a morning tea. The personality of the group, as well as the interests of the unbeliever, should be considered. Particular groups often enjoy certain things together and it becomes their outreach to many people. Guys who enjoy fishing together may periodically invite an unbeliever along. Women who enjoy coffee together may bring a friend as well. The choice of the event can be motivated from both the unbeliever’s side and the nature of the small group.

The wise leader will learn the character of the group and help them turn life together into reaching out to others.

After choosing an outreach event, the date is set and all members begin doing their part. When the group pursues an ongoing event (something that lasts three or four weeks), the leader needs to keep his hand on the pulse of the team. If things are going smoothly, let them go. If there is a glitch, the leader should adjust that part of the outreach. Monitoring the pulse includes keeping an eye on timing as well as effort.

God works through strategy

Strategies for reaching the lost are as numerous as there are people to be reached. Whatever a group chooses, there are several aspects to keep in mind.

First, though God can supernaturally work out strategies without His children being aware, they are still responsible to seek Him for strategy.

Some have the idea that Christians do not decide who to reach. To them, evangelism is just the serendipitous side effect of life. Well, thank God that He does work in spite of men at times. However, the scripture is full of admonitions to “actively engage” the lost with the purpose of being a witness.

The real chore of home fellowship leaders is to help people see where God is already opening doors and then equip them to follow.

Second, there are several stages in teamwork. After a team member sees an open door, he can then present the opportunity to the rest of the team. The team begins to pray and develop strategy. It’s now time to put the plan into action, which can always be adjusted along the way.

The ultimate goal is to share the gospel with the unsaved person and see them come into the Kingdom. Popping the question to an unbeliever can be done in several ways. Many times the gospel is shared from friend to friend through a presentation, personal testimony or

naturally evolving discussion.

This can also be done by another team member, at a home fellowship meeting, at an evangelistic meeting, at church or through a book.

Expect disappointment as well as success. Crucial to success is that the team member who opened the door, along with other team members, be consistent in following up with their friend. If the person chooses to follow the Lord, it is time for discipleship. If not, the team can always leave the doors open.

Finally, consider the following wisdom gained from leaders who have learned through trial and error.

The leader must not allow the evangelist to move too quickly or too slowly. Turning on the fire full blast or letting it die are equally destructive.

Also destructive is a leader who is lazy in times of need. When a window opens, it is time to act.

The team members will look to their leader at every point of the process. The leader must be faithful to check on his team members to see if they are doing their part. When a team member shows weakness, he must be honest about how they can hurt the group effort. The leader also must be encouraging and inspiring about strengths and releasing them.

Most importantly, don't skip prayer.

“Delivering” salvation

Churches who are aware of this kind of evangelism have numerous testimonies of individuals who have been won for Christ through wise and loving teamwork. One example begins with Curt Eiden, a member of Lexington Christian Fellowship.

Curt Eiden is the owner of Professional Expediting. A few years ago, while working as a salesman for Central Transport, he called on Alltech in Nicholasville, Kentucky. He was introduced to Janet Blakeman from customer service and arranged a lunch meeting. At Applebee's, Curt was covering basic procedures when a question came up about a certain process in the shipping of freight. Curt quickly mentioned that he didn't believe that a certain action was ethical and that caught Janet's attention. She asked him why integrity issues were important to Curt. He asked her if she wanted to know the politically correct answer or his true reason. She asked for the truth.

Curt explained that he was a Christian and that everything he did was an expression of his life in Christ. He said he lived for God and that fashioned his life.

After a few more calls, Curt was able to introduce Janet to a couple of other ladies, Elizabeth Williams and Sandy Wieck, from the church. These ladies picked up the relationship and Janet eventually made a deeper commitment to the Lord.

Now, Janet and Sandy are close friends and have worked together in discipling other women.

Breaking out of the evangelism box

Again, each group, as well as the contacts they have, determines what type of outreach to do. The religious mind gets stuck in a box as to how to reach the lost. That mind wants to force people into religious settings and hope they will respond to a certain creed. The evangelistic approach takes the life of the church to the unbeliever and allows the life of God to draw them into relationship with Him. It is amazing how many normal life activities can be a foundation for reaching others.

This chapter already mentioned a cookout, a trip to the lake, a work day, a trip to the museum or a morning tea. Here are some other events to help stimulate thinking outside of the box. All of these have been successfully implemented in reaching out to others.

One group decided to do a series of teaching on marriage via video. They simply set

the dates and invited friends for four weeks. It was an opportunity to strengthen their own marriages, while introducing non-Christians to the team. Another group decided to do a vacation Bible school with their own kids in the back yard.

Another group agreed to invite a friend to the church worship service, at an appropriate time, and then take him out to eat afterwards. While the conversation did not specifically share the gospel with this person at the meal, he got to hear the team talk naturally about their lives in front of him.

The types of life activities that can be adjusted to include unbelievers is without number. It is only limited by the teams ability to see.

The evangelism of everyday life: meet the woman at the well

The final type of evangelism to consider implementing in a home fellowship is what can be called point A point B evangelism—evangelism that usually occurs one-on-one in everyday life. This is the bread and butter of touching the lost through the church at the very foundation of outreach.

To fully describe this model, which can be seen in John 4, would be a book in itself. However, the basic principle of the story can be easily extracted. Here is the way the chapter begins:

“ Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), he left Judea and departed again for Galilee. And he had to pass through Samaria. So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob’s well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, ‘Give me a drink.’” John 4:1-7 (ESV)

As the story progresses, Jesus leads the woman in a conversation that goes from giving Him a drink of water to Him offering her eternal life and revealing Himself as Messiah. The broad point of the account is this: While a person travels from point A to point B, he will encounter individuals along the way that have little to do with his destination. However, that person along the way is just the person God has in mind for evangelism.

The point is made through a contrast between first Jesus and His disciples and then the woman and the disciples.

In the first contrast, Jesus readily sees the woman’s need and leads her from her point of need to a deeper realization of her spiritual need. On their return from a visit in town to buy bread, the disciples are dumbfounded as to why Jesus is even talking to this woman. Their only comment is, “It’s time to eat.” Basically, these men could only see the object of eating. They could not be interrupted with a less obvious but greater call. Jesus explained the reason He could see the need, “My meat is to do the will of Him Who sent Me.” The foundation for seeing the need between point A and B is living to do the Father’s will.

The point is further emphasized by the contrast between the actions of the woman following her revelation of Jesus as the Christ. She immediately leaves her water pot and runs back to town to tell everyone about this man she has met and declares Him as the Christ. The irony is that the disciples had been to this same village a few minutes earlier and had not brought one person out to the well to meet Jesus. While the woman forgot her reason for going to the well (she left her pot) and shared the gospel with others, all the disciples did on their journey to get meat was get meat.

Knowing God motivates man to bring in the harvest

“My meat is to do the will of Him Who sent Me.” It is on this point that this study returns to the great theme of this model of leadership—knowing God.

If evangelism is just the next step in a program, it will be dry and unfruitful at best. When it comes from a heart that knows the Father, it springs up at every turn. If, in reading this lesson, there is not a burning desire to reach the lost, the reader must meet with the Father and understand His will and desire. In living to do His will, man finds that the fields are already white unto harvest and He is looking for those who will bring in the harvest.

There are at least three thoughts about God that can help Christians know Him better in such a way that they are motivated to participate more readily and naturally in sharing Jesus with others.

He paid the highest price

First, God has already exhibited His great love and compassion toward lost humanity by offering the greatest sacrifice, His Son Jesus Christ. The Father and the Son lived apart from all sin and enjoyed one another, but God recognized the need to “interrupt” His eternal journey to send Jesus to redeem the elect. If the compassion in God’s heart motivated Him to allow His own Son to die for a people who did not even know Him, how much more does He desire for that message to be presented to them? He has paid the highest price. He now waits for his people to tell others what He has done.

God depends on man to get out His message

The next understanding of God commands great responsibility and motivation from the believer. Simply stated, God limits Himself to extending His message through the church. Without discussing all of the implications on God’s nature, He is desperately (not in the sense of ability but choice) looking for men to share this message. He knows full well who needs to hear and watches His people pass opportunity after opportunity. Speaking of strategizing to reach out, God is the all knowing strategist Who continually orchestrates “chance” meetings between His people and the lost. Take time to commune with God about this fact. It will change the life of anyone who finally sees God’s (deliberate) dependance on man. Matthew records both the sentiment and words of Jesus that illustrate both God’s compassion and His desire for men to see the need and respond.

“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.’” Matthew 9:36-38 (ESV)

That all would receive Jesus

The third aspect of God’s heart that helps a believer join Him in His purpose is to see the scope of His compassion.

“The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9 (ESV)

This scripture is set in the context of people questioning when Jesus would return. Peter gives the clear declaration of God’s heart and resulting actions—God is not slow, God is not unintentional. He is waiting and waiting for as many as possible to be restored to relationship with Him. He does not want any of His to perish. He is desiring that all would

receive Jesus. This is the overwhelming desire of God—that all would receive Jesus.

Couple this great desire and great compassion with God's choice to work through man, and a whole new picture emerges of how He relates to His disciples.

Eyes wide open

There is one final point to consider in coming into agreement with God on this issue. It doesn't have to do with His nature or character but the situation of sinners. The disciples were excited to be with Jesus. They found hope and purpose in being with Him. However, they had forgotten the pain of those around them. The modern Christian must not be lulled to sleep by Hollywood or Fifth Avenue. All is not fine and most stories do not have a happy ending.

