

Master of Mission & Evangelism Dissertation

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Title: “The Lamad Book of Mission and Evangelism to Secular Un-churched 21st Century
People.”

A Revelation Based Approach to Christian Missiology

The Lamad Book of Mission

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Glossary

Revelation Knowledge: This means the type of knowledge which is derived through the work of the Holy Spirit through the eyes and ears of the heart. It does not come from a human source, but from the Spirit of Christ' who dwells in the Christian's spirit.

Rhema: This comes from the Greek word Ρηματος [Rhemos] which stands for the spoken word as opposed to the written word Λογος [Logos]. In revelation terms this is the word that is used again and again in the New Testament when speaking of the words of God. It means that when God's word is read that we are listening to still speaking words. Rhema also stands for the voice of God which is perceived as spontaneous thoughts or ideas which light upon our minds when the Holy Spirit communicates with us through our hearts.

Lamad: is a Hebrew word which stands for a word of instruction to a learner or a disciple. In terms of this book it means the way that the Old Testament prophets and Jesus and his Apostles learnt through the direct disciple-ing, or apprenticing, of their hearts by the Spirit of God. It stands for the way that Christians go about mission activity as they live by the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit showing them what God wants to do through them next, and what he wants to teach them next. The key text in this regard is found in John 5:19, 20; which tells us that Jesus never did anything unless he saw "his Father doing it". Hence "Lamad" mission is based on the way that Jesus did things – following his Father's heart!

All other terms in the book are explained or self explanatory in the context in which they are used.

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Chapter 1 – A Revelation Based Approach to Mission and Evangelism in Secularised Britain, Europe, America

I have been involved in mission and evangelism to the so called un-churched sector of British society for the past 19 years. As I will discuss in the next chapter the facts about post modern Britain demonstrate that contemporary British people have moved away from a view which has a Christ centred world view toward a secularised rationalism and, or, an experiential search for meaning with New Age Mysticism or other ideological routes. Indeed humanism and rationalism in the British church scene may be said to be widely embraced in the more liberally compromising established denominations to a lesser or greater extent. In the so called “free church” sector that is non-denominational the picture is mixed, and in the widely acclaimed restoration style churches there is a definite heart to restore the church to its first century revelation based community life!¹ House groups play a significant role in the social and relational basis for encouraging people to explore spiritual experiences others are having. The purpose of my dissertation is to frankly consider current trends of Christian mission to British secular culture and by extension raise issues and training needs which can be transferred to other expressions of Western culture in Europe or North America; particularly, in the light of what seems to me to be the New Testament model, which to a greater or lesser extent may be loosely labelled as coming from restoration-ism.

My own experience of mission to secular/un-churched society seems to agree notionally with the statistics which indicate that between 40 – 50% of people are completely un-churched in the United Kingdom. The great challenge which burns as a passion in my heart is to reach out to people so that they may come to have a deep and intimate reciprocal relationship with Jesus Christ through the enabling of his Holy Spirit. Relationship and intimacy with the God-head are the prime passions of my own life as an unashamed charismatic evangelical Christian. And my experience has taught me that the only type of evangelism that really works is that which is derived through the media of revelation knowledge. Paul writes to the Ephesians:

“I never cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him”².

It cannot be over-emphasized that Paul’s evangelistic missionary activities were based on revelation knowledge. The concept of the Greek term for “revelation” is *αποκαλυψις* [APOCALYPSIS] which translates as an “uncovering of something which is hidden until it is revealed.”³ Paul prays that the Christians who live in Ephesus might have the eyes and ears of their spiritual hearts opened so that they may receive revelation knowledge. The only way that the people of Christ can be or become people of Christ is if they have their blinded spiritual eyes opened to see what Christ is doing in the unseen supernatural world to all those who are blinded by the so called “god of this world”⁴. This is based on several simple facts in Paul’s outlook on the way God guides people and saves people. So let us consider these factors:

¹ Walker, 1998: 129 - 170

² Ephesians 1:16, 17 RSV

³ Moulton, 1981:42

⁴ Ephesians 2:1-4

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1. Paul's own conversion experience set the paradigm for all of his philosophy to evangelism and discipleship. He writes of his conversion experience on his way to persecute Christians at Damascus the following:

“For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not man's gospel, for I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through a **revelation of Jesus Christ**. For you have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were elders before me, but I went away into Arabia; and again I returned to Damascus.”⁵

The radical turn around in Paul's life story from being a convinced Jew against Christ, and his disciples, to himself becoming a disciple, set the whole tenor of his life's work telling others about Christ into clear focus; for Paul Christ is revealed “to him” or “in him”⁶. The Spirit of Jesus comes into his very soul. Christ proves his reality through word and vision⁷. Paul needs no one in the first place to teach him anything but he departs to Arabia and allows Christ to continue to reveal himself to Paul through the eyes and ears of his heart by the Holy Spirit's living presence in him. To Paul there is only one way that evangelism can happen and that is the same way that it happened for him – by “revelation”; an uncovering of the real living Jesus who is alive for evermore in the supernatural world of God⁸. The born a gain Christian, who now possesses a new heart, makes continuous contact with Jesus by his Spirit in the super natural world!

So a first principle of New Testament Mission and Evangelism is that Christ is directly involved in still making disciples by direct communication with them as his humble learners; through the eyes and ears of their new covenant hearts. Christ actually dwells in the deepest recesses of the new Christian heart and we are to live by intimate two way dialogical communication and relationship with him. Consider how Paul pictures this reality:

“And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness of God. For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’

⁵ Galatians 1:11 – 17 RSV

⁶ Ibid. 1:16

⁷ Acts 9

⁸ Fee, 1994:372

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who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.”⁹

There is only one way to be convinced about the reality of Jesus and that is for him to live in Christian hearts by the reality of his communicative living Spirit. In other words people are only converted to a relationship with Christ by opening their hearts to the proof of his continued life by him being continuously revealed alive and well; giving vision and thought to the eyes and ears of their hearts.

This is exactly what convinced me to become a follower of Jesus because he became real to me the moment he filled my inner most being with his Spirit. From the day of my conversion I have had a living dialoguing relationship with him in the depths of my heart. Post modern secular people need to find Jesus exactly as I did, and as Paul and all early post Pentecost Christians of the first Century did¹⁰!

2. When the church in the Roman province of Galatia went off the rails, and started to try to find other ways of living Christian life, Paul did not write his letter to them trying to convince them to sort out their lives for themselves. He did not set out church programmes that would keep them on track. He did not appeal to things they had achieved as Christians as the basis for them to try even harder to be faithful Christians. He did not brow beat them with manipulation and guilt trip strategies. No! Paul appealed to their experience of the living Christ who worked among them solely on the basis of revelation knowledge and life. He writes:

“O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? Let me ask you **only this**: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh? Did you experience so many things in vain? – If it really is in vain. Does he who supplies [present continuous tense, continues to supply] the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith?”¹¹

And this short passage makes the point all too strongly, the “only” thing that Paul wants them to consider is the basis of their ongoing relationship with Jesus, “Is it based on a supernatural indwelling of the living speaking Spirit of Jesus in their lives?” Or “Is it based on reaching performance targets to get God on their side by doing things to please him and win his favour?” Clearly their relationship with God is based on “only this” revelation reciprocity.

When I had first become a Christian, and upon attending church for a while, I became confused with the many young people who had been brought up in the church; they considered my open declarations that I had met Jesus personally, and that he spoke to me daily in my heart by his Spirit, as weird or even crazy! It must be said that the church was an

⁹ 2 Corinthians 4:3 – 6 RSV

¹⁰ Frost and Hirsch, 2003: 22

¹¹ Galatians 3:1 – 5 RSV

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inter-generational church and the young people were from second or third generation Christian families. Some years after joining, and having gone to study at university, I returned to the same church and almost 90% of the 70 odd young people that I knew previously had left the church with no faith or experience of God they could speak of. I met up with some of these young people years later, who were then married with children of their own, at an Alpha course I was conducting with another friend, and they still had not experienced the revelation of Christ through his Spirit.

The point I am driving home here is how different church can become! Consider how far it can move from the New Testament blue print that exemplifies the normal Christian life based on revelation knowledge.

3. The Pauline epistemology is really based on the whole way he describes the gospel, and its' current appearance in the person of Jesus Christ; beginning in first century Palestine. He writes:

“Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s grace which was given me by the working of his power. To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places. This was according to the eternal purpose, which he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and confidence of access through our faith in him.”¹²

Up until the appearance of Jesus through incarnation in flesh and blood, the plan of God remained hidden to the extent that it was only pointed forward to by prophecy which was authenticated by the arrival of the reality in Jesus. Jesus is the revelation knowledge of God brought to life in a person rather than on parchment. God’s thought is made audible, living and breathing in the person of the Son of God. Before his arrival the great significance of Christ – who is the gospel [the good news] – was not understood. Only by Christ’s incarnation is God made known¹³. So the true revelation knowledge of the gospel is not a set of doctrines or ideas but a person who is living, breathing, thinking, feeling and communicating with other sons and daughters of God through whom Jesus becomes incarnate in; through his indwelling Spirit. The gospel will always remain hidden as a concept, and it will always take life when Christian people get along side secular people and start to share what the intimacy of their revelation based relationship with Jesus means to their lives. Post modern people need to make at least 10 good friends before they will go to church, but they only need to make one or two close Christian friends to discover the way they too can open their hearts to the revelation of the liberating Saviour for themselves.

Hence the thesis of this dissertation begins with the fundamental statement that Jesus is the only answer to reaching the secular/un-churched post modern people of today. He will do so by meeting

¹² Ephesians 3:7 – 12 RSV

¹³ John 1:14, 18; 14:9

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them in their hearts on the basis of developing intimacy with them by his Spirit. Christian people cannot convert people to gospel concepts and teachings in the secularised situation – what post modern people want is an experience based on revelation reality. In the first place Christians who live in revelation intimacy with Jesus will need to forge relationships with secular people based on God's genuine love for all of his creatures. No one is easily fooled these days; an ingenuous Christian person who only wants bottoms on church seats will be sent away with a few choice words by our secular friends. They can smell a rat a few feet away in my experience. What they want are people who have Christ's passionate desire resident in their hearts; to enable others to discover the Christ of super natural revelation.

Moreover, I have been through a number of years of a wilderness experience up until about 2 years ago, when I started to get involved in influencing various churches and their mission outlooks again. In the lake district this past spring [April 2007] God gave me a piece of revelation knowledge that he wished me to move forward into an apostolic style of team based ministry again; which would lead to Britain, Europe and the world going through a great revival based on revelation relationship with Christ the real gospel [the person of good news sent by God]. I am not saying that this will happen because of me, but I am claiming that God is awakening many people in different contexts to the need for a flat line apostolic ministry once again – which basis leadership on the team rather than the apostle.

It is not the purpose of this chapter to set out all of the things God has given to me as a man being part of a sent [apostolic team of many thousands] team to reach the secular world. But it is my purpose to declare that:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me [all Christian people], because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor, he has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.....’Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’”¹⁴

In the following chapters I will develop what I have sensed God giving me revelation guidance on for reaching the un-churched/secular society of today in Britain and even Europe.