Millions of babies have been aborted in the last thirty years, leaving murderous women without conscience or hope. Many of those same women end up in divorce, leaving both the man and woman shattered. Sexual orientation is so distorted that men are burning in their lust toward one another at an ever increasing rate. One of the largest entertainment industries in the United States is pornography. While church attendance may hold steady or increase, the social fabric of western society continues to deteriorate at an alarming speed.

Christians must open their eyes and see what God sees. They must open their hearts to feel what He feels. They must commit themselves to do what He desires for them to do.

It is the job of the leader to reveal God in this way so that believers will be motivated to the great work of His heart's desire.

Chapter 6

Discipleship Part 2-Follow-up

Follow-up is the spiritual work of grounding a new believer in the faith.

Gary W. Kuhne

The next stage of discipleship is follow-up. The term is not found in the Bible but describes a certain aspect of ministry clearly described in scripture. Gary Kuhne has written several books on discipleship and has dedicated a whole book to this phase. He uses the term to identify all the work that goes into the grounding of a new believer.

Disruption as a way of life

It is best to begin by identifying scripture that mentions or describes these first lessons in a new believer's life.

The beginning of follow-up is found in the beginning of the church. Three thousand people had been saved and added. Over the next few days, everyone adjusted their life to be together to be involved with follow-up. The following scripture describes the situation:

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” Acts 2:42-47 (ESV)

More than anything else, Paul describes a disruption in the way of life for both the apostles and the new believers. Whatever their lifestyle was in the past, it would never be the same after they became Christians and were added to the church.

First of all, what they did with their friends changed. Rather than just hanging out, they were devoted to the Word, being together in the Spirit and work of Christ, sharing meals and praying.

Second, the focus of their work and wealth switched to developing the Kingdom.

Finally, they began to spend more time at the temple and in using their homes to receive and share God's gifts.

In other words, the use of time, allocation of money and home life of both new believers and leaders changes when people are added to the church.

With this in mind, new believers must immediately be brought alongside older

believers in an almost daily relationship. In order for this to happen, older believers must already be living a lifestyle of devotion to the Lord. An existing life of devotion is the most important asset to the new believer. Leaders preparing to follow-up new believers or to help others do the ministry of follow-up must keep this as a forefront issue.

Life with a new believer

This is how follow-up begins. An older believer, already involved in the work of the Kingdom, opens his home and life to the new believer. Although a simple statement, this may be the hardest step in teaching others the ministry of follow-up. Many people are used to having their schedule set around their own preferences and desires. A decision to follow-up a new believer is a decision to die to one's own plans and goals.

The cost of this decision cannot be overstated. Bringing the first baby into a household is a good parallel. The situation develops something like this: A happy couple has enjoyed a few years of "married dating." They have adjusted to one another and have learned to give each other their space and share life together. Then after nine months of joyful anticipation, the little bundle arrives. After a stay in the hospital, baby Joy comes home. Dad expects to fall back into the old routine as soon as mom has time to recover. It will never happen. Mom will be tired from getting up in the night to feed little Joy. This means less attention for Dad when he arrives home in the evening. The "jumping in the car to run" period, is a thing of the past. It now takes a parade permit to haul all the stuff necessary for short trips. Eating out is different, eating in is different, attending church is different, attending a ball game is different. Life is different. There is now another person living in the house, requiring time and money. Although little Joy's schedule can be adjusted some, there are certain times that she will dictate. Mom and dad must respond.

This is life with a new believer. Uninterrupted family time is less. There is often a financial need. Even entertainment may change some. If the new believer happens to be part of an acting group or sports team, guess where the older Christians will be spending Friday evening or Saturday morning.

The disciplines of discipleship

If the primary asset in follow-up is an already devoted Christian, the first lesson in follow-up for that devoted Christian is an even greater embrace of the cross and death to self.

In the same way, the new believer will need to be led into a whole new view of what he does with his money and time. At first, it will just be by example. Later it may be by instruction. The time will probably come in the process of follow-up that the new believer reconsiders his decision to walk as a disciple. Unfortunately, there are churches that offer a second option and many potential disciples may be lost to this "easier road."

Having crossed the devotion bridge, the exact disciplines of Bible study, prayer, fellowship and attending body functions must be initiated.

In order to lay the foundational patterns for these disciplines, the person doing follow-up needs to have a broad understanding of exactly how these disciplines mature with time. For sure it begins with bringing the new believer alongside what older Christians are already doing. But there must also be some deliberate introduction into all four of these areas.

Bible study

While exact methods of Bible Study should be passed on in the discipling process, a proper view of the Bible and its application is extremely important. There are at least three attitudes that should be cultivated in the life of a new believer in regard to the Word.

First, study of the Word of God must be a relational activity. The believer must see that the Bible is God's revelation of Himself. Every word is some revelation of Who He is,

What He is, What His desires are and How He lives. If the Bible becomes a religious duty, a self-help manual or an answer book, it loses its meaning.

Second, the Bible masters the one who understands. While many religious people believe they have “mastered” the Bible, they have missed the point all together. The Bible was meant to possess the reader. Spiritual knowledge of the Bible is a changed life not a bunch of new ideas.

Finally, the Bible is a complete story. Each verse only makes sense in light of the rest of the book. Verses are understood by the context in which they occur. This is why an early broad reading and understanding of the Bible is important.

Prayer

In the same way, prayer must first be understood as coming to know God. Through spiritual knowledge God can adjust a believer’s understanding of situations and help him to ask according to God’s will. Finally, as in the case of Bible reading, the context of teaching on prayer helps define the true intention of God in that type of prayer.

Having impressed these important guidelines of prayer, the older believer can move on to instruct the convert in the many types of prayer. Each church should have some general principles of prayer that all members understand.

Joint participation

Fellowship is a unique word and deserves some defining. Without the technical study of the Greek, it is safe to say that fellowship means jointly participating. By a broader theological definition, it means jointly cooperating by the Holy Spirit in the building and function of the church.

The idea of joint participation is difficult to teach. Recall the chapter on the church that expressed the need to forget the old model of church. Most new believers have been exposed to some form of church during their life. More than likely, it is a model that has the parishioners sit while the clergy talks. No matter what class is taught on joint participation, it is better demonstrated than verbalized. Again, this calls for older Christians walking in this fellowship and bringing new believers alongside.

Fellowship includes an understanding of the dynamics of body life as well as authority and function of the body. The new believer must learn both where to receive and what he can give. He must know the general contribution of all Christians while discovering his own personal gifts and talents to offer. The fine tuning of gifts and ministry will occur down the road of discipleship. It is enough in follow-up to make the believer comfortable with the general principles mentioned here.

Daily church activity

Finally, the cue from the disciples in Acts is to develop a lifestyle of being with saints in daily activity and attendance of meetings. It is helping the new believer to be faithful to the broader ministry of the church while continuing in the daily fellowship of the brethren.

Two more aspects

At least two other aspects of foundational ministry, verification of the heart attitude in salvation and doctrine, are seen in another portion of Acts.

“Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they

laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, saying, 'Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.' But Peter said to him, 'May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.' And Simon answered, 'Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me.'"
Acts 8:14-24 (ESV)

This is a great portion of scripture. It shows some of the foundational teachings such as baptism and repentance as they are given in a context. It also describes a situation where someone who had shown interest in the kingdom and even professed Christ had not yet gotten through to a real relationship with God. The solution was to instruct in the basic doctrines and to discern where the pseudo-believer was or was not in God.

In the same way, disciples need to be able to teach people through any faulty conversions.

Giving disciples a firm foundation in teaching

Speaking of foundational teachings, the most complete list can be found in Hebrews:

"Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, and of instruction about washings, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits."
Hebrews 6:1-3 (ESV)

The context of this scripture is moving on to levels of maturity. However, it is implied that an understanding of the truths listed are necessary for growth. There are six areas of a foundational teaching to consider, which all relate to Christ. They are the "elementary doctrine of Christ."

In an expanded paragraph, these verses might say, "The foundation is that the believer must (faith)believe that Jesus is the Messiah and decide to follow Him (repentance). That decision to follow Christ results in death to the old way of life and a filling of the Holy Spirit, the life of God (baptism (washing) in water, fire and Holy Spirit). The believer is then placed in the body both governmentally and organically (laying on of hands). Walking in the kingdom not only changes a person's direction in life but for eternity as well (resurrection). Plus, the measure of life's success takes on a new standard (eternal judgements)."

Most churches have a method for initiating a new believer into the Kingdom. While some churches have a new believers class, others may do it through home groups or personal discipleship. It is the job of the leader to know the methods and material used by the body for giving believers a consistent foundation in Christ.

So these scriptures cover knitting believers into the Kingdom of God and the Church through an understanding of the doctrines of Christ.

A heart issue

Getting back to the scripture about Simon, Peter used discernment in seeing that he was not truly following God. While the truth of salvation is clear cut, it is often hard to know

or help others know if someone has truly entered into relationship with the Lord.

In this particular situation, Simon was more interested in the power of the Holy Spirit than a relationship with God. He was still centered on himself and was not walking with God. This describes a situation where someone has made a profession of faith, been baptized yet is still in the bond of iniquity. Depending on a person's theological bent, Simon represents a misdirected Christian or a false Christian.

The scripture is not clear on what Simon's state was, other than that his heart was not right with God and that he was in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity. Peter may have been strongly rebuking a new brother or he may have been declaring him not a Christian. At any rate, the prescription is clear. Simon needed to pray to God and find true repentance for what he had tried to do.

Culture is becoming increasingly bizarre. As a result, many new converts come in with gross misconceptions about what life and the Kingdom is all about. In addition to knowing the foundational teachings, it is just as important to be able to see the major issues in a convert or potential convert and help him rid himself of the wrong heart.