I adhere to a belief that the only way to win people for Christ is through supernatural revelation of Christ to the eyes and ears of their hearts. However, the way that this will happen in God's scheme of things means that we need to be clear about the lessons God wants to teach the church about reaching people. Fundamental to it all is for Christian people who live in revelation intimacy with Jesus to become incarnate in genuine loving friendships for the long haul with secular people. It is taken as a given that they must form a relationship with genuine loving sensitive Christian friends before they will be facilitated by the Spirit of Jesus¹⁵ to explore a revelation based relationship with him. Secular post modern people are no longer interested in churches in the UK but they are seeking an experience of God. The New Age movement has won many admirers among this vast class of 50% of the British population. So they are seeking a knowledge of the supernatural world. They want what they see working for others rather than traditions. Hence let us as Christians take ground back from the enemy

¹⁴ Luke 4:18, 19, 21b RSV

¹⁵ Acts 16:6 - 10

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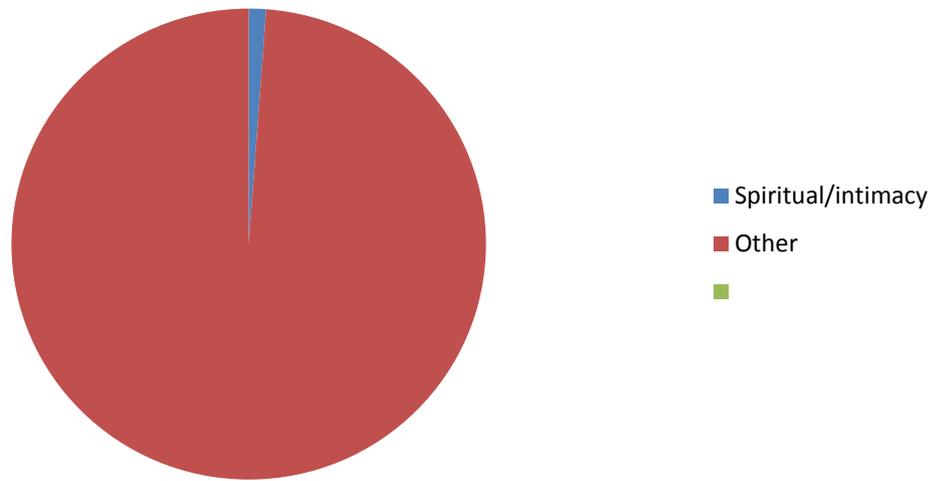
by getting along side people where they are rather than trying to get them to come to a church programme. As they get to love us as friends then they will want to join God's family of friends. The church fails because it does not promote families so much as programmes and schemes to reach people. People can only be reached if Christian people truly love them with the love of Christ, not dumping them at the first difficulty or hurdle, but like the hound of heaven they stick closer than glue to those Christ has died for. Whoever taught us that the church building is the church, or its programmes? The enemy I believe! No, the church is a body of people who love to be together in the family of God, and they want their non-Christian friends, however long it takes to be part of their family. Too often the church has dumped the uninterested un-churched people within minutes of meeting them or a few days or weeks. Jesus calls us to eternal friendships and eternal commitments to win the lost to intimacy with him.

This intimacy is based on revelation intimacy ultimately, and it is facilitated through genuine caring friendships with un-churched people. The prime thesis of this dissertation is that:

“The church has always been based on the people of the church who live in intimacy with Jesus dwelling in their hearts by his Spirit which communicates with them through the eyes and ears of their hearts! Mission to the secular world means we need to allow Christ to first of all become incarnate beside such people as he dwells in us, and ministers through us to such people, which will in turn lead to them opening their hearts to his Spirit as well. Revelation based mission to the secular world is the only way the gospel will take root in secular people's hearts – for it is founded on them having revelation intimacy with Jesus by discovery from their Christian friends who they have relationships with already!”

However, the picture in the church today is that on average, various studies have shown, that Christian people spend about 2 minutes praying per day with 10 minutes reading the Bible. Mostly this is one way prayer based; asking things of God rather than seeking revelation and dialogue with him. If we are generous we may say people spend 15 minutes a day praying and reading the Bible – with little time spent on developing intimacy with God. So let's be a little more generous and say people spend 2 hours a week on prayer and devotional reading. There are 168 hours in a week so we might visualise this in the pie chart below. Life seems to be defined for the average Christian in the post modern period doing most things related to secular life through work, leisure and family, with little thought for intimacy with Jesus.

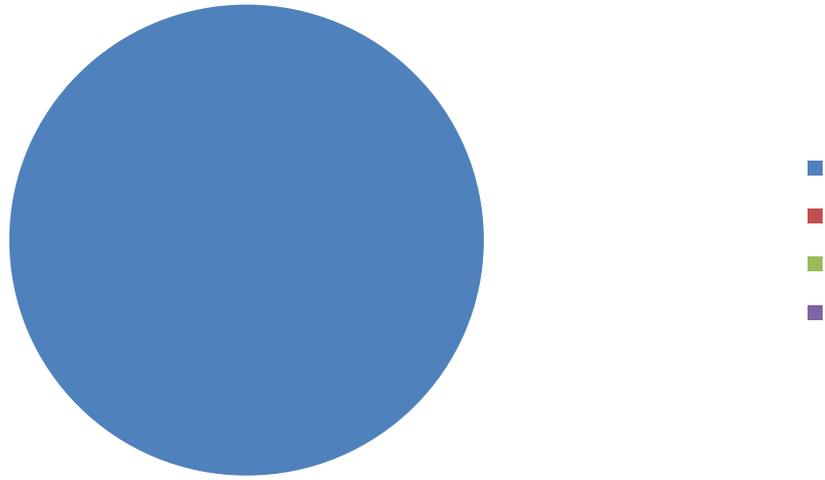
Spiritual activity Compared to other Activities



The new challenge is slowly being realised that the church, and its' meetings, need to take on a far smaller part of the Christian's life and they need to be equipped to see every area of their lives in work, leisure and at home as a ministry; in other words to see themselves as being ministers, and the church as a place to celebrate what has happened in the home mission. The term "clergy and laity" has much to do with the distinction between the secular and the profane, or those called to ministry and those who have not. Where as in popular traditional church the pastor is seen as the professional Christian who is full time at his job, of being a professional Christian, and that the lay member is part time on Sunday mornings, and at family worship time. The term "laity" comes from the Greek term "LAOS" [λαος]¹⁶ which is used biblically to speak of the "people of God" who are all in Biblical terms thought to be full time professional Christians and ministers in the body of Christ; with Christ as the head leading them, empowering and guiding them by his Spirit who lives in their hearts by faith. Consider the graphs below and ask Jesus to reveal by his Spirit how you view yourself as his full time minister, in the work he has given you to do, and in every life situation.

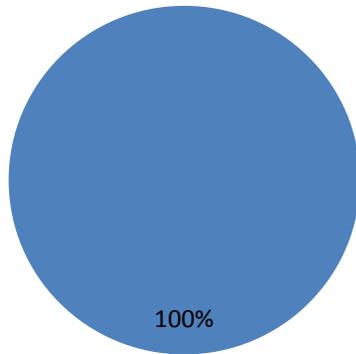
¹⁶ Moulton, 1981: 247

Full Time Professional Clergy in a Parochial Setting



All Christians - the People of God - have a full time ministry in a Para Church Setting

■ 100% ■ 100% ■ 100% ■ 100%



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Chapter 2 – Un-churched Parents Re-live Their Lives through their Children

In the years that I have been involved with ministry to those who do not know Christ I have discovered a fundamental principle which is mostly true of “functional families”; that parents want the best for their children because they re-live their lives through them!

This was not at all obvious to me in the first place, and it was not until I had worked in professional ministry for a few years that God revealed it to me. However, I came to realise that parents seek the very best for their children secretly harbouring the hope that they might go on forever if they find God! What a thought; anyway on with the story. I was sent to a church on the east coast of Britain by the guiding body of our church organisation. When Jenny [my wife] and I arrived we were shocked to find a church membership which was for the most part made up of members in the age range 50 – 90 years old. The congregation was not large, and families with young people and children were not part of the picture. The membership and attendees made up about 35 people. They were all lovely people who were very ready to seek what God wanted them to do to reach others, and I have so many fond memories, and good friends; some still with us and others with the Lord.

Our “shock” was not that we were unwilling to love and minister to our good friends, but rather that we had come from a lively all age church environment into a situation where an all age balance did not exist. We did not believe in cadging members from other churches to make up our numbers, and we have always had a strong sense that we want to reach out in the love of Christ so that everyone can have the opportunity to know the Lord. If our new church family were to be an all age community it had to happen by reaching the un-churched and lost people of Lowestoft. I must admit as a young minister I wanted to make my mark as it were. I wanted God to work through me to demonstrate a call to ministry. I’m sure you know what I mean! I was young, 30 years old, and had spent 8 years of my life in the nice comfy walls of an academic environment. During that time I had completed my ministerial training, had read theology, and now worked with a team looking after the seminary students, the seminary church, and two other churches plus a church plant. It was all so easy compared to what I was faced with in my new district.

On the day we arrived and were unpacking our things as the removers drove off I received my first phone call. “Pastor Hardy”, “Yes speaking what can I do for you?”; “I need you to conduct a funeral for us my Sister has just passed away, and as you are our new minister we need your help.” A word of explanation at this point, I had never conducted a funeral let alone dealt with grieving relatives all on my own before. I had trained as a counsellor, but I had only really dealt with youth and families over less emotional things than a major loss. I’m not telling the whole story now, but I want to emphasize we were in the process of burying church members during our first year rather than welcoming new babies and new families. And it was in the crucible of the experience of feeling my ministry was going to be defined by death a fair bit of the time that God taught me how life is defined by passing on to others, our children, our families, the best of what we would have ever wanted for ourselves.

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The members certainly wanted to see new life come into the congregation. And God has put the desire to pass life on to others into each heart. So it struck me one day as I was worshipping God and praying for his guidance that parents want to give their children every opportunity for life. God said to me in so many words through revelation knowledge:

“Andrew I want to reach people in this post modern generation through children and young people. I want them to find me, and I want their families to find me through sharing in the journey of their young ones as they get to know my love and my salvation.”

This fitted perfectly with my desire because both Jenny and I genuinely loved ministry to the young, and the privilege of watching them grow in every way into real people made in God’s image. And this was a key to God putting this ministry on our hearts because he had given us genuine love for this special age range 0 – 18 year olds. So we found the mission which God had delivered to us for our part in the growth of his church. I didn’t understand everything that was implied by this at the time, but I did grasp that God was going to reach into the families of the youth and children God was going to bring us into relationship with.

Moreover, related to this specific mission was the whole way I was being influenced by the concepts which were being birthed with regards to ministry to the un-churched in post modern culture, and the work of Willow Creek Community church with its well branded “Seeker Sensitive Services”.