Practical application

The rest of this chapter is based in practically applying the above principles. It describes a method that serves this particular model of home fellowships. The above principles are biblical and necessary. The following methods are practical and change depending on the circumstance.

Where home fellowships come in

Home fellowships play a key role in follow-up. When a new believer enters the church, he should be connected to a home fellowship where there are older believers to disciple him.

Organizing and implementing care of new believers falls on the shoulders of the home fellowship leader. But the leader is not necessarily responsible for the ongoing follow-up. He generally chooses another member in the group to be in charge. By giving someone else the responsibility, the leader trains that person to care for others. The leader gives clear guidance and accountability in the process until the older believer is proven.

The first task of the leader, then, is to choose the person to give follow-up. More than likely, new believers who come into the body have a friend who invited them. This is often the best person for the job. There are some circumstances where this is not the case.

All things being equal, the next-best choice for follow-up is the home fellowship leader's assistant. Since the assistant is training to coordinate a home fellowship, he needs the skills developed through following-up a new believer.

After choosing who will do the follow-up, the leader must work as with the other member as a team to care for this new believer. He must follow the example of Jesus and His disciples. Jesus first showed his disciples how to minister. Then he gave them responsibility and sent them to do it. He checked up on them and evaluated how they were doing. Next, He corrected any excess or failure. This is the process of delegating. Demonstrate, define and delegate responsibility; maintain accountability; evaluate; then redirect.

The goal of the home fellowship leader is to have several different follow-up arrangements going on in his home fellowship. In this way, training happens on several levels. The leader is learning how to care for others and is training his team to care for others. Also, new people are learning the foundational teachings.

After finding new believers for his team to follow-up, the leader should always pursue the same process. He should define the responsibility of the person in charge of the follow-up. The leader trains others by first following them up and then teaching them the principles of follow-up.

Delegating follow-up does not mean giving up total responsibility. The leader must ask the person in charge of follow-up specific questions about their disciple, help them see where they are in the process, and always be ready to tell them when and how to take the next step.

Start immediately: first relationships count the most

To protect new believers, follow-up must be immediate. The older believer must quickly include the new believer in his life. It is a constant stretch to pull him into home, play and church life.

This first relationship is extremely important and develops the new believer's attitude toward body life. If the person following them up is always late, missing appointments or distant, that is what will be produced. For this reason, every team member must develop the character of servanthood, love and brokenness.

Building consistent fellowship

One of the most frustrating aspects to training new people is finding their level of discipline and commitment. After living apart from God, many have misplaced priorities, undisciplined minds and bodies and a lack of integrity. Helping a new believer grow in these practical areas does them as much good as any other topic.

Before one can encourage others in this, he must first develop the values and disciplines necessary for building his own walk with the Lord; his commitment to family, friends and church; and walk this commitment out to the lost. If a group member is not consistent on this level, he cannot teach it to others.

Various authors and ministers approach the topic of discipline very differently. Most people have a book or two on the topic sitting on their bookshelves. Each has a different approach to scheduling, goal setting, etc. It is good to be familiar with various titles in order to accommodate different members, but the key to discipline is to keep it tied to the Holy Spirit and the Word. Many of the books on discipline are culturally bound and are little more than law.

The patterns and expectations of each culture must stand in the light of God's greater picture. At the root of discipline is the ability to do what God wants. Each person's method may be a little different in his private life. This does not mean that each person can create his own little world.

As one learns discipline (that is to do his part in relating to others), he must have the self-control to adjust his own methods to meet those around him and to be faithful to legitimate expectations.

So, for training in discipline, leaders must keep the following in mind: The particular style of study and personal relationship to God varies. Learn to facilitate a person where he is.

As disciples begin to mature, they must learn to discipline themselves to be faithful to agreed upon standards by the people with whom they work. Like other topics, this will generally lead to brokenness, servanthood and love.

Spreading out the responsibility

Though his role is crucial, the primary discipler does not work alone. It is very important to help the older believer learn how to work with the rest of the team in discipling the new believer. While he will be making sure the person has at least one solid relationship, he must also help the new believer tap into the lives of other ministers in the church.

The Emphasis is Jesus

The great commission of Matthew 28 says to go and make learners, baptizing them in the name of Jesus. Christians baptize people into His name, not theirs. New believers are

Jesus' disciples alone.

One of the best ways to keep perspective is to stick with a "team mentality." The discipler works with the home fellowship leader, who works with the elders, who work with the pastor, who works with other pastors, who work with other churches, which are involved in missions. All join together to point toward Jesus.

Each aspect of follow-up needs to relate back to Jesus and His body. Leaders and team members must never take ownership of an individual. Keep in mind, new disciples may one day be a pastor or pastor's wife.

Discipleship is not like a pyramid with the discipler on top of others. It is like a V with the discipler at the bottom.

Jesus purchases those who are lost and desires to shape them into His image—His image only.

Knowing God through serving others



Chapter 7

Qualifying Leadership

The first three chapters dealt with laying broad foundations in what the scripture reveals as nearest to God's heart...knowing Him, understanding what He values and His general way of accomplishing His purpose in the earth, the church. In steps toward discipling others to Him, the growing Christian must ask what God requires in and of those who would lead His flock. This chapter answers that question.

Protect emerging leaders from themselves

As a backdrop to the importance of this study it must be explained that existing leadership in the church must always protect emerging leaders from themselves. Young men have always had a tendency to want to run before they are ready. This caution is clear in 1 Timothy:

6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.
1 Timothy 3:6-7

The very essence of sin is seen in the attitude of the devil. Being lifted up with pride, he desired to rule over God. For this he was condemned and cast out. The older and wiser a leader becomes the more he sees the importance of this caution. Watching emerging leaders grapple with insecurity and get lost in the smoke of deception which leads to hurting others is painful. For this reason, a slow and deliberate approach to releasing men in measures of responsibility becomes the pattern for mature ministry.

The outline for the rest of this study is simple. It begins with an exposition of Exodus 18:17-22 and then 2 Peter 5:1-4. Following this, the combined lists of qualifications for elders and deacons from 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 are mentioned and briefly discussed.

Advice from a father-in-law

¹⁷ Moses' father-in-law said to him, "What you are doing is not good. ¹⁸ You and the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it alone. ¹⁹ Now obey my voice; I will give you advice, and God be with you! You shall represent the people before God and bring their cases to God, ²⁰ and you shall warn them about the statutes and the laws, and make them know the way in which they must walk and what they must do. ²¹ Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are

trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. ²² And let them judge the people at all times. Every great matter they shall bring to you, but any small matter they shall decide themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. Exodus 18:17-22 (ESV)

In this study, we are more concerned with verses 21-22. However, Verses 17-20 reveal a dynamic of church growth that can be briefly stated: God establishes leadership and then causes the responsibility to grow. As that happens, the Lord intends for existing leadership to spread the work to other leaders.

Able men who fear God

The last two verses describe the characteristics of those men who are to be chosen. They are to be able men who fear God. They are to be trustworthy and not willing to take a bribe (or as it says in the King James Version, “hating covetousness”).

It is interesting that, of these four characteristics, only one deals with ability. The rest have to do with character. It is not a hard and fast rule, but it is generally true that ability counts for much less than character. Since the character issues will be discussed thoroughly in the rest of the chapter, this portion will only discuss ability.

When Moses needed to spread the work around he had to look throughout all the people to find “able” men. The word able must always be defined by context. An able basketball player may not be able at ballet. An able singer may not be an able carpenter. So the context of this scripture tells us what these emerging leaders needed to be able to do. And what were these men able to do? “Judge the people at all times.”

Surprisingly, the greatest burden on Moses was helping the congregation work through their differences. While one person may be trying to divorce his wife, another might be having trouble with his neighbor or teenage son over a dispute. A big part of the work was helping people live together in harmony for the furtherance of the nation. This is exactly the same ability necessary today in helping carry the burden for the church.

Maturing Christians must first learn to have their lives “judged” by others so that others may honestly know if they are walking in love. Having developed the willingness to be judged, they can go on to develop the ability to see situations in the body which need to be corrected. This ability comes from innate ability, imparted ability and developed ability.

Innate ability is what a person is given at birth. No one really knows for sure why some people are more able naturally than others, but it is a fact born out in both scripture and life. No doubt, the men chosen by Moses were seen as naturally adept in sorting through issues.

Imparted ability has to do with the ability that comes from anointing, or the work of the Holy Spirit. The best example of this is in the life of Solomon. Although he was trained in the house of King David, he knew the difficulty of ruling people. When he became king himself, Solomon was given the gift of one request of God. His desire is recorded in 1 Kings:

⁷ And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I *am but* a little child: I know not *how* to go out or come in. ⁸ And thy servant *is* in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. ⁹ Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? 1 Kings 3:7-9 (KJV)

Needless to say, this request pleased Lord and it was granted. Throughout Solomon’s life,

he was noted for his ability to judge and keen insight into the nature of relationships (see Proverbs).

So, a person can be born with certain ability and then receive a deeper anointing in the same. In addition, a person is capable of developing that natural ability through practice and prayer. Hebrews five speaks of those who, through use, have learned to apply the word of God. In the book of Acts, we see the young church crying out to God for deeper anointing in abilities they have already exhibited.

So the ability to lead is determined by innate ability and anointing received. This ability can be increased by natural practice and prayerful petition. It must be added that individuals have varying degrees of ability in any certain task. In the scripture which follows the above verses, Moses makes some men rulers of thousands, some rulers of hundreds, some rulers of fifties, and others rulers of tens. While a person may increase in ability he is limited by original ability and anointing. The diligent Christian makes the most with what he is born and what he receives.

While it is not directly relevant to this study, verse 26 says, “they judged the people at all seasons.” The New Living Translation say, “they were constantly available.” These able men adjusted their schedules to always be ready to help others work through conflicts by helping them apply the Word of God.

Again, the other three characteristics of Moses’ leaders were fearing God, being men of truth and hating covetousness. Since these are covered in the next scriptures commentary will be reserved until then.

Peter’s advice on leaders

The next portion of scripture presented to shed light on this idea of a leader’s qualification is 1 Peter :

¹ The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: ² Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; ³ Neither as being lords over *God’s* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. ⁴ And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 1 Peter 5:1-4 (KJV)

Again, there is much in this portion of scripture that has to do with method and responsibility. Generally, it describes two aspects of how a leader cares for the flock. The first is feeding and the other is giving protection. These aspects will be considered elsewhere so that this chapter can continue to focus on the issue of character. However, the quality issues which emerge from these scriptures on leading the flock are related to feeding and overseeing.

Feed the sheep

Feeding has to do mostly with presenting the Word to the flock. In the lists to be discussed from 1 Timothy, we will see that emerging leaders must be “able to teach.” This would have to do with a genuine love for the Word and a diligent approach to study on the part of the one who is wanting to feed the flock. The best first step in teaching the Word is loving and learning the Word.

It is interesting how many people who would teach others have never really been broken by submitting to faithful study of God’s Word. Wanting to be a teacher before becoming a humble learner is a sure step toward the snare of the devil. So, the first thing to learn from striving to feed is to be a learner first.

The second aspect to feeding is that it is done as one who nurtures. The Bible uses specific language to communicate ideas. It is no accident that the ministry of the Word is called “feeding the flock.” This phrase can hardly be uttered without Psalm 23 coming to mind. With the emotional and mental picture created by reading this psalm, one is able to “feel” the sense of being one who “feeds the flock.”

In the same way the shepherd of Psalm 23 feeds the sheep, the growing Christian is to minister the Word to younger believers. This ministry of the Word begins by presenting rich pastures and safe surroundings. It continues by ministering the Word for the sake of the Great Shepherd in accordance with His righteousness. This feeding the flock continues by applying the Word in times of difficulty. The care of the shepherd leads to a sense of peace and goodness in the flock.

Overseeing the sheep

In addition to feeding the shepherd must take oversight. The word oversight is best understood as caring for the sheep. More technically it indicates being in the place to see others and be aware of needs or dangers. It is the idea of a shepherd who positions himself in a place to be able to see the flock and respond to any need that might be obvious.

The scripture is very careful to make sure that this position of care is not one of superiority but service. The cautions are both toward motivation and method.

With a willing heart

The motivation of the overseer must be “not by constraint, but willingly: not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.” “Not by constraint, but willingly;” presents the idea that a person must have a willing heart to lead as opposed to someone who feels forced to do so by the church or some other coercion. The willing heart results from an emptied vessel full of love. Constraint might be from a parent or leader, a desire for reputation, or the discipling structure of churches using the model of church being described in this manual.

In the past, some individuals who have been in particular churches for some time feel a “need” to advance. Sometimes, it is just a social pressure that makes them feel this need. At any rate, these people enter the training program of the church, work through the material and become leaders. This is disaster. People who lead for the wrong reasons, anything other than a willing heart, hurt those they are supposed to protect.

For this reason, current leadership of the church must qualify leaders based on a willing heart of love.

Not for personal gain but eager

The second phrase, “not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind” deals with any desire for personal gain as a result of caring for the sheep. A ready mind could be translated “eagerly.” The heart that is eager to serve others out of love for the Father and His sheep will not become bitter when they do not pay back the service. While most leaders in the church do not receive pay, it is possible to have an attitude that, “these people owe me.” For the positions in the church which are paid, the leader who is not “eager” can end up with a complaint against the church for not paying more. Even worse, some have been known to see their service to the saints as little more than a job for which they are paid. This is a far cry from a person of God who is eager and willing to watch over the flock.

So, new leaders must be known for their eagerness to care for the flock.

Servant leadership

As far as method, the scripture says, “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.” This clearly establishes a model of “servant leadership.”

Enough cannot be said about the difference between the leadership used in the world and the Bible kind of leadership.

The worldly approach to leadership and management deals with motivating people by showing them how they can be most successful. Of course, that success generally has to do with a higher salary, more perks and a better position. The biblical model demonstrates to people how they can pour their lives out and receive nothing in return. To the world this seems foolish. However, to the person truly born from above, this example by a leader calls something that is deep in their heart which they do not understand but know is there. Seeing someone live their lives for them brings Christ to life, and they in turn want to do the same for others.

This is essential. A leader in the body of Christ must lead by example. Love cannot be taught in precept; it must be modeled in life.

While the qualities of leadership mentioned in 1 Peter are different from those qualities Moses sought in the men he appointed, they do overlap in some measure and then compliment those characteristics.

The next portions of scripture to be considered are 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. It must be stated in the beginning that the lists found in these chapters are intended as qualifications for elders and deacons. They would be best studied in context. However, the combined lists are excellent as an overall synopsis of the kind of character to which all Christians should aspire.

The big list

¹ This *is* a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. ² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; ³ Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; ⁴ One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; ⁵ (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) ⁶ Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷ Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. ⁸ Likewise *must* the deacons *be* grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; ⁹ Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. ¹⁰ And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being *found* blameless. ¹¹ Even so *must their* wives *be* grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. ¹² Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. ¹³ For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁴ These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: ¹⁵ But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. ¹⁶ And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. 1 Timothy 3:1-18 (KJV)

⁵ For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: ⁶ If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. ⁷ For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; ⁸ But a lover of

hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; ⁹ Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. Titus 1:5-9 (KJV)

The combined list (from the New International Version) is as follows:

Self-controlled	Manages his own family well	Upright, holy
Able to teach	Sincere	Above reproach (blameless)
Not quarrelsome	Tested	Temperate
Not a recent convert	Hospitable	Not given to drunkenness
Not overbearing	Not violent but gentle	Sees that his children obey him
Loves what is good	Not a lover of money	Does not pursue dishonest gain
Disciplined	Has a good reputation with	Keeps hold of the deep truths
Husband of one wife	outsiders	
Respectable	Not quick tempered	

These twenty-four characteristics have been the subject of many studies on leadership. At least one book, *The Measure of a Man*, by Gene Getz, is an in-depth study of these characteristics. It would do the reader good to spend some time looking up some definitions of these words. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this study to do a detailed study of the words.

However, it would be good to draw some overriding principles that are suggested by the lists.

Past performance, even-tempered, knowing the Bible

First, a person's ability to lead or care for the flock is based in past performance. Specifically, how he relates to his boss, wife, kids and others in general must be considered before he pursues any role of caring for others.

He must also be even-tempered with a kind and giving spirit. He must not be in it for personal gain.

Additionally, he must know and follow the deep truths of the Bible. He must be able to teach these truths to others.

While this does not come close to explaining the list, it gives an overall description of the kind of people who can go on to care for the flock of God.

These three or four sections of scripture only scratch the surface of biblical instruction on leadership. However, they have been chosen because they lay good foundations for some of the essentials in moving from being a baby Christian to simply caring for others. This level of ministry in reality should not be called leadership but "intermediate Christianity."

Self qualification

While it is the responsibility of existing leadership to qualify and appoint men and women into deeper levels of service, part of the process must be self qualification. The primary thought guiding this manual is that by knowing God a person is motivated and prepared to serve others. Then, by serving others, the individual comes to know God even better.

In this section, it is important to move on to knowing others and knowing one's self. Through an open relationship with others and vulnerability with self, the growing Christian can meet God by rooting out areas of his life which are contrary to the Kingdom and thus cloud his view of God.

There are many people who desire to be leaders. However, when the Christian sets on the path to serve others he soon learns he must meet the Father in new ways. Serving without reward can only come from knowing God.

It is important that aspiring servants search their hearts to see if their motivations and goals are appropriate to take the next step in responsibility. However, it is more important that existing leadership know those who are aspiring and be able to give account for their lives.

The reader who truly desires to be the type of person defined by the qualities mentioned in this chapter will no doubt meet God. More than likely it will include meeting Him in “the fellowship of his sufferings,” as well as the “power of His resurrection.”

Knowing God through serving others



Chapter 8

Responsibility of Leadership

This chapter is written to explain the broad responsibilities of a home fellowship leader and the duties he must pass on to members in the home fellowship. The responsibilities will be explained in context of the home fellowship itself and the ministries it is to fulfill.

The backdrop for this chapter is the previous section on the church. The work of the home fellowship is in the context of the church. Beginning with just the local church, the home fellowships are under the direction of the elders and pastors of the local church. Elders and pastors are responsible to make sure the sheep receive proper care. By organizing people in groups which can be cared for by older brothers, they spread the work around and are able to be more effective in God's call on their lives.

So, to begin with, it is the responsibility of the elders and pastors to identify able and trustworthy men to help them care for the flock. Having chosen these men, they then must delegate them responsibility and authority to do the work of the ministry.

Specifically, the elders have called and appointed these men to be an extension of the pastoral heart of the church. In a sense, they become an extension of the pastor's ministry of feeding and overseeing the sheep. It is important that they are familiar with the pastor's heart in caring for the sheep and reflect that heart in all they do in the Home Fellowship.

Four primary areas of caring are mentioned in this chapter: 1) Loving the sheep, 2) Giving oversight, 3) Feeding the Flock and 4) Responding to needs.