In terms of the United Kingdom it was doubtlessly true to say that people were no longer turned on by going to church. They perceived that the church, its’ teaching and lack of integration into the real felt needs of community life [generally speaking], was a million miles from where people were at. And this was primarily affected by two major factors: Firstly, that the church was not speaking a genuine language of real relational desire to the un-churched community. Hence un-churched people felt that Christians were hypocrites who were only interested in them if they became the same sort of people as they were; not just by becoming Christians like themselves, but a certain brand that fitted the image of the church i.e. middle class professionals, working class etc.. Secondly, the church up until the early nineties had been very strategic in various kinds of evangelistic initiatives, which were method based, that had been interested in getting new members to fill seats. Although this is far too simplistic as a generalisation here, it nevertheless was the message that many un-churched and non-Christian people had come to expect. For instance this was confirmed again and again by many colleagues in ministry who found that people would come to Christian evangelistic meetings up to a point, but soon stopped attendance because, among other factors, a trained evangelism team would be interested in them, and focus on them whilst the “campaign” [you may remember the good old “campaign” days] was running, but on entering a Sunday morning church service they were widely ignored after, or not nurtured because Christian people widely considered that the job had been done by the professionals and they could get on with more normal church life. Hence genuine love and relationships were if anything incidental almost by accident when it came to members forming meaningful relationships with new comers; it was hit and miss, and for the most part it was missing the mark badly. The professional evangelistic team left and went else where because church outreach was seen as a programme delivered by professional trained people who among other things had been trained how to target the needs of outsiders; if

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you like they were professional friends – although I knew many programme driven teams who went from place to place who had a great love for people, and they were far from ingenuous.

Indeed they longed for churches to become genuinely mission minded looking out to reach lost people with the love of Christ, rather than looking in. They desired to communicate their heart for people to local church communities – but broadly speaking this did not occur. Recently, I had a picture of a particular church with most people facing inwards toward each other in the circle with a few looking out. It was the sense that God was saying to me:

“The church that looks in on itself is only focussed on protecting and preserving itself, what I want is for the church to learn to look out as well with my eyes and my heart – for I did not come to heal the healthy, but to heal the sick.”

Although I am thoroughly convinced that this is true, to a large extent the church can be more interested in preserving itself, and its’ existing identity, than sharing real love as Jesus commanded:

“Little Children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”¹⁷

So in another sense we are to selflessly serve the needs of the other without thought of our own. This is the heart of Christ’s love. But this is not to happen as an inwardly looking circle protecting itself, but it is rather to be magnetic in itself in the sense that we give this love to each other, and that we share it with all those that we meet – the love of Christ is an attractive force like magnetism. Because Jesus’ love gave no thought for self, but always sought to give salvation to all that responded to his love with openness and trust. By loving each other in the church we are like the creatures of revelation in the sense that they had eyes all around their heads – we look out in every direction as Christ’s love flows through our hearts by his Holy Spirit¹⁸. In other words we look out to give, rather than trying to take control and keep things safe and unchanging. This is a massive challenge. And of course we need to have intimacy with God so that we are continually putting our selfish desires for a nice comfortable life to death and rather living from a flowing relationship away from ourselves, and away from our churches, towards all those in need of God’s love. Church buildings are no longer the place where church happens effectively!

Returning to the old programme driven days, I think it is clear that what God is asking of us is to model his love and his friendship to all around being based on our intimacy with him, and by being filled with the selfless sacrificing love of Jesus through his Spirit. This love poured out in our lives only works if it continues to flow out, and this means we need intimacy and power from Jesus Christ through his Spirit. So perhaps it was once true that the professional evangelists were experts at

¹⁷ John 13:33 RSV

¹⁸ Romans 5:5

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winning people by their passion for bringing them to Jesus, but we must move away from the idea of the professional lovers and friends of sinners to becoming intimately on fire with a love like that of Christ's which comes by the flow of his Holy Spirit in our hearts. And the old ways of doing outreach and the use of the word "outreach" in itself demonstrates that it has a defined limit. What Jesus pictured to his disciples was an organic reality which would always be ongoing because "all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Broadly speaking the concept of a relatively short period of out reach has affected the church member's view of the importance of real love and relationship with people. Even though the campaign days are past we have bought into the programme driven days which we have been somewhat thoughtlessly borrowed from our north American cousins; and this to a large extent because we have not thought through the very foundational matter of relational and incarnation mission which is God's way of genuinely reaching people¹⁹, particularly in European post modern culture.

Looking back over the past 60 years we can see how we have arrived at a point which is very different in the very real challenges which we now face as a church. In broad terms we cannot expect people to join churches today because the church is not communicating in a radically different language of Christ-like love in a way that people are identifying with. And this is further compounded by the massive changes that secularisation has transformed the way people relate to society. Broadly speaking in post war Britain [1945 – 1959 roughly] Christian religious education in schools was widely, if not totally, made available to children. Of course it was still part of basic school policy into the sixties and seventies as well, but pluralism, secularism and changes toward a multicultural society created a new sense of relativity as well. Acts of Christian worship were conducted in schools it is true until the late eighties, but the Sexual revolution of the sixties transformed the will of society away from traditional religious uniformity which was more ritually based by then, than relationally based. In post war Britain, teachers, if not committed Christians, paid far more than simple lip service to religious education in the curriculum because it was considered to be a core value of a Christian country. Family life was still well defined by church attendance, and in many instances bible readings, and night time prayers with the children; So Christian faith was part of the fabric of the normal relationships which children had with their teachers, and with their families.

There were two major consequences of this environment. Firstly, the fundamentals of Christian belief were taught, and were intelligible to the young and the rising next generation of adults who would enter into the decade of the 1960s, and secondly, these teachings had been attained in the form of genuine caring human relationships – which meant that they were given real life credibility.

So the post war generation had come to understand Christian faith in terms of it's' normality in human life as a natural part of caring and nurturing relationships. Hence people could respond to Christian evangelism conducted by various denominations far more readily and naturally than post modern culture can because of the normative nature of what they had come to in principle accept as at least theoretically true as a normal part of their life and development. So the information that explained faith was already intelligible to them, because it had been given credibility to them through genuine human relationships fostered in their families and with their teachers. Today [2008] 8% of the British population attend church regularly with a further 10% attending sporadically. This means that less than 20% of the population of the UK have any familial expectation of transmitted,

¹⁹ John 1:14, 18

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core, traditional values about religious experiences of worship. In post war Britain the expectation was probably that 70/80%²⁰ of the families of British population supported church life to lesser or greater degrees. As only 8% go regularly in the early part of the 21st century we may deduce the social and cultural transmitted deficit of awareness of being involved in church community life!

And this second point is vital to grasp. People do not accept new truths or ideas based on whether they make sense or not, so much as they do because they feel right as part of their affirming human relationships with others, society and in their families and friendship groups. There was a history of these relationships still in the fabric of the post war families and in the education system. Of course the war had disrupted so much of family life, and this had also initiated a destabilisation of peoples old accepted values and beliefs about God as well, but when people are challenged they can either seek safety in what gave security in the past as much as seek other ways to reclaim it. To a great extent post war Britain still sought security in the religion of their fathers. We know this was radically challenged particularly in the 1960s with the birth of the so called liberated generation of the hippie movement, and the explosion of personal and sexual freedom, but this is part of the broader story of the steps which have led to current post modern culture of the late nineties and early 21st century. What I really want to draw attention to is the radical difference between post war Britain and current post modern trends in culture in Britain and Europe.

And this has to do with a fundamental difference between un-churched people today and acculturated churched people of the post war period. The majority of people today do not have Christian education as part of family life or school life. This means they do not have a memory of the relational importance of this to their personal family histories, and neither do they have it as a normative memory based on the educationally nurturing environments of schools.

This means that children [generation Y], youth, young families or even grand parents do not retain a positive relational memory of church attendance, church life, and Christian faith. Un-churched people do not have the fundamentals in place in other words. They do not trust religious institutions as post war people were more disposed to do, and they do not have any genuine meaningful relationships with Christian people in the volume of relational contacts as a society of yester year could boast. Of course some will have such relationships, but often these relationships are defined by mutual respect for each other, more than that one Christian friend or acquaintance makes up for the deficit in the un-churched person's normal human contacts.

So this leads to a net result. Un-churched people need to form genuine relationships with Christian people whether they become Christians or not. In the first place they need to know that it matters not to their relationships with Christian people whether they become Christians or not. It can take a long time for people to move from the place where they have good Christian friends to the point where they might start to explore Christian faith let alone a real relationship with God. Of course God's Spirit is intimately involved in speaking into people's lives, but whether we like it or not post modern people need to find the face of Christ in us, mostly, before they will seek the face of Christ personally for themselves. Don't forget they are asking themselves "do these people really have love? Can they be trusted? Are they after something from me? Is their God for real?" Let us not

²⁰ Vexen Crabtree, 2007: All pages

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forget that God works through his body – the people which make up his church²¹. God values genuine intimacy and loving relationships²² – and guess what – he made us like him – to be in his image – so we need to do the same; and un-saved people [to coin a phrase] want real love. They will sniff out a hypocrite, and mostly I trust that they are right when they don't trust a Christian they have known for a while – because they sense a lack of genuine Christ-like love flowing out of that person. Of course other factors can make them dislike us not just because we do not love them!

This was not the case in post war Britain to the extent it is the case today. People were far less inclined to question motives. Of Course people will always be attracted to Christ when they have genuine loving affirming relationships with Christian friends, but in post war Britain people had a strong folk memory of school, state, church and family affirming Christian faith as a normal part of trusted relationships, which more readily meant that people attended church and received catechesis from the leaders there. So they more readily found a saving relationship with Christ than is the case for post modern people. They are faced with far bigger barriers, and fundamentally the biggest is that for the most part an un-churched person needs to make at least ten good Christian friends before they will attend church, or for that matter seek a relationship with God at all.

Post modern people want relationships with genuine loving²³ and caring Christians often a long time before they will seek God for themselves, or even go near a church; in other words we cannot expect them to come to us, but we need to go out to them every day of our lives. We are each living stones building the church wherever we are to be found²⁴. Church is not about the building and never was, Jesus said that he wanted to take the church away from buildings, and build it in his people's lives and they in the communities around **them**²⁵. **In other words un-churched people test their relationships with Christians to see if** they really are genuine, not in a church but in the crucible of local community. They need confidence that we really are filled with Christ's selfless love. Because the big question of un-churched people today is [and I emphasize it again] "does this really work for my new friends? Do they really genuinely care for me? Are they after something from me? What if I don't become like them will they abandon me?" Yes the big questions have to do with genuineness and does it really work? And this can only be demonstrated to un-churched people today by real Christians really living as Christ lived and behaved becoming incarnate amongst them through us. Of course I am not saying that the Spirit of God cannot save people, and draw them to himself! However, like it or not, post modern people are looking for what works in real life case examples in their relationships with the people of Christ.