Loving the Sheep

The first thing a good pastor wants from someone who is beginning to do the work of the ministry is a true love for the sheep. If the ministry of the home fellowship is not based in love, it defeats the very purpose of ministry. Of course this comes from the example and command of Jesus:

³⁴ A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ³⁵ By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John 13:34-35 (KJV)

The number-one asset to any home fellowship leader is an unfeigned love for the sheep. This love can only be the result of having the character of Christ worked into our lives through prayer, the Word and walking with God and the body. It is loving as he loved us. Listed below are some ways in which Jesus loved people and how the leader can come to love the sheep.

He initiated relationship

The Bible teaches that "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." This declares

that God reached out to man when he was unwilling to reach out to God. That same quality of love must permeate the life of any home fellowship leader if he is going to do the work of God. Many people can run a program. However, the true servant cannot expect the sheep to attend his organization. He cannot wait for people to come to him; he must go to them.

This is the first point in loving the sheep: the leader must go to them. Practically, the home fellowship leader must commit himself to:

- Decide to befriend the people under his care and commit to follow through with that decision.
- Initiate times of fellowship, such as getting together as families, sitting together at church, taking trips together, sharing about life together, being interested and remembering the details of their lives.

He expected no repayment

Jesus made atonement for the sins of mankind with His own precious blood. There is no way man can ever repay Him. When the prodigal son returned to the father, the only thing expected of him was to live in the Father's house in a loving relationship. That is all God requires of sons who return to Him.

This is the example that home fellowship leaders must follow. He can expect the sheep to grow. He can expect the sheep to love God. However, there should be no expectation of personal gain from the sheep on the part of the home fellowship leader. The leaders should not expect repayment for time spent in serving the sheep. It is fine for the leader to hope the relationship would grow into a loving reciprocal friendship. However, that cannot be a condition.

The leader should:

- Not expect the member to serve him.
- Not keep an account of how much he does for the person.
- Serve as unto the Lord.

Jesus is faithful

Jesus told His disciples that He would be with them to the end of the world. He said He would never leave them or forsake them. He has kept His word.

In order to be successful in ministry to the saints the leader must realize that perfectly disciplined sheep are few and far between. He must be prepared to be let down a few times as the relationship grows. Sheep will:

- Not even realize when they are being served.
- Often stray
- Not understand.
- Run off and do things when they are needed.
- Miss meetings.
- Eventually grow up.

The leader's job is not whipping the sheep into shape. His job is to walk with them as they grow in relationship and love to the Lord. If a leader remains a leader very long he will come across a sheep that he would just as soon forget. It is at this time that he must remember that Jesus was faithful to him in times that it was not deserved. He must press in to know God in this difficult task.

Jesus allowed his disciples to grow in relationship with Him

Jesus began by performing miracles and preaching while His future disciples observed. Later, he asked them to walk with Him. He went through progressive stages until He shared

his very inner most secrets with them. See the chapter on discipleship.

In addition to considering the life of Jesus as a lesson in love, it is always helpful to revisit 1 Corinthians 13.

Giving Oversight

With a foundation of love, the leader can give oversight. Remember, the idea of oversight is to care and protect. Jesus gave a good example of caring for the sheep in the Gospel of Matthew:

¹²How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? ¹³And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. ¹⁴Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. Matthew 18:12-14 (KJV)

This portion of scripture is better suited for a teaching on evangelism. However, it does show the principle of keeping up with the sheep in order to care for them.

As a leader begins to care for a group of people, he will find that they do not always lend themselves to being cared for. It is the responsibility of the Shepherd to keep up with them until they become mature enough to care for themselves and then begin to care for others.

A typical situation which occurs in church life is a particular person being left out of the loop of relationship. The person being left out may be shy or backward. Also, the person may be hurt or independent. Whatever the case, it is the job of the home fellowship leader to make sure the person does not get left out.

Also, it is often the case that newer people don't have any idea how to begin connecting with other members of the church. It is important that all home fellowship leaders keep an eye out for new people who begin to hang around the church. If all of the older folks are watching for new people, it will help form a stronger net, so that no one falls through the cracks.

The other side of the coin is seen in people who come into the Kingdom and cannot get enough fellowship, meetings and study. These types seem almost self sufficient and need very little care. However, it is important with sheep like these to keep them challenged and growing.

Every culture would require different methods of keeping in touch. The following list was written by a pastor of an American church in the 20th century.

- Make sure all members of the home fellowship are notified of all meetings.
- Check on members when they miss meetings.
- Connect with new members as they are channeled into the home fellowship for which the give care.
- Connect with the follow-up (see chapter on follow-up) team and monitor this ministry.
- Keep in touch. The home fellowship leaders should have at least one contact with every member during the week. This can be done by phone, e-mail or visit.
- The home fellowship leader should make up a phone chain and use it when needed.
- Have each family or single over for an evening every three months.

This is only a list and can be quite sterile if not read with a heart of love. The idea is not to program leaders but to give ideas of how they can express their true love and concern for the ones they are serving. Generally, a person who has worked in this type of ministry for a couple of years does the above list naturally. It is only given here to prime the pump of newer leaders.

Feeding the Flock

In the life of the flock, feeding occurs on several levels. There are weekly meetings, particular Bible studies and personal study. It is the job of the home fellowship leader to make sure new believers are being fed.

It does not necessarily mean that the home fellowship leaders need to do most, or even any, of the teaching. However, they must make sure the flock is lead to a place to eat. Different churches will have various ministries for the ministry of the Word. Below are avenues of that ministry in the church where this manual originates:

1. Sharing a portion of the previous Sunday teaching and developing conversation. The home fellowship leaders must be tuned into the overall direction of the church and make sure the flock is meditating on the scripture that is guiding the flock.

2. Advising the home fellowship members of foundational classes. There are two ways this church takes new members through the foundational teachings. The preferred method is a one-on-one study with an older member. The home fellowship leader should set this up with an older member from the group. However, when there is a number of new believers at the same time, a class can be offered.

3. Feeding is not just through structured Bible study. Sheep encourage and share with one another. The wise home fellowship leader will make sure members are building relationships with one another.

4. Another method for feeding sheep is through the home fellowship meeting which will be discussed in the next chapter. At this meeting, the leader can spend a number of weeks on a particular topic if it is relevant to the members.

5. Very simply, the home fellowship leader should pray for members.

6. The home fellowship leader should be pro-active in directing members to books, seminars or other members of the body who are proficient in a particular topic. The home fellowship leader should also warn members about reading “any ol’ book that comes along.”

Different churches will have different avenues of ministry. The home fellowship leaders should know what those are and direct members accordingly.

Responding to needs

In addition to giving oversight and feeding the Flock, there are unique times in body life which call for special response by the home fellowship. Examples of these times are serious illness, hospitalization, death, loss of employment or marital upheaval.

Whenever anyone in the group becomes aware of a need such as this, he should automatically notify the home fellowship leaders (it is the leaders who must train the members to make this contact). The home fellowship leader should make contact with the family and notify one of the elders or pastors. Next, the leader should organize the members to respond properly to the situation.

Here is a checklist for responding to needs. Like other lists in this manual, it is specific to the model being presented. After a home fellowship leader hears of a need he should:

- Inform a pastor or elder.
- Mobilize the home fellowship members.
- Determine what kind of assistance the person needs and then find someone to offer that assistance.

Child care

Transportation needs

Food for the family

Maintenance of the house

- Determine what visits are helpful and then make them
- Having cards and flowers sent or delivered
- Be sensitive to see the situation through to the end. Often times a crisis passes but there is a need to process it 4-6 weeks after it passes. A good leader will revisit the situation at a later date to see if there are any collateral needs.

Most people do not face crisis regularly and are not prepared to deal with them properly. It is for this reason that older members should continually prepare themselves to come around younger people and even older members when a crisis occurs.

Developing Leadership

A final responsibility of a home fellowship leader is the reproduction of himself. The method of multiplication in this model is multiplication of home fellowship leaders. It is not structured around any certain numbers. Instead it is driven by level of maturity.

The people directly responsible for producing new home fellowship leaders are home fellowship leaders. It is their job to identify other men with the qualities mentioned in the chapter on qualifying leadership. Having identified these men, they should bring them alongside and teach them how to do the work.

Below is a punch list of how to progress in training your new leader.

- All leaders should first be solid disciples.
- After helping this man grow in evangelism, the home fellowship leaders should help him begin to help disciple someone.
- A man who has been part of the discipling team for a while can then begin to help coordinate home fellowship activities.
- There should be an ongoing class where this manual is being presented for the training of new home fellowship leaders. As soon as a new potential leader is identified, he should move into this class.
- If a leader is considering someone to mentor as a home fellowship leader, he should be especially attentive to building life together with this person.
- When this new leader is ready, he should be presented to the elders and pastors and set in as a home fellowship leader.
- At this point, the men who trained him should help identify members to join his new home fellowship and help him get started. Older home fellowship leaders should check in periodically on the men they have mentored and released.

This chapter may not seem very scriptural but it is an application of many biblical principles. It is the “how to” in the present culture of the scriptural principles already mentioned. Furthermore, this chapter is certainly not the final list of how to do things. It is only a small example of the way a home fellowship leader can love, oversee, feed and respond to the needs of the flock. With age and experience, this chapter should be rewritten by every home fellowship leader as he finds the way he best serves the people of God. Start writing.

Knowing God through serving others



Chapter 9

The Home Fellowship Meeting

This chapter will discuss how to run a meeting on a particular night of the week. The fact that it appears near the end of the book is for a reason. The ministry of a home fellowship is not running a meeting. It is a way of life. The meeting is not the home fellowship. It is the place where the life of the home fellowship is strengthened and directed. So, in the order of presenting the model, how to run a meeting comes late. However, how this meeting runs will guide the life of the group.