Coming back to the original thesis of this chapter it is through children and young people that parents will seek what is genuine by seeing what is really making a difference to their children. Younger people are far more open to building relationships with people than adults. Parents want their children to have more than just facts that will help their futures they also want them to find genuine helping and caring relationships which will make for the very best for their loved offspring. This may happen in a church club, but mostly it needs to happen in our homes. They want their children to really find an eternally loving God even if they are too scared or too sinful, or too fixed in

²¹ 1 Corinthians 12

²² 1 Corinthians 13 and 2 Corinthians 5

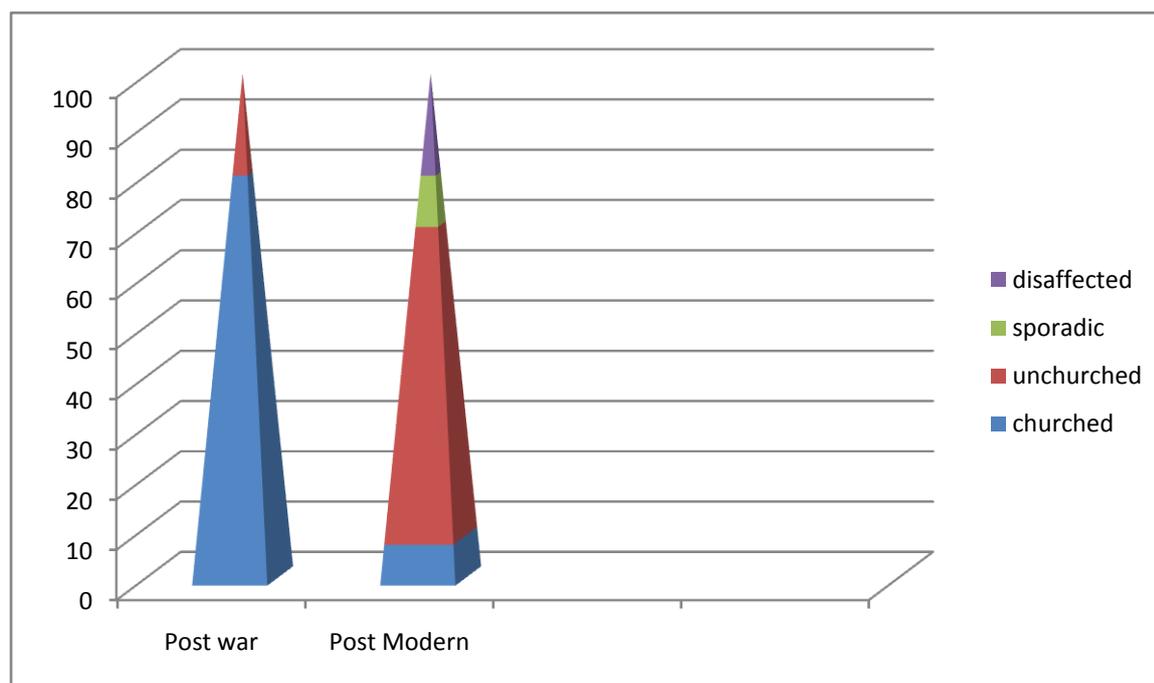
²³ Frost and Hirsch, 2003: 22

²⁴ 1 Peter 2

²⁵ John 4:21 - 23

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their ways to do it! They accept their children can be safely inquisitive in a way that they feel too uncomfortable in the first place to be. This may seem to fly in the face of much modern thought about secular society, but if we approach un-churched parents in the right way, then we will certainly be given the chance to inform their children and young people about Christ. Believe it or not, I know from experience that it is true. In the first place God showed me by experience that it was true, and showed me that this is one of the ways he wants to reach un-churched society today. At this stage I want to say this book is not about a programme to be followed, but it is about the passion of God's great selfless heart to give his love eternally to his children. This book is meant to be paradigm shifting, and I am writing it not because I'm an expert, but because I want to be able to share God's mission of love alongside him unselfishly. He seems to be shifting my paradigm. May it be so in Jesus' name amen! Hence our next chapter will explore how God took Jenny and I on our next learning experience in ministry as he taught us how he looks at people, and how he wants to transform society through his people. Of course I am not claiming that this book is God's one and only answer to church growth, I am rather seeking to share the part of his heart which he has revealed to me with those whose hearts reply with mine "this is a journey we want to take with you as well Jesus". I am not writing this with any sense of pride, but rather with a true humble hope that the little that I have grasped of God's passionate heart [which is infinite and incomprehensible to me] might inspire others to move forward in his love for all men and women, boys and girls, young,



middling and elderly.

A Comparison Between Post War Britain & Post Modern Britain in terms of shift in terms of Church Attendees

The chart above gives a rough comparison of the percentages of churched compared to un-churched attendees in the post war period and the post modern period. Although this must be considered notional at best the transformation that has taken place in terms of those who are churched compared to those who are not represents a rough graphic illustration of the differences between two epochs in British society in terms of a world view which was once based notionally on a Christian ethos, and a country and culture which identified itself in these ways to the present

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post modernism which is multi cultural and multi faith, at least in a notional sense! Those in the post modern category have 8% regular church attendees, which was 9% in the 1989 church census period. So 1% have left in the period 1989 – 2007 – roughly. 10% sporadically attend when they feel like it, and a further 20% are disaffected from the church no longer considering its life and institutions relevant to their lives although such people may notionally call themselves Christians in some sense.²⁶

²⁶ Brierley, 1991: Whole Book & Vexen Crabtree, 2007: Whole document. The above chart has been derived via a number of sources, with some juxtaposition.

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Chapter 3 – A Road Test of Ministry to Un-churched children and Youth

Everything needs road testing. In the case of our developing ministry we felt encouraged to try to reach children in the locality of our new ministry. Six months had passed in early 1993. By now I had conducted my six first funerals, as far as my memory is accurate. My daughter Elizabeth was 18 months old my Son Timothy was a new born baby. We were young inexperienced parents. But what had reached right into my heart was the incredible responsibility I was faced with as a father. God had blessed us with such young fragile dependant lives. When my daughter Elizabeth had been born it was in a hospital in Ascot, I remember the impact it had on me as I drove home after the birth. I just burst into tears. Not tears of sorrow, but of a sense of the tremendous responsibility I now faced as a father.

Liz had only arrived on the scene when we had to start packing to leave Berkshire for Suffolk. Jenny had fallen pregnant again about 8 or 9 months after having Liz. Tim was born more or less as we arrived in Suffolk. This combined an incredible God-given contrast in our minds. Here we were with new baby life being faced with the opposite of an aging church. Our little Tim and slightly older Liz were the only children at church, besides the occasional visits of a few grand children. What were we letting our children in for? This was another factor which set my mind on asking God why we had been placed in this new congregation, as a junior minister who still had 3 more years before ordination I was placed in a church which it was felt would offer us an opportunity to prove ourselves – so to speak. So I can say that I had a mixed bag of feelings about where we had been sent, and a mixed bag of motives as well. Our love for youth and children's ministry to the un-churched was already there. With a desire to minister to families as well – that was genuine, but this whole push for proven callings to gospel ministry was also a worry for us at that time. Although now-a-days we see it differently to the extent that I know I have a definite calling for ministry from God, and I no longer worry about proving it. Things change. I guess I now consider what God is asking me to do far out weighs what I feel I have to do to win approval from people; although, we are all approved to each other by the Love of Christ which joins us together as part of his family.

However, the next factor that helped me to ask God about the way he wanted to reach people was born in the nurturing environment of young children and emerging family life as normative for Jenny and I.

So I asked Jesus where to start. And it must be said that I felt convicted to go with what I knew best a good old holiday bible school. This in itself must surely have been in conflict with un-churched mission ideals hence God made me consider just what this would look like. In my previous role in team ministry our team leader had been a real practical expert in marketing the gospel to people. Un-churched people as a category were not recognised in a formal identified way with his ethos and philosophy, but he did have a heart for people to come to know Christ who as yet did not. So I learned all about target groups, branding messages, designing targeted advertising and so on. On top of this we had been utilising the help of seminary students by carrying out extensive surveys in the community asking un-churched people what they believed, thought about the church, what it was not doing for them and what they felt it should be doing for them. We discovered that everything came down to a few key points.

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Firstly, that people felt that the church was not relevant to their lives and life styles. They considered church to be boring and not relevant to their felt needs. Most did not identify with any positive caring Christian relationships. Often they would point to accepting Jesus was a good man, and that either a relative or friend seemed like a good person, but that was as far as their interest went.

Secondly, There was a feeling that if churches made groups like cubs, scouts girl guides etc available then they thought it a good thing. Some even felt it was a worthy thing for churches to do for surely young people were the most in need of guidance for their futures [in these modern to immersing post modern views]. And this was very interesting to me, and I can trace the early awakenings of what God was to teach me a few years later in Lowestoft.

Thirdly, People expressed belief in some sort of God, but they did not know which one, or what to believe. It is very hard to get authoritative data which holds up to scrutiny about how many people may feel this way in the UK, but our research seemed to indicate more than 50% expressed this view, and were open minded to the possibilities by their own admissions. The Church Census in 1989 seemed to indicate that about 9%, may be 10% of the British population were regular church goers²⁷. This figure is lower today at 8% regularly attending [note]. Christ Stoddart indicates that more than 40% are part of the so called un-churched category today [note]. So it may be said that between 40 – 50% of people make up this special mission category. What struck me, and still strikes me, is the open mindedness of un-churched people. Indeed our team [in the late eighties and early nineties] was involved in teaching and researching church growth in the seminary environment – so we were discovering the massive changes which were needed in order for the last quarter of the 20th century church to adopt in order to meaningfully win people for our Lord.

Fourthly, we discovered that people were very suspicious of questions which asked them if they would consider attending church themselves. Among the reasons why they would not feel comfortable with an invitation were, “We know people who just want to ram their ideas down our throats;” “We want to do what we want without being told what to do;” “We think that the church is a waste of money, or just after our money;” “We go sometimes, but we like to go when we want to, and we don’t want to be singled out.” This of course said a lot about the level of trust that people had of church organisations, and the degree of relevance they felt it had to their families.

In fact things have changed a lot in terms of people’s openness to reporting religious experience since the late eighties when we were conducting our research, David Hay, an empirical researcher on the nature of religious experience gives us interesting statistics.

²⁷ Brierley, 1991: 60

Frequency of Report of Religious or Spiritual Experience in Britain for Years 1987 and 2000

	1987	2000	% Increase
A patterning of events/transcendent experience	29%	55%	90%
Awareness of the presence of God	27%	38%	41%
Awareness of prayer being answered	25%	37%	48%
Awareness of sacred presence in nature	16%	29%	81%
Awareness of the presence of the dead	18%	25%	39%
Awareness of an evil presence	12%	25%	108%

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The reason why I am reporting these figures now is because they give a good statistical perspective on what people were reporting during the period of our earlier research about religious experience. The general rise through out this period demonstrates an important transition which was happening within un-churched communities incrementally in the period in which we were learning about ministry to un-churched people, and their report of religious/spiritual experiences. **This means that what happened in our first ministry to secular people through children and youth to parents later in Lowestoft is even more potently true now! God still wants us to reach the post modern generation through the same route!**

However, most Christian leaders, and Christian people in general had become fixated about the lack of spiritual interest in the so called “modern period” [and this attitude still exists today in the so called post modern period! So let us repent of this negative expectation]. In deed the England of the 1980s had seen a terrible materialistic culture developing, with a general reliance on science, agnosticism and atheism, and yupee wealth and materialism, which many took as evidence that society was in majority terms no longer interested in Christian faith. However, it was my experience, among a growing number of mission minded evangelists, that people were far more open to explore faith, and, or, spiritual encounter than it was believed at the time.

So our small team in Lowestoft thought carefully about how our summer holiday bible club should be packaged. We concluded that we should run a non-traditional holiday club which was to be as free as possible of Christian jargon. So we resisted the tendency to speak to un-churched families who were to bring their children in cliqued words, or with overly religious language. We advertised through schools, and we set a one week period in the summer diary to host the event. All of our strategies were God’s revelation based guidance to us. He told us that people wanted it all up front

²⁸ Staddard and, 2007:11

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and open. Which was going against Christian expectations that we needed to not be open and honest about our intentions to evangelise people because if we did they would not want to come to mission events; God told us that as long as we declared our intention to help children and youth explore beliefs without manipulation or pressure then we would realise the greatest amount of harvest in terms of parent's allowing their children to come to the summer club. Parents needed to know we could be trusted to allow their children a right to explore, but also a right to choose to no longer explore Christian faith if they so wished without manipulation. We made sure our advertising was clear about what we would be running in the following ways because God said this was the way ahead:

1. We made it clear that this was being run by a church.
2. We made it clear that we wished to aid children [7 – 10 year olds] to explore Christian beliefs.
3. We would do so in such a way that we would focus on core beliefs, and that no child would be forced to explore things that they did not wish to know.
4. We would not promote one church, and we would point families to any other clubs which could be run by any other church.
5. We would make sure that parents could come and observe and interact with their children or our team at any time. All material being taught would be made available to them if they wished so.
6. We would not communicate with families about future events unless they released us to do so on the registration form.

So we advertised through the schools sending leaflets home on the last day of school through the religious studies specialist or head master.

On the last full week of July in 1993 we had all our material ready, and we prayerfully awaited what would happen. At 8:30am more than 200 children in the age range were queuing with their parents waiting to come in. We had so many that we had to turn a number away because of child ratio issues, and safety issues. This was such a pleasant shock to our aging church friends that it took a while to sink in.

We found that the large majority of the children who were coming – some 60% - were from an un-churched background. Parents were pleased that they had the opportunity to explore Christian things in an apparently safe environment. Indeed by the end of the week we had all sorts of parents churched and un-churched wanting us to establish a more regular club at least once a week. They were also offering their help, and with careful selection, and role assignments, we had a number join our team. We finished the week with the children leading a family seeker friendly service, with them playing a major role, sharing what they had learnt with their parents. The parents loved this, and many un-churched families said they wanted more for the children. Two comments which parent's made were crucial in the success God was giving this. Firstly, they said they had been sceptical of our motives, but after a week of having simple open and friendly interaction with the team they believed, or had started to, that we were genuine in our desire to foster an open dialoguing interaction with their children and their families. Secondly, they said that they did not feel under pressure to bring their children, or to come to church.

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In the six months that followed this simple adapted holiday club our church children's clubs went from zero children to 40 children coming almost every week. And the major ratio of attendees were from un-churched families – hence we did not feel we were sheep stealing. Those few Christians who came to help us were released by their churches to support what was considered to be a worthy mission.

Having said these things in a nut shell it is important to identify some critical lessons that un-churched mission requires:

1. You need a clear God-given vision delivered to the team by the Holy Spirit.
2. You need a team which has a broad agreement with the vision – they need to own it.
3. You need to have a plan of how to start with vision for following steps; therefore seek the steps through revelation knowledge.
4. You need to have a relationship with the places where un-churched children may be reached – schools are a vital place to build trusted relationships with.
5. The team must be aware of vital qualities and attitudes which work with un-churched people – they must be trained and aided to live these. Revelation knowledge already exists through training courses we have on the qualities of a secular minister and ministry.
6. Advertising has to be targeted to un-churched people – you want to target them, not existing Christians, and hence you need to tick the right boxes by targeting the un-churched family/children.
7. The more that children get to know your faces around their schools the more they will talk about you even to their families, and the more simple trust is built. Doing assemblies or school clubs can help, or be the sole way of reaching un-churched children in the first instance.
8. The big question many un-churched specialists who work in schools are asking today is “How can we move children and then their families toward exploring faith”.

So it may be said in summary at this stage that the most crucial steps in un-churched ministry require seeking for God's specific vision for mission. Secondly, a team must have been working together in planning for some time before they forge ahead. This team must sit God at the meeting table looking and listening for the great chairman of the universe to guide the meeting through the eyes and ears of their hearts.

Thirdly, a carefully structured event of mission needs to be planned, advertised and executed. This carefully thought out mission event needs to be delivered via revelation knowledge! What I hope has become clear to the reader now is that I am not so much giving a detailed account of all the steps which we took in our early un-churched mission. Rather I want to bring out some key things in terms of the process of ministry which we have come to trust as we have progressed over the last number of years. It would be very sad if any one reading this material were to consider that I am advising that our approach to un-churched ministry in the details is the way to do it. It is the qualities, and attitudes in a developing team's guided by direct specific revelation from God who need to be clear what un-churched ministry requires philosophically and epistemologically.

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During the five years of Revelation based mission to secular people that we conducted in Lowestoft we discovered that God guided us by revelation knowledge through a number of stages and steps with resultant fruit at each stage. Here they are:

Stage 1

God Gave the revelation “I want to reach into secular families by firstly reaching into the hearts of Children and Youth – they will lead their parents to me because their parents are seeking to let their children have what they really want ideally for themselves – intimacy with me. I want a team who genuinely love secular children, youth and their families.”

So from 1992 – 1993 the vision was conceived and incubated among a growing team of like minded people. This team started off small. It was important to dream during this stage, explore the possibilities God was developing, and building relationships with local schools through which the children would get to know team members. Advertising could be done through these schools. This was all given to us by revelation knowledge. It is important to see what the Father is doing in mission just as Jesus only lived by looking at what the Father was doing, he did nothing of his own initiative²⁹; so likewise the mission-al team must practice planning evangelism to secular people based on revelation knowledge . This is vital for the team to understand and work in principle with as its core epistemology. The Holy Spirit revealed that we needed to build relationships with the teachers and head teachers in local schools, so that we could be viewed as people offering good things to the school and its children – which meant we could advertise mission and evangelism to the children and their families. We did it openly, not hiding our faith, but expected to be accepted as open honest Christian people. And it worked. Parents let their children come in their hundreds to our missions. God’s vision showed us the reality of what parents wanted – they wanted their children to have a chance to explore Christian faith with people who they could trust. Because the school trusted us, so did the parents, and when they got to know us they also came to trust us! God’s plan worked as we lived out of his plan, his initiative, instead of our plans which I knew from experience always failed when ministering to secular people!

Stage 2

In this stage we implemented children’s clubs, not youth clubs. As yet we did not have youth but only children up to 11 years old. God gave revelation knowledge on how to proceed. Children came to our Sabbath School but we ran it on the same grounds as we had the un-churched seeker sensitive modified holiday bible club. It was important that we followed Jesus as he revealed the steps that he had always used to reach people. As John 1:14 clearly says he became a living human being with a real human body. The Greek is best translated from this verse that he “Tabernacled amongst us”. He started at the place where people were experiencing life. His parables, his miracles and the way he identified with the culture in Palestine at that time

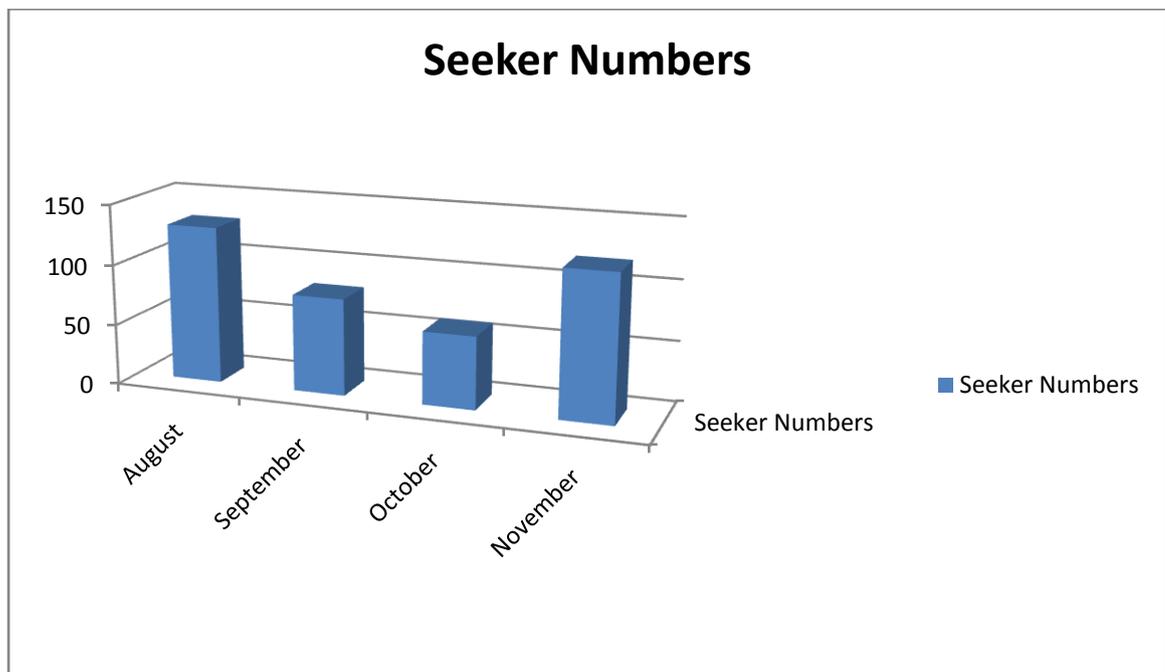
²⁹ John 5:19

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demonstrate that he started at where people were, and moved them on at the pace they were able to take things. He did no run ahead of them, but he kept pace with them as they travelled on their particular journeys. The Holy Spirit is called the “Comforter”³⁰. The Greek term used that is translated here is “PARAKLETOS” [παρακλητος]³¹ which has the meaning of one who is called to our sides as our helper, defender and carer/supporter – to give counsel and comfort. This indicates the primary function of the “Spirit of Jesus” he still works in the same way he always did – he walks along side us moving us on at a safe pace which he sets for each person.

In terms of un-churched ministry to children they had come from secular families, hence they needed things packaging sensitively in a way, and with a language and media of communication that they could relate to.

This period covered 1993, and during this time we did a second Holiday bible club in the summer of 1994, and invited parents to come to a service which was seeker sensitive which their children were to be part of. We had a large response of over 130 people. From this the next bit of revelation from God was to move us to do monthly Seeker Sensitive Services for secular families – for they were now themselves getting excited about the changes they were seeing in their children. Over the year 1994 if we consider 4 seeker services we can see how many people roughly came to each of the monthly services. Of course there were many more of these services, but this is just a sample.



³⁰ John 14:16

³¹ Moulton, 1981: 303

What grew out of this by revelation knowledge, as well, was that we were moved to start visiting our secular friends on a pastoral level. They were very pleased about this. Direct sensitive Christian ministry which provided a listening ear, helpful advice concerning children's issues, prayer for problems could be sensitively offered without using Christian jargon and language, but rather plain English. Some started to attend church weekly after a time. Some took on simple helping roles as they committed themselves to Christ! Even those who had not committed themselves to Christ could help in other ways which were not directly related to the spiritual programme so to speak.