Organizing relationships, evangelism, discipleship and leadership development

Since the home fellowship meeting is used to organize the activity of the group, it is good to review the primary areas of life which are built through the group. A home fellowship is designed to nurture accountable relationship and fellowship, do evangelism, make disciples and reproduce leaders.

Each of these areas should be overseen by the leader, and the home fellowship meeting is designed to help this happen. While each of the areas mentioned actually occur during the week, a wise leader will use a meeting once a week to nurture aspects of community life.

Hold to the schedule

While training new leaders to run meetings, it is best to hold them to a tight schedule and give them boundaries. By being faithful to the boundaries of others, the leader is freed from any personal preferences that may work against the meeting. Later, the leader can venture away from the schedule as he matures and is released to do so by the other leaders.

While this may seem controlling it is needful. Many new home fellowships have been destroyed because the leader just didn't know how to use the meeting to build the group. One example is a young leader who loved to talk. He emphasized the teaching part of the meeting to a fault and failed to meet the other needs of caring. Before long the members in his group began to languish and never went on to become leaders themselves.

The measure of the meeting is not whether the leader enjoyed it or not. The measure is whether or not the work that needed to get done got done. So for that reason, the following schedule is imposed on new leaders.

- Open with 15-30 minutes of worship.
- Follow this with 15-30 minutes of prayer.
- Spend the following 10 minutes discussing the evangelism focus.
- Next, a specific teaching should be presented for 15-30 minutes.
- Finish by sharing the vision.

After this schedule has disciplined the leader to "hear the model," he should be released to "hear the Lord," for the emphasis of the meeting. Seasoned leaders may use the whole meeting time for only one of the activities mentioned. However, this is best done by men who have developed a sensitivity to the Spirit of God and the condition of the flock.

While a seasoned home fellowship leader may take a group further, a new leader who

follows the given schedule does far more for his people than the average believer.

Worship

The meeting begins with worship. This worship is significant because it is in the home with very little electronic support. Worship is never more real than when it happens at home.

²³ But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. John 4:23 (KJV)

This scripture appears in the middle of a conversation between Jesus and a woman who wanted to argue about “where” it was proper to worship. She was a Samaritan who worshiped in a certain mountain, while the Jews typically worshiped in Jerusalem. However, Jesus makes it clear that God is looking for people who would not haggle about proper trappings in worship. He wanted people full of the Spirit, worshiping Him from their heart because of a revelation of Himself.

What a wonderful opportunity the home fellowship presents for living out this desire of God.

A home fellowship leader should have a good understanding of worship and how it plays into the gathering of God’s people. It is the leader’s opinion of worship that will be carried into the meeting. For this reason a leader must be in constant worship and developing principles of worship to share during the meeting.

The nature of the worship will vary from group to group. Some leaders may play the guitar, and that will automatically set the tone for worship. If the leaders don’t play, it may be possible that some member of the group is able to play an instrument.

If no instruments are available, it is hoped that someone can sing well enough to lead a capella. If no one sings well enough to lead a capella, the group is in the wonderful position to get creative. Possibilities will be discussed later.

Supposing someone in the group does at least sing well enough to lead, a leader should be appointed who will take responsibility to lead the worship. This person should be a worshipper at heart and should spend time preparing a list for worship at the meeting. The songs chosen should be songs that everyone is familiar with or the words should be copied and passed out. It is important that when new people are starting to come to the meeting that the words are available so they can join in.

Now, suppose no one really sings in the group. This is not a problem. Very little is said about singing in the New Testament. Much of the worship mentioned is verbal worship without music. There are at least three methods of worship which serve home fellowships which are not musically inclined.

Reading of the Psalms is a wonderful way to worship together. It is possible to spend a few minutes at the beginning of the meeting reading through the Psalms as very powerful worship. Using this as worship, a group will go through the Psalms about every five months or so (this is reading four or five chapters a week).

A second form of worship is just spontaneous thanksgiving and praise to God for Who He is and What He has done. If the group gets into the habit of this, it will build into them a type of worship that is easier to carry around than a CD player. Of course, it takes some instruction and encouragement along the way.

A third way to worship is through prepared testimonies. The leader can ask members to prepare ahead of time to share testimonies which glorify the Lord.

Even if a group is strong musically, the leader should incorporate these methods of wor-

ship into his meeting at least sporadically.

Remember, the key in worship is the leader of the group. If he is a worshipper, he will bring that to the group. If he knows the group needs to worship because of reading this manual, he will “do worship” but the group may not worship.

Ministry or prayer

Following worship, when hearts have been directed toward the Lord, the leaders should move the members toward ministry or prayer. Again, this takes some training of the members and the leader should not be discouraged if others do not join in easily.

Ministry would include any type of encouragement, word or spiritual gift that a member feels inclined to give. The leader should model having specific words for individuals during this time. As members see a leader minister in this way it lays the foundation to bring the member along in the same.

If members of the group do not flow naturally in this kind of ministry, it may warrant a few teachings on encouragement, spiritual gifts and ministry of the Word. A leader who needs to work with his people could use the meeting itself as a time to train in this area.

Small teachings on the following topics with the accompanying scripture would be useful:

Exhortation:

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*. and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.
Hebrews 10:25

Prophesy:

But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men *to* edification, and exhortation, and comfort. 1 Corinthians 14:3 (KJV)

Speaking the Word:

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 2 Timothy 4:2

After giving opportunity for ministry the group moves on to prayer.

The prayer time should begin with spontaneous prayer following the worship or ministry. If all the time is used up through this kind of prayer, the leader can make sure to do prayer requests at the end. However, if there is time during this period, members can share personal requests and then someone can lead the group in praying for those needs.

The home fellowship leader should slowly become an expert in prayer. By the time a believer is ten years old in the Lord, he should be well versed in the various types of prayer.

Prayer is any type of communication between man and God. Petition, praise, supplication and intercession can be mentioned as examples of different types of prayer. Each of these have various applications and there are other types as well.

The leader should have a foundational understanding of the various types of prayer. In addition he should both grow and help his group to grow by passing on teaching and encouragement toward prayer each week.

All churches should have some small pamphlet to serve as an introduction to prayer. The leaders should be aware of the primary areas presented in the pamphlet and review them with the group throughout the year. In addition the leader must continue to grow in an understanding of prayer through reading classic books on the subject. Two books worth mentioning are *Prevailing Prayer* by D.L. Moody. It is a small book that outlines various types of prayer. Of course *With Christ in the School of Prayer* by Andrew Murray is an all time classic.

While ministry and prayer could be listed as two different sections, they are combined to emphasize a flow between the two. This period of time should be flexible and weight should be given to a different aspect each week as the leader discerns.

Evangelism Focus

While many churches use the home fellowship meeting as a means of evangelism, this particular model does not generally encourage non-believers to attend the regular weekly meeting in the home. This meeting is designed to strengthen the believer. However, it has been the experience using this model that the group becomes very effective in evangelism as they use the weekly meeting to plan outreach as a team.

The method of evangelism has been discussed in a previous chapter. It should be remembered that the evangelism of every group will be different. One may use gatherings in the park while others may use meals in the home.

Time is set apart in the meeting each week for planning and prayer for evangelism efforts. The leaders must keep outreach on their hearts and cultivate the vision to reach others each week. All members should be involved in some type of outreach at all time.

The first line of outreach is helping members see the people in their lives who need the Lord. This can be barbers, neighbors, waiters or anyone else who breathes and is seen regularly. It is often helpful to have a prayer list with the names of potential believers. The group can use these minutes to pray for those people.

Since the numeric growth of the group is an indication of its health, a leader may need to implement some specific outreach when it seems the members may be getting indifferent to the lost. This period of time can be used to discuss and develop a strategy for the group. If the leader cannot come up with a plan that serves the group, he should speak with other leaders for ideas.

Finally, if a specific outreach is going on, this time can be used to pray for the unbelievers and keep the team focused on the plan.

Again, this meeting is not generally used as outreach. However, there are times when it may be good to designate a month or two as a time for doing outreach during the home fellowship meeting time. This could be through adjusting the format of the meeting or using this time for going out.

One added hint on growing a home fellowship numerically. The author of this manual has built several home fellowships easily by being attentive to visitors at the weekly church meeting.

Just remember, a healthy group will grow.

Building the saints through the Word

¹⁵ Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV)

A healthy church must work on all levels to make disciples who are students of the Word. While one function of the weekly home meeting is to coordinate activities, the leaders should usually make provision for teaching that is intended to build the members through the Word of God on this night as well.

Choosing the topic for teaching is extremely important and should be done together with older leaders until the new leader has a better understanding of how this teaching should supplement the rest of the believer's studies. Each believer should be meeting in the Word on several levels. One level is that of personal study. Another level would be weekly teaching by the pastor. As the home fellowship leader wades through what is important, the sharing at

home fellowship must compliment what the believer is already studying.

One great approach to the teaching portion of the home fellowship meeting is to go over the teaching from the previous church service. This supplements the general teaching of the body and doesn't just add on a new topic. However, it is often appropriate to do a particular study of the Bible or to read a book together. If the home fellowship leader chooses a book to read, it should be one which compliments the vision of the church. The best way to make sure the book fits the vision is to ask the church leadership.

Most churches have certain video courses used in training the flock. It is sometimes helpful to review these videos in home fellowships. Again, these videos should be suggested by the leadership of the church.