Moreover, extended family members started attending our seeker services, grand parents, friends, other relatives and cousins. God opened the door in so many ways to new opportunities to share a living relationship with Jesus as he was incarnated in his body – his un-churched secular ministries apostolic team! We discovered it was vital for those who worked on the team that they had been put there by God's revelation and appointment!

Stage 3

Obviously I am not giving a detailed account of what happened in each stage but a bare bones outline. During stage 3 we had some surprises which God brought about by his providential action. During the summer club of 1995 our numbers kept up, and many new children joined. And on the first day of the club 16 young people aged 12 – 14 years old came and asked if I would let them now become helpers in the club as they loved it so much. We said yes!

God revealed to us through revelation knowledge that he wanted us to start a youth group. So we asked the young people now to old to come to the Holiday club if they would like to have a youth group that met each week for them, just as the children's group met for Sabbath School each week – their reply was affirmative. So these young people started to come to a seeker sensitive youth group for the years 1995 – 1996. The youth group grew, we did many things with them, and continued to teach them about having a relationship with Jesus. All of these young people bar 1 came from secular families. They were tough kids who valued their so called "street Credibility". To be part of a church group was not on, but to be part of a seeker sensitive un-churched ministry youth group was OKAY. This is not to say that they did not like learning about Jesus, but it is to say that during this year if they had lost face among their friends because of a normal form of ministry to youth which many Churches only operated for Christian youth and their families, then we would have lost their trust. Jesus was our constant teacher in all of this. They were given roles to do to still help the

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children at times. We let them do sketches and dramas in the Seeker services, and main church services. They performed liturgical contemporary dances expressing where Christ was meeting them in their peer groups and in their families. They brought their secular friends to our special seeker friendly youth groups. The group bonded together, and formed emerging strong supportive and caring ties to one another.

Also during this time God revealed the need for a toddler group in the week – so this was started, and new people joined the team. Toddler parents brought their families to the seeker services, and to normal church services. All of these things happened from God’s initial vision that he wanted to reach secular children, youth and then their families, and it happened in that order. The team started to get the point that it was best to be involved in a disciple-ing mission which got along side people revealing Christ to them as he manifested himself through relational encounter with group members. We learnt what it meant to do the Father’s mission by having the Spirit of his Son flowing through our lives³². He flowed into many lives. The church became a living body of Christ as this all happened. We learnt that any initiative which came about by man’s planning would fail and that God liked to take the initiative and reveal himself amongst people by his people living by revelation knowledge; doing what the Father showed them he was doing³³.

Stage 4

1996 – 1997 were our last year in the Lowestoft district. Sadly the powers that be had decided that enough was enough for our ministry in their area. However, it was in the summer of this year that something really amazing happened again. Our Secular youth group had grown much in Christian knowledge. They had benefitted from their relationships with the team. So in this summer we ran the Holy Trinity Brompton Youth Alpha Course. For those who do not know what it contains it is a Christian basics course which seeks to answer the basic questions such as:

- A. Who is Jesus?
- B. What did Jesus do?
- C. Why did Jesus die?
- D. How can I be sure of my Faith?
- E. How and why should I pray?
- F. Who is the Holy Spirit?
- G. What does the Holy Spirit do?
- H. How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?
- I. What about healing?³⁴

³² Romans 8:15 - 18

³³ John 5:19

³⁴ Gumbel, 1995: 14

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During the week in which we ran the course we covered A – E. The youth said they would like to become Christians, but struggled with experiencing God. We told them it was not their job to experience Jesus, but that it was Jesus' job to reveal himself and save them. So after doing sessions F and G with the group we invited them to a Holy Spirit evening. We invited the Holy Spirit on the first evening to open their hearts to bring themselves to him. Only 6 out of the 16 turned up. They started to open up about all sorts of problems, abuse etc. They left the evening still without a revelation of the living Christ in their hearts however. We sought God and he said they need a week to let it sink in then invite the whole group again. Once again they spent over an hour, all of them, the 16, on that occasion, pouring their hearts out. Still they were struggling and could not sense the entry of the presence of God.

So I invited them into the church worship hall if they wanted to be filled with the Holy Spirit. There was no hype or expectation of what might happen given to them. We did not whip up emotion with lots of music, in fact we had none. They did not know what to expect, and had never seen any body filled with the Holy Spirit before.

I prayed for each of them by name inviting the Holy Spirit to come into their lives as I laid hands on each head. As I did so each fell to their knees and the presence of Jesus immediately entered their lives. They wept, laughed, hugged and repented for the next 2 or 3 hours. We just stood back and Jesus ministered to each and healed each of the hurts that they had expelled from them. They accepted Jesus as their Lord. They were enabled by the power of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit to pray for and minister to each other in ways that I would have expected of mature Christian ministry teams of some years standing. Remember these were street wise kids. Street Credibility had meant everything to them up to this point, but not when the Spirit of Jesus' filled them any more. Baptisms followed. New people joined our church, and others. God brought fruit forth and then within months of this all happening we were removed from the church district to go to Oxford to minister among other ways to university students.

I will leave the story at this point with a simple prayer, "Lord Jesus please continue to keep your sheep in Lowestoft and from these ministries in your hands. I claim the promise which says you will not let anything or any one snatch them out of your hand – I pray that this may be so – in Jesus name Amen!"³⁵

³⁵ John 10:27 - 30

Lessons to be learnt for the next steps in describing Revelation based ministry in this Dissertation!

So I will summarise the key lessons for working with un-churched/secular people below:

1. A team must be brought together by revelation from God. The team member needs a call from God, the team need to affirm that call by turning to God and asking his permission for them to join, and the team and new member needs to work together producing good fruit of living out of the Father's initiative and guidance³⁶.
2. God must be sought to give his vision for who he wants the team to target, and simple guidance on what the overall mission of the team is to look like.
3. The team needs to implement each step that the Spirit reveals needs to be taken before moving to the next. The core starting vision will be the basic guiding principle that will keep the team on target.
4. Once each step of the evolving vision is carried out then seek further revelation knowledge on what God wants the next step to be. Remember that he takes us at one step at a time, but each step will have a number of issues related to it which will need God's enabling and guidance in order to bring them to birth. He may take us through several at a time as well some times, but remember he wants us to be a team, and teams need the security of being in community and trusting and trustworthy relationships with each other!
5. Christ's un-churched secular ministry team needs to minister in the same way that the Spirit of Jesus has always ministered. The gospel of Luke and Acts set this out wonderfully for us, and we will give further study to them in the next chapter. At the core of such ministries are the following factors:
 - A. Jesus got along side people where they were
 - B. He did not use jargon, religious language or things they could not relate to.
 - C. The "Spirit of Jesus" the "Comforter" is the one who works just as Jesus works – he is called along side people to help them right where they are at in particular stages of their journey. Let him set the pace, and learn to watch for signals of his work in people's lives, then follow those steps.
 - D. The Spirit does not rush people, manipulate responses out of them, judge them or disempower them. Instead he respects their choices, and aids them at the right time just when they need it, rather than a team deciding for it self that it is the right time for a person or group to take the next step, unless the team is convinced by the Holy Spirit to challenge growth.
 - E. A team lives out of the Father's initiative rather than its own human concepts and ideas of what to do – so they seek revelation knowledge with the eyes and ears of their hearts concerning what they are to do next in the Father's timing and planning³⁷.
 - F. The team speaks in the sort of culturally sensitive language that Jesus did, using plain English, or French etc to meet people where they are at.
 - G. The team does not seek to give people an experience of Jesus, but rather facilitates an open quiet environment for those who wish to be filled with the "Spirit of Jesus".
 - H. **The biggest thing which is missing in many initiatives of un-churched secular ministries of today is that people rely on principles for success, rather than a revelation of God's initiative, guidance and blessing by his Holy Spirit for an un-churched ministry to succeed in winning people to Christ.**

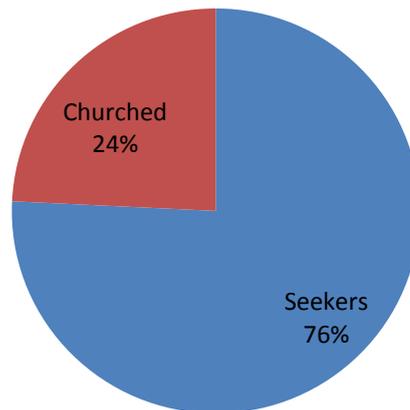
³⁶ John 5:19

³⁷ Ibid

Conclusion

And on the last comment of point “H” above I conclude this chapter. The missing ingredient of secular ministry today is for people to get so caught up in the culture of the secular people they are seeking to reach for Christ that they themselves become secularised and compromise many of the core absolutes of the Christian life. Central to this core are firstly, that we need to have intimacy with Jesus via revelation knowledge as he lives in our hearts by his Spirit speaking to the ears of our hearts, and giving vision to the eyes of our hearts. Secondly, that teams do not seek God’s specific vision for their work, but work with generalised principles of what they think will work in ministry to the un-churched. Thirdly, they try to mix old traditional church ministry styles with the new emerging secular ministry styles. They want a bit of both in the mixture. As soon as they make this compromise they demonstrate that not all of their team has been apostolically appointed to secular ministry, and they need to release people who want the traditional to ministry in a traditional pastoral team; that those who want secular ministry do this solely. And that people who want a bit of both need to be gifted to be able to switch from one ministry style to another avoiding the temptation to mix and match!

Comparison of Seeker Attendance to Normal Church Attendance 1993 - 1995 in Lowestoft



The Pie chart above shows how many secular seeker families with their children attended our seeker services targeted to their special needs compared to the numbers who attended our normal services as Christian people. These were two different services that met at different times. The chart reveals that we had up to three times as many secular families

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seeking God compared to our normal Christian worship services. The implications are immense for future mission to the un-churched given that the statistics recorded earlier in this chapter demonstrate that even more people today are open to spiritual phenomena than when our initial work was given to us via revelation knowledge! In other words I would expect that a church which worked with secular youth and children guided by revelation knowledge could expect their seeker services to be three times larger in terms of attendance than a normal Christian worship service on a Sunday morning! Remember that revelation knowledge is the key for your developing team to develop its' mission to secular people. May God give you the Spirit of revelation knowledge so that you may live out of the Father's plans, initiative and time table for his work through your team to secular people³⁸.

³⁸ Ephesians 1:17 and John 5:19

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Chapter 4 – The Missing Factor in Mission to Secular/Un-churched People in 21st Century Britain, Europe and America

The central missing factor in ministry to secular society today is the utilisation of revelation knowledge and supernatural gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit in an apostolic style of ministry. We will unpack this statement as the chapter progresses. But in short at this stage by “revelation knowledge” I mean that we need to allow God to flow through our lives by his Spirit as he dialogues with us in our spirits through the eyes and ears of our hearts. More specifically we need to see what God’s plan is for today and more broadly for the future in the way we seek to engage in Mission and evangelism. We need to live as our prototype lived – with his normal approach to reaching out to others – He did and said only what the Father was doing and saying [John 5:19, 20]. This is also what he taught the Apostles to do, and by extension all believers, when he spoke of the Holy Spirit being our direct line of communication with the exalted Jesus after his resurrection and Ascension [John 14]. By an “apostolic style of ministry” I mean that Christ has delegated his authority to teams of people who are sent out by the direct guidance of the “Spirit of Jesus” to do and say what Jesus guides them to do and say. This approach to mission by the early church meant that the message of Jesus had spread throughout the whole Roman Empire within 40 years of Jesus ascension.