It is mentioned here that videos and books should be suggested by the leadership of the church. As a believer transitions into responsibility for others, it is important that he begin to understand that even good books can be bad if they work against the vision of the local church. One example would be the popular "Left Behind," series. Without commenting on the right or wrong eschatology in the series, the books are hurtful if read by believers in congregations who disagree with the books. They create a certain expectancy that may not be fulfilled by churches with a differing view. As one matures, he begins to understand that the presuppositions behind books often teach theology. It is important that the leader know how books on a particular subject affect the developing believer in other topics as well.

So, most importantly, the teaching needs to be knit in with the overall vision God has given the church.

In addition, the leader must always bring the study back to two points:

The study should help people come to know God better. Some studies are answers to questions. Some studies are instructions on how to live. Some studies are just to gain knowledge about God and His Kingdom. However, the leader must be able to present all of these as a revelation of God's character, nature or desire. Answers must be a revelation of God's purpose.

The second point a leader must emphasize in home fellowship is the absolute submission to the Word of God. The learning of God's Word must never be only academic. The growing believer must learn to allow the Word of God to become engrafted into his life. It is not the hearing of the Word, but the doing of the word that brings life. The word cannot be mastered, it must become master.

Share the Vision

¹⁸ Where *there is* no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he. Proverbs 29:18 (KJV)

² And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make *it* plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. Habakkuk 2:2 (KJV)

The leader must have vision and be able to communicate that vision to others. If this is not true, the home fellowship will fall apart. It is simple but true, If people don't know where they are going, they will never get there.

Vision for the Christian believer is more than an idea. It is a revelation of God's desire for his people. God truly has a purpose and He is accomplishing that purpose in the earth today. The wise leader discerns that purpose and folds himself and others into serving that great purpose.

While the leadership of the church should have the vision written out plainly and declare it often, the best place to personalize it is in the home fellowship.

Knowing God through serving others

The model of church life being presented in this manual is based on a revelation of key elements in both scripture and culture. The abiding values and principles of the first three chapters capture God's heart and desire. The actual form the vision takes seeks to apply the derived principles to the culture of the day.

While this model takes into account many aspects of culture, the following are mentioned as examples.

First, the current deterioration of relationships must be addressed. Marriage and family relationships in the United States are vanishing. It is an epidemic. If any church is going to bring the Kingdom of God to this culture, it must function in such a way that it restores relationship.

Secondly, individualism has shredded the society. The church must function in such a way that personal lives are sacrificed for the work of God. All men must learn to give their individual lives for the cause greater than themselves.

Even though it is a buzzword, postmodernism must be mentioned. Without detail, postmodernism can be simply described as a way of life in which truth rests in a person's perception or "how they see it." The church must clearly establish the fact that God is truth and He has communicated that truth to His people. Furthermore, He has given them the ability to know what He means as opposed to what His Word means to them.

These three are only given as examples of cultural trends considered in the model presented. It is believed by the author that the vision of this manual, including the method, militate against current culture and serves to tear down the gates of hell and regain ground for the heavenly Zion.

While this whole manual describes the working of the vision, three points should be explained on a home fellowship level. The home fellowship leader should share the following points each week and emphasize them for five minutes.

- This home fellowship is based in a desire to know and walk with God.
- The vision of this home fellowship is to learn how to care for one another through discipleship, honest relationship and mutual edification in the Lord.
- It is also imperative that this home fellowship extend the life of the Kingdom to others through wisely sharing the gospel.
- Furthermore, it is our goal for each of us to become part of the leadership team and be prepared to begin another group as we grow in numbers.
- Finally, we are part of a larger church who's vision it is to plant small churches of 100 to 200 members around the city as a foundation for further outreach.

The topics presented in this chapter are the essential building blocks of the vision. Worship, prayer and the Word passed from person to person in responsible relationship are like food, water and air in the Kingdom of God. In order for the home fellowship to function properly it must be led by healthy leaders. The best preparation for leading in these areas is to be a man of prayer, worship, the Word and love.

Chapter 10

The Roles Unique to Women

This chapter will discuss the unique role of women in the church. The last part will discuss women's leadership in the body and home fellowship. However, before that topic is broached, a woman's role in daily Christian life will be considered.

When the word unique is used, it refers to those aspects of life which are only addressed to women. The beginning of this chapter gives some remarks about women in general and then moves on to a description of unique roles. Specifically, the end of the chapter will discuss: 1) Meekness and gentleness, 2) Being taught by older women, 3) Loving their husbands and children and 4) Keeping house.

No single list for women

To begin with, it should be noted that the manual has no chapter on the unique role of men in the church. This is not a careless omission. It has been the experience of LCF that a simple reading of the qualification for leadership in 1 Timothy and Titus provides ample understanding of what needs to happen in a man's life before he considers leadership positions in the church. Things like being a good husband, father and employee appear in this list.

Through the years, the church has attempted to be faithful to qualify her leaders through these lists. It is interesting to note how many would-be-leaders strive for positions before they are good Christians (as defined by said lists). Church leadership works to make sure these men are not given a place of leadership.

Now, when it comes to qualifying women for leadership, there is not a single list. However, there are certain unique roles that women are to be taught. Like men, women should not even begin to consider themselves for a role in the body until they have allowed the basic callings of their gender to shape and form them.

Feminism clouds the discipling process

As noted earlier, this manual is bound by its time and place of writing. Certain things must be addressed that may be of no value in another place at another time. This chapter brings us to another one of those themes: feminism.

Feminism, as practiced generally in American culture, militates against the role of women in the church. Abortion, large-scale daycare, lesbianism and a host of anti-male sentiment are the offspring of this movement. The church has adequately opposed these explicitly contrabiblical trends. Unfortunately, the pressure of feminism has moved the church at large toward the feminist position in subtle ways.

Since the purpose of this chapter is not a full explanation of the problem, a few statements will illustrate the types of influences that affect the church:

First, there is a general "feeling" among some Christian women that they "have to stay home with the kids."

Corollary to this sentiment is the idea that women have to sacrifice their career.

Some women believe the church is unfair to women and does not give them their rightful place of ministry, stated another way: “the church is chauvinistic.”

These thoughts only touch on the many attitudes that work against the woman’s role in the Kingdom in general and the church in specific.

The unfortunate result of these combined attitudes is that women end up believing that those unique, women’s roles (listed above) in the church prevent them from “more important positions.” On the grounds of this conclusion, women decide to resist those very roles. This situation presents two ironies. The first is thinking child rearing and/or homemaking is a lesser position. This simply isn’t true. The other irony is that those unique roles prepare women to function in the broader ministries that they see as “more important.” While they are not “more important,” the church does need women in broader ministry than what they currently perform.

It does not seem “feminist” to say that men should first love their wives, protect, train and provide for their children, do well on their job and study their Bible before they are considered for leadership. Yet listing a woman’s unique roles as the place to begin sends the feminist mindset into accusations of chauvinism.

So, what should be the discipling process for women? It is the same as for men. Women should become Christians, learn the foundations of the Kingdom and then develop devotionally. Following this, they should begin to integrate into the community according to the general modes of relating (the rules of love.) During this time they should learn the uniqueness of their gender and the part it plays in community life. For women, this begins with an attitude of meekness and gentleness. It also includes having a heart for learning to serve a man, mother children and/or work with younger women to do the same. (In this, it is possible for an older woman who is not married or does not have children to teach/help younger women love their husbands and care for their children).

It may be that reading the previous paragraph or two caused a negative emotional reaction. If that is the case, the reader may be tainted by some of the negative attitudes being discussed. This is the nature of the beast. It causes women to react against a simple explanation of what the Bible defines as special roles. If the reader discovers negative thoughts toward these beginning principles, she should acknowledge those and see what is needed to renew her mind.

It is here that the church has much work to do. Before her women can be released to broader ministry, they must first embrace and be shaped by the image God intended for woman from the beginning. The discussion will now center on those unique, women’s roles. Following this, the remainder of the chapter will describe a woman’s part in serving the church on a broader scale.

Four aspects of the woman’s role

Again, this chapter cannot detail the many ideas and thoughts that go into shaping women according to their uniqueness. At best, primary aspects can be listed and briefly discussed. Four aspects of the woman’s role have been chosen: 1) Meekness and gentleness, 2) Being taught by older women, 3) Loving their husbands and children and 4) Keeping house.

The first aspect, that women should have unique attitudes and demeanor, may surprise some. The best known portion of scripture relating to this is in the book of 1 Peter:

“Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold,

or of putting on of apparel; But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” 1 Peter 3:1-4 (KJV)

Two points are worth noting. First, meekness and quietness are set in opposition to outward adornment. The woman is not to be noticed for her beauty or achievement, but the spirit in which she serves and achieves. This spirit originates in the heart. It is not an encouragement to cover poor attitudes with proper comportment. It is a call to allow God to deeply change the woman from needing recognition or notice to becoming one who serves without needing notice. How this happens is a book in itself. In the context of LCF, it is part of initial discipling.

The second point to note from this scripture as it relates to a meek and quiet spirit is the context. The very context of this admonition relates to how a woman submits to her husband. In other words, in the context of serving her husband, a woman should develop a meek and quiet attitude. Working in this attitude at home prepares the woman to carry this attitude in all she does.

This provides a good bridge to the second aspect of a woman’s unique role: submitting to her husband.

It is interesting to ask women how they live out the scriptures which teach them to “submit” or “be in subjection” to their own husbands. For many, the explanation begins with a litany of what it does not or should not mean. Unfortunately, the litany ends there. Many women are so determined that they will not be “ruled poorly or unjustly” that they have not gone on to learn how to submit properly. This type of woman never learns to serve.