However, to any one reading this dissertation with more than a passing knowledge of the history of church attempts at mission in the UK, and Europe, over the past twenty to fifty years will realise that despite all of the initiatives, programmes, plans and research conducted; offering us “the solution” the decline in the size of the church has remained constant. For instance Peter Brierley in his book discussing the decline in the so called “tweenager” group [10 – 14 year olds] relates that the decline in this group’s attendance at Christian meetings remains constant at 1000 less coming every week. Which means by 2020 we will have none coming³⁹! Church attendance among all age groups is steadily in decline moving in a downward trend from 72%⁴⁰ of the population attending in the 1960s to about 8% in the first decade of the 21st century. Missiologist’s have analysed this phenomenon to exhaustion. Many solutions have been proposed. Many so called experts have pronounced “the solution”, but things remain in a steady constant trend of decline. Why is this?

I say it is because the church has embraced rationalism and logistical modelling approaches to try to solve the problem. What I mean is that theorists declare that analysis utilising human wisdom will produce a solution. The church has embraced this notion and tries to model itself with the latest thing out there. But decline remains constant! This is because we need to give up on humanistic solutions to this situation and instead we need to seek to live as the Messiah Jesus lived! We need to become a messianic community once more! As I have said Jesus only did what he saw his Father doing:

“Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever he does, that the on does likewise. For the

³⁹ Brierley, 2002:1 - 18

⁴⁰ Vexen Crabtree, 2007: See all

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Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing, and greater works than these will he show him, that you may marvel."⁴¹

Luke reminds us in the book of Acts:

"...God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him."⁴²

This was the secret to the Messiah's mission. He was "anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power", this is why it could be said that "God was with him." He lived by flow in intimacy with the Father. From the day he was anointed by the Holy Spirit at his baptism he demonstrated what all believers in the Messianic community must do; they must live by flow in intimacy with Jesus by dialoguing with his indwelling Spirit as he daily communicates with us through the eyes and ears of our hearts.

We must start to live by anointed reason, and anointed deep hearted flow, with our hearts full of the passionate Spirit of Jesus. To be a messianic community we need to follow the prototypical man of God – Jesus Christ. He never acted out of his own initiative, but rather out of a passionate intimate connection with his Father through a living breathing relationship of two way dialogue and power to do the works of God for God had "anointed him" and he was "with him". This is what we must have as well if we are to fulfil the mission that the Messiah has given to us, not as individuals, or denominations, or para-church practitioners, but rather as the people of the Messiah living by flow receiving the words and works of Jesus by an intimate anointed two way relationship with him.

The first item of training for any mission-al team must be "How to hear God's voice"! If we are unable to live with the sort of anointed flowing two way relationship with God that Jesus had then our team will fall at the first hurdle. Jesus mission was successful because he was "anointed" and "God was with him". The next chapter will deal with what this foundational training programme must look like. I am indebted to Communion with God ministries for their excellent applied theological approach to effective training in this area, and I would recommend that every mission-al team at the very least thoroughly work their way through the book "How to Hear God's Voice" by Mark and Pattie Virkler [See on Bibliography].

Some reading this may respond that "this is all well and good but that was Jesus, we cannot live with that level of anointing in our lives." However, this is not what the New Testament claims! Indeed Luke makes certain that the people of the Messiah would never forget this in the second volume of his record of the mission of Jesus through his people.

Luke begins the book of Acts with:

⁴¹ John 5:19, 20 RSV

⁴² Acts 10:38 RSV

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“In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach.”⁴³

The first book mentioned is of course the gospel of Luke, which Luke takes pains to emphasise is an accurate presentation of Jesus words and works, life and ministry based on eye witness accounts⁴⁴. In this second volume addressed to “Theophilus” this same working integrity of his sources is to be assumed! Given the Lukan worldview it is a basic assumption of this writer that the Holy Spirit guided Luke in the composition of his material as Luke himself was a Spirit led man⁴⁵.

Luke wants Theophilus to be aware that those things which he recorded about Jesus in the gospel were what he “began to do and teach”. By implication Jesus will continue “to do and teach” by the direct activity of his Spirit through his followers in the age of the church until he comes again⁴⁶. This is indeed born out by Luke the Eye witness who had first hand experience of this happening. We read:

“And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. And when they had come opposite Mysia they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; so, passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: a man of Macedonia was standing beseeching him and saying, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us.’ And when he had seen the vision, immediately **we** sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.”⁴⁷

Notice the use of the word “we” in verse 10; Luke was with Paul’s missionary team as they processed the constant revelation knowledge which they received. Notice how Luke terms the Holy Spirit as the “Spirit of Jesus”. To Luke the Holy Spirit is not just any old spirit out there, but he is the “Spirit of Jesus”. Foundational to the book of Acts, and the gospel of John, and the Pauline epistles; the whole New Testament in fact, the work of the Holy Spirit is the continued work and presence of Jesus Christ as he dialogues with his people through flow as they encounter every aspect of ministry. This is the New Testament paradigm of Mission, it arises out of an intimate passionate two way daily communicative relationship of Jesus with his people and through his people as he continues to do and teach through them. This theme can be traced in every gospel, book and epistle in the New Testament corpus.

Therefore, this is the central thesis of this dissertation, that all, mission, arises from his Messianic people being led by him to do a mission like his as they follow Jesus; walking by the Spirit of Jesus as he guides their mission-al footsteps, and as he has an intimate two way cooperative relationship with them!

⁴³ Acts 1:1 RSV

⁴⁴ Luke 1:1 - 4

⁴⁵ Acts 16:6 - 9

⁴⁶ Acts 1:11

⁴⁷ Acts 16:6 – 10 RSV

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This leads to the following core observations about this supernatural relationship between the Messiah and his Messianic community on a corporate and individual level recipercally:

1. Followers of Christ have the Spirit of Christ living in them and leading them, not like robots, but on the basis of an intimate two way relationship,

“I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me, and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him. Judas [not Iscariot] said to him, ‘Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?’” Jesus answered him, “If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our home with him.”⁴⁸”

2. Christ will not only live in us intimately relating with us from his Spirit to ours and our to his, but also we will do even greater works through his Spirit flowing out of our lives in ministry,

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father.”⁴⁹”

3. The Holy Spirit speaks not for himself [although he is God] but for Jesus Christ. Thus all the miraculous and merciful words and works that flow through the faithful mission-al believer will be the continued words and works of Jesus Christ,

“I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine, therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”⁵⁰”

4. Everything belongs to Jesus. Complete victory over all the power of the enemy [Satan]; all authority in heaven and on earth belongs to him. He has given this authority to his people. Consider the following verses that summarise what this looks like,

A. “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, baptising them

⁴⁸ John 14:18 – 23 RSV

⁴⁹ John 14:12 RSV

⁵⁰ John 16:12 – 15 RSV

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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 lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.⁵¹”

B. Pray then like this:

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
 On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
And forgive us our debts,
 As we also forgive our debtors;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.⁵²”

C. “And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity⁵³.”

D. “Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, ‘Who do men say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.’⁵⁴”

All of these verses describe the power and authority for the believer and the community of believers to exercise. All of the power of Christ is already ours as we live out of a deep intimate two way relationship with Jesus committed to him totally every day. We do not need to pray for the authority to heal, cast out demons, preach and see people come to Christ, rather if we are living by revelation guided mission and life styles we can claim all of these things because Jesus will be continuously showing us what he is doing. We do not need to pray for what is already ours through Christ, we just need to claim his authority to do miracles and to deliver people from Satan and to speak forth his word. It is already ours if we know how to hear God’s voice and then act on it!

5. The Acts church was not a building, not a tower, not the seats, not the pulpit, not a meeting place, but rather it was each believer in who Jesus had made his home by the presence of his Spirit⁵⁵! Hence they received power to fulfil the mission of Jesus because he lived in and through them continuing his mission of deeds of power and words of creative authority. The secret to church mission is this. It is only this! And it is nothing else but this⁵⁶!

⁵¹ Matthew 28:18 – 20 RSV

⁵² Matthew 6:9 – 13 RSV

⁵³ Matthew 10:1 RSV

⁵⁴ Matthew 16:13 – 19 RSV

⁵⁵ 1 Corinthians 6:19

⁵⁶ Acts 8

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6. It was not that the early believers tried to lead the Spirit of Jesus' into action through its programmes, and models and modes of expression and mission, but it was rather that Jesus flowed through their lives and brought those to them who were being saved,

“.....And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.⁵⁷”

Notice how the verb is in the passive. Those who are “being saved”, and those who are being led to Christ, not to the church notice, but rather to the number of those who are saved, who are living in flow and revelation knowledge, being believers themselves in the Acts mode of Spirit led community; these new converts are being added to their number. The church which lives by revelation knowledge and flow does not need to do anything to attract people, because they have Jesus living in them and flowing through their lives already. Rather they just need to follow where he leads as they listen to his words of guidance through the ears of their hearts. Then he will guide them to the people, and people to them as the people of Christ. In other words the primary focus of Acts is not on a programme, or model or mode, but rather it is built on a community of believers who all share a revelation based intimate lifestyle of a shared Jesus and his shared love.

For too long the church has hoped to win people by attracting them to their church, to their programme, to their denomination. What has been missed is that they as the body of Christ are to be mobilised to live by flow and revelation knowledge to go where Jesus goes and to meet those he puts in their path; who he is leading to them as community.

Conclusion

I conclude this chapter with the simple truth that the first step in church at mission is for the mission team to learn how to hear God's voice. This is the subject of the next chapter.

This is a bold statement which will no doubt more than raise a few angry eyebrows. It is clear to me that I lump myself together in this with the reader. I have not arrived seeing the reader as somewhere back there in the journey. I confess I have been part of the problem many times in my own small patch. I may be pointing you to what was a successful and blessed ministry to the extent that God worked through it as I detailed in chapters 2 and 3, but this is only a small part of my story, and I can say I have too often compromised with contemporary rationalism and secularism to try to keep my credibility. It is very sad that I am talking about the manifestation of this in the churches approach to mission and Christian life. My attempts at apologetics utilised evangelistically have often led to me relying more on my rational mind than on the work of God as he flows through my heart by the “Spirit of Jesus”. And this is an important point to nail down as I finish this chapter: **the Christian church from its' inception at Pentecost was not based on rationalism but on the power and demonstration of the miracles of the living Jesus as he flowed by his Spirit through the ministering hands & mouths of his followers.**

⁵⁷ Acts 2:47 RSV

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The church was not so much defending ideas as it was promoting a supernatural relationship with the living Jesus as he dwelt in the believer's heart through his Holy Spirit. Mission and evangelism in New Testament terms was the continuing "words and works"⁵⁸ of the "Spirit of Jesus"⁵⁹.