So, without giving the teachings here that go into shaping a woman to submit to her husband, it can simply be said, “Before a woman goes on to serve in a broader fashion, she must first learn to submit (to her own husband if she is married).

The third aspect is a woman’s call in the home. Again, because of twentieth century attitudes, this concept conjures ideas of oppression in some minds. Housekeeping is seen as trivial and demeaning work made for those who could not achieve. However, in Titus, Paul is careful to point out that women are to be keepers at home.

“The aged women likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, *To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.*” Titus 2:3-5 (KJV)

A well-managed home provides the foundation for all ministry in the church. While a program is run in a church building, life is imparted in the living room. Hospitality, service, intimacy, faith, fellowship and a whole list of virtues are best realized in the home. Making the home this place of ministry is invaluable. It is especially important to churches like LCF that are working to emphasize ministry in homefellowships.

Keeping a home involves everything from producing income, to cleaning, to creating a good spirit in the home. It is primarily the woman’s responsibility to manage the home in such a way that these dynamics occur.

It is at this point that we begin to see how homefellowships help restore some of the emphasis of early Christianity. Hospitality in the home played a much greater role in the church than the worship style, carpet color and parking availability. The woman who wants to grow in the vision of this manual should ask herself, “How have I managed my home to provide a foundation for my family’s ministry?”

Well, this portion of scripture also brings up the fourth aspect of a woman's uniqueness: learning from an older woman.

While the verse states that the older women should teach the younger, it implies that younger women should be learning these things ... from older women.

Once again, culture can be indicted for working against this principle. Younger women are taken from their mothers and placed in schools. Older women are taken from the home and placed in jobs. That leaves younger women to be shaped and formed in competition with the younger men and by the developing attitudes of other young women. Instead of an older woman's strong influence in her life, young girls are formed by "youth culture." The attitudes of youth culture do not need to be expounded here; they are evident.

So, most women who come to the Kingdom have developed by responding to the pressures of peer culture. If that woman is over 18, she has probably been shaped internally to react to a completely different value system than the Kingdom's. Certainly good teaching can help undo that psychological framework. However, the best prescription is to find an older woman who loves her husband and has produced a home full of hospitality. Having found that older woman, the younger should allow her to teach her how to live these godly virtues.

This concludes the four examples of unique, female roles presented in the Bible. Every church should be able to nurture a woman in these attitudes as well as others. It is best done by older women, which takes us to the next section: What are the broader ministries available to women?

Broader ministries for women

To begin with, a distinction must be made between government and ministry. The Bible has clear direction on establishing government in the church. While some exegetical gymnastics have produced alternate interpretations, the clear teaching of the scripture is that women are not to govern the church. Specifically, women are not to fulfill the position of eldership in the church.

On the other hand, in regard to areas of ministry, women are on an equal level with men. It is this area of ministry that the rest of the chapter will address.

Paul's admonition to the church at Rome in regard to Phoebe is a good place to begin:

"I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also." Romans 16:1-2 (KJV)

Here is a woman whose name means "radiant." She had been a great help to the church in Cenchrea as well as to Paul himself. She is presented by letter to the church at Rome. The church is admonished by the apostle, "whatever she needs to do whatever she chooses, give it to her."

There it is. That is the place of ministry in the church that women should achieve. Already, in the body at LCF, there are women who have proven themselves worthy of this commendation. It did not come from special giftings; it did not come from a special call. It came because the consistent activity of their life helped many people around them.

It is not a Biblical title, but the term used for these ladies is "primary women" (this is the equivalent of "older women"). They are known and respected, yielded to and served. Out of that, they have developed ministries that touch the whole church. Since it is not the

purpose of this manual to describe broader ministries of the church, the following discussion will focus on the responsibility of these women in homefellowships.

The role of women in homefellowships

This aspect of homefellowship is seen on two levels. First, through the fellowship of the sisters, younger women are disciplined. Second, as these women mature they become the body which passes on these special set of skills.

Working backwards with the four points mentioned in unique, women's roles, the need for older women to train the younger women is noted. In fact, "older woman" does not mean just age. It assumes the aspect of maturity. A woman who has first done the things she is to teach should begin teaching those to younger women.

It is amazing how many women who don't even know how to change a diaper or keep house think they are qualified to "lead other women." It is like the man who cannot even disciple his own sons yet thinks he is a pastor. Although women are not ordained to a specific position, homefellowship leaders understand who these women are and give them the liberty and recognition to minister. Women who get into this tract of ministry can branch out later to other things.

So, first and foremost, these women see a primary role in disciplining younger women. In relation to homefellowship, this would be the major responsibility. Now, it is worth mentioning again that ministry and authority are two different things. Married women are submitted to their husbands and unmarried women are submitted to their fathers. Other women are submitted in a general way to the direction of the church (authority for a divorced or single woman is a difficult issue to explain and needs more in depth discussion). However, all young women need strong, spiritual mothers who are helping them work through the issues of becoming a woman of God.

One of the things homefellowship leaders are trained to do is help men direct their wives and daughters toward older women in the Lord. They also help young women who do not live at home find older women (or couples) to learn from.

In addition to focusing on younger women, the primary women in the church extend their own home to the body. This includes both during homefellowship meetings and extemporaneous visits throughout the week.

Remember, these women have trained their kids, loved their husbands, managed their own homes well, have taught good things and become noted for their discretion and meek and gentle spirit. Out of this character, they make their homes an oasis for travelers in the midst of a desert.

People are welcomed into their homes with this spirit because of the woman's management. Children are greeted and directed in such a way that the woman's concern for the children is obvious. Whatever the program is for the evening, whether a formal meeting or just one couple visiting, the purpose of the evening is facilitated by the woman in the spirit of Phoebe who knew how to serve and help others get their business taken care of.

At the risk of seeming programmatic, the previous paragraph will be used as an outline to give examples of each aspect of the woman's ministry in the homefellowship community.

The spirit of the house is the first thing mentioned. Meekness and quietness coupled with discretion create an atmosphere for true love and fellowship to occur. While men should have the same qualities, there is a special way for women to create atmosphere in the home or gathering.

While a list of actions that reflect meekness and quietness could be presented, that would not achieve the teaching necessary. Actions of meekness from a woman who is not meek create a plastic atmosphere. Most can remember entering a home full of smiles and

feeling they were not truly welcome. It is the first ministry of the primary women to “be” these things, not “act” these things.

While the list should be expanded as the woman matures in homefellowship ministry, meekness, quietness and discretion are at the top.

Simply put, meekness is accepting who one is and operating within the full scope of personal ability. Meekness keeps a woman from putting on airs. Meekness challenges a woman to do all that she can and be satisfied with her portion.

Quietness is also translated as peaceable. Another word might be tranquility. The woman of God should have a sense of peace which emanates to those around her. Remember, Phebe’s name meant radiant. These two words are used to describe the woman’s spirit. In this sense of the word, it includes the mind and emotions. The woman must learn to be peaceful on the inside.

The word discreet is similar. It speaks of someone who acts according to wisdom and love, someone with self-controlled actions. Practically, it describes a woman who did not always impose her emotional state (whether happy or sad) on those around her. It is a woman who is able to use her emotions to encourage those around her but who has the sense not to emote at the wrong time.

The importance of keeping the home

So far, a woman who is tuned into the development of the younger women around her and conducts her interactions circumspectly has been described. Next, the woman’s keeping of the home should be mentioned. The actual word used in the scripture (keeper) can be understood as manager. It is the woman’s job to manage the house. A quick perusal of Proverbs 31 reveals a very powerful foundation created in the home as the wise woman “manages” the house.

This management first feeds and provides for the woman’s own household. Next, it extends into caring for the poor and needy. Finally, the household becomes so great that the husband becomes famous because of his wife’s good works. These might be some of the “good things” the woman is expected to teach to others.

On the night of a homefellowship meeting, this kind of management means sufficient refreshment for those who arrive. It also covers special needs (death, sickness, birth etc.) represented at the meeting.

Part of managing the house has to do with training the kids in how to function in the house. This involves both doing for the children and then teaching them to do. The woman of God turns her children into a team to serve the vision of the house. In the early years, she must do more for the children. However, as they get older, they are trained to take over responsibilities which free the mother to serve in a broader sense.

The older women know how to handle a small group of kids. They understand the importance of the kids’ time together. They know how that time can build the Kingdom or produce foolishness. These women do not see group meetings as a time to allow the kids to baby-sit each other. It is a time for directed play that moves the children toward the vision.

The older women also know how to include younger children, especially girls, in hospitality. The healthy homefellowship has a team of women and maturing children who care for current needs of the group with special attention to the activity of other children in the home or at the meeting.

Women support their leaders

The fourth aspect is loving and submitting to husbands. The married woman should be her husband’s best support in extending hospitality or ministry from the home. Having

spent years learning how to love and serve the desires of her husband, she now begins to join with him publicly in ministering to the needs of the body.

While older women certainly pray, prophesy and share encouraging testimonies, they have the unique role of knowing the direction the meeting is supposed to go and serving the leadership in getting it there. If a phone rings, a baby cries or a cup drops, the woman of God knows how to respond so the meeting or gathering is not disturbed. She sees her role as one of trusting and supporting the leadership.

In the teaching and discussion, rather than take the lead generally, she uses her comments to promote the direction of the teaching.

So, we see that younger women need to take on the unique roles women are given by the Lord. As they mature in these, they are then put in the place to help others grow in the same path. Out of this formation of character, older women go on to gain stature which causes the leadership to say to others, “help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.” That broader ministry is the subject of a different chapter.

Knowing God through serving others