⁵⁸ Acts 1:1, 8

⁵⁹ Acts 16:7 - 10

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Chapter 5 – Four Keys to Hear God’s Voice

Introduction

This chapter is designed to offer training to a Mission team planning to reach out with the gospel to secular/un-churched people. As I suggested before the hurdle that all missions and evangelistic efforts fall at is that they attempt, often, to plan evangelistic initiatives by utilising the group’s ability to plan, and set in process logistical programming. The assumption seems to be that God has given us brains so why not use them. In a sense the assumption can be “now we feel that God has shown us that we need to reach out with the gospel to secular people in our community we can take it as written that we can plan this ourselves.”

However, this runs contrary to the model represented in the book of Acts. As discussed in the previous chapter; the “Spirit of Jesus” guided every step of mission which Paul’s apostolic team took. Moreover, as demonstrated in chapters 2 and 3 my experience of mission was based on seeking God’s direct guidance on the steps we took as a team whilst we were involved in mission in Lowestoft on the east coast of Britain. I propose that it is vital that we carry out mission just as Jesus did as he lived out of his Father’s mission⁶⁰ in at the very least four ways:

1. That each team member knows how to dialogue with God on a daily basis.
2. That each team member speaks and acts on the basis of the revelation God has given through the eyes and ears of their hearts.
3. That the team have a shared cooperative open relationship whereby they seek God’s vision and goals for the team’s mission.
4. That the team speaks and acts on the revealed vision of God by engaging in revelation based mission to the un-churched⁶¹.

With these points in mind I will now set out a training programme below which will help the mission team to discover the keys to revelation based mission.

⁶⁰ John 5:19, 20

⁶¹ Virkler, 2005:Chapter 2

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The Lamad Approach to Mission-al Revelation

“LAMAD” is a Hebrew word which has a basic meaning “To teach, to become accustomed to, to be a disciple”⁶². “What on earth is good about this as an approach to Christian Mission?” we might ask? Well I hope to demonstrate to you that it has everything to do with it.

“LAMAD” can be used in biblical terms to express the essential means by which the prophets were taught to receive revelation knowledge in the schools of the prophets⁶³. It can express the idea that

reaching and
their hearts
learning by
comes from
this sense
of the true



people really only learn when they learn by God disciple-ing them in the primary spiritual organ –⁶⁴. That indeed outside of a “LAMAD” heart revelation all teaching becomes empty because it non supernatural media, or a demonic source; in “LAMAD” may be thought of as a diagnostic term state of mankind in the sense that:

All of our words come to nothing if a person lives outside of Christ. – The whole of his or her life is empty! Indeed the real education that matters is when God discipules us through “LAMAD” knowledge that comes by revelation received with the eyes and ears of our hearts!

“LAMAD” is used of prophecy and the prophets whose words come from direct revelation from God! The Hebrew word for prophet and prophecy says it all:

The Hebrew word is NABA which means to “bubble up”. In other words the idea is that the words of prophecy which God gave to the prophets “bubbled up” inside their hearts. The words which they gushed out came by the gushing out of the Spirit of God as the river of God flowed through them!

Jesus promised his first disciples, and those who would believe in him to the end of this present age that:

⁶² Davidson, 1850:431

⁶³ 1 Samuel 10

⁶⁴ Hebrews 8:10, 11

“If any one thirsts, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.’ Now this he said about the Spirit which those who believed in him were to receive; for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”
[John 7:37 – 39 RSV]

This means that all Christians can live by “LAMAD” [being directly disciple-ed by the Spirit of



<http://www.cc.gatech.edu/cpl/projects/graphcuttextures/data/interaction/LittleRiver.jpg>

Jesus’], “NABA” [Bubbling up] and “Flow” as the river of God’s revelations flow out of their hearts. All life in God, who is the source of life and upholder of life, is based on selfless flow. The nature of sin is based on trying to live by our own resources, and hence if we live this way we are living a dead end existence subject to the “prince of the power of the air who is now at work in the sons of disobedience.”⁶⁵ Jesus the Mission director is called to be our guide and counsellor [PARAKLETOS – Greek]; he chose his disciples teaching them in the way of the prophets who

lived by “flow, NABA and LAMAD”. Jesus primary means of receiving knowledge about his mission with the Father was to receive it from him – he is our example to follow, and he lived by Revelation Knowledge:

“Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever he does, that the Son does likewise’⁶⁶ .

“I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your Father [the Devil].”⁶⁷”

Jesus says it all here, and he is the teacher who sets the example for his disciples to follow as they learn in the school of the ultimate prophet - the Son of God – they are to live by revelation knowledge, not by any other sort of knowledge which the world might offer. All other knowledge in the world does have things we can learn from, but it is very much laced with deception as the world outside of Christ is in bondage to the “Father of Lies”⁶⁸. Jesus did nothing of his own accord, he only chose to do the things he saw the Father doing. Are we living with the

⁶⁵ Ephesians 2:2

⁶⁶ John 5:19 RSV

⁶⁷ John 8:38 RSV

⁶⁸ John 8:44

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world and its standards as our number one priority for deriving mission, or are we living with our place in the Kingdom of God as our prime reality. Which type of learning does God ask us to gain – Revelation knowledge, or worldly knowledge which philosophically is miles apart from kingdom knowledge; and living by following the Father’s heart? Did Acts Christians follow the leading of the Spirit of Jesus’ by seeking his voice and vision with the eyes of their hearts, or did they seek to compromise with the world? What happened when compromise and deception were attempted⁶⁹?

Christian mission is based on revelation knowledge. Paul says this in Ephesians 1:17 when he prays:

“that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him.....” [RSV].

So fundamentally Christian mission is not based on:

- A. Our human efforts.
- B. Our human methods.
- C. Our human knowledge.
- D. Our supposed inner divinity.

Christian mission is based on:

- A. Receiving direct messages from God in our hearts through the flow of the Holy Spirit
- B. Receiving visions, and pictures with the spiritual eyes of our hearts from God
- C. Receiving thoughts that spontaneously come into our hearts as they “bubble up” in us and flow into and beyond our beings.
- D. That the team is taught how to recognise the spontaneous flow of this revelation knowledge in their hearts.
- E. That the team is taught how to receive healing and counsel from the “Spirit of Jesus”⁷⁰ directly.
- F. That the focus is on Jesus doing the mission through the one true guide the Spirit of Truth which we have received if we are Christians⁷¹.
- G. The mission-al leader is a vessel through which God facilitates the new convert to also become a vessel which the Holy Spirit will flow into and brim over and out of as well.

⁶⁹ Acts 5

⁷⁰ Acts 16:8 - 10

⁷¹ John 14:15 - 27

This type of mission-al leadership aids the convert to discover the infinite resources of God to encourage them, guide them, give them new life, give them unlimited life forever⁷² and the peace of Christ that passes all understanding!

Conclusion

In the next section we will be discussing four keys to hearing the voice of God. We will start to discover how these keys can open up the door to the infinite resources of God, but above all to an intimate relationship with our heavenly dad.

1.1– Group Exercise



Get into groups of three and pray for each other, whilst laying hands on each others heads, that God will open your hearts to receive revelation knowledge from him. Wait quietly for a couple of minutes after doing this waiting on him and stilling your own thoughts down to see what he wants to say to you. You may get a picture, a feeling, some thoughts – share these thoughts for a couple of minutes with each other, and write down what God has said to you in your journal note books which come with this course.

1.2 Write down what God has said to you below

⁷² John 5:24

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Four Keys to Hearing God's Voice

Let us begin this training process by considering the fundamental way that the ancient prophets sought to discover God's revealed will. Indeed what we are about to consider is the foundation to how the schools of the prophets trained their disciples [learners] to discern and hear God's voice and receive visions. Jesus lived by this teaching, and taught his disciples to do so as well. The book of Acts shows us the outworking of what this looked like in real life. The gospel of John models what this looked like in Jesus who is our example.

I remember saying to a close friend in leadership concerning a talk I was to give at a conference "I want to share the four keys to hearing God's voice today." He said to me, tongue in cheek, "Yes and I will share my five keys". He was saying it with a twinkle in his eye making the point that we should not break down God into a method. So I tend to say to people now I would like to share four keys that I find useful in order to aid me in hearing God's voice. I must start this section by saying that I have learnt the importance of these four keys through studies I have done with Christian Leadership University. I recommend to any one taking this course to seriously consider doing some of their courses, particularly to begin with a course entitled "Communion with God." This course thoroughly examines the whole area of hearing God, dialoguing with God, and having intimacy with God. I am indebted to CLU for these great lessons, and I will utilise many of these lessons in this course as they have become part of my Christian experience. In other words I have proven them for myself.

So what are four keys to hearing God's voice? Let us consider a key Scripture:

"I will take my stand to watch, and station myself on the tower, and look forth to see what he will say to me, and what I will

answer concerning my complaint. And the LORD answered me:
'Write the vision; make it plain upon tablets, so he may run who
reads it.'⁷³

Four Keys to Hear God's Voice!

[1] Stillness – I still my own thoughts

[2] Vision – I look to Jesus

[3] Spontaneity – Spontaneous thoughts

[4] Journaling – I write down these thoughts

From this verse we may deduce how the prophet Habakkuk approached his times of dialoguing with God, so let's examine the verses:

1. He took his "stand" and waited in stillness of being to "see what he [God]" would "say to" him. The first principle to hearing God's voice is to "still" your self; this can be demonstrated from a variety of instances in Scripture, and it is crucial in the process of dialoguing with God.



So how can we bring ourselves to stillness, here are some things that work for me:

- i. I pray in tongues, which open up the part of my mind which is particularly involved in intuitive flow – the things of the heart.
- ii. I put on worship music without words, and ask God to create a still space inside of myself where my thoughts, worries, plans etc can be laid aside for my time with him.
- iii. If I can't do this then I write down my concerns on a piece of paper and decide to leave them until later.
- iv. I look at some nice relaxing pictures from nature.
- v. I breathe deeply and slowly.
- vi. I picture a scene which brings me to relaxation.

⁷³ Habakkuk 2:1, 2

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By coming to stillness, letting my mind be empty of my thoughts, I invite Jesus to come and fill my heart.

2. And this brings us to the second great approach to dialoguing with God – I “watch” to “see” what he will say to me. I look with the eyes of my heart, and listen with the ears of my heart to see what Jesus wants to say to me. So the next step is I look for vision, I look to Jesus. There are two great verses which help me here:



“Looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”⁷⁴”

“For it is the God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.”⁷⁵”

We will rarely go wrong when we seek the voice of the Spirit of Jesus in our hearts. We must look to the “Spirit of Jesus” to give us his thoughts, his feelings, his vision. If we were to read 2 Corinthians chapters 3 – 4:6 then we would clearly see that for Paul he knew that Jesus was living in his heart by his Spirit. He quite literally expected to see Jesus face in his heart, and he believed that his Spirit was living inside his heart and mind in deep interactive intimacy with him. When I look to vision I see Jesus face.

3. Next we come to “and the LORD answered me”. If we are still and do not look to ourselves but to Christ then we will find that spontaneous thoughts, pictures and feelings will light upon our minds. We will sense that these thoughts are too wise for us, too comforting, beyond our normal way of coping, or dealing with things. These thoughts, feelings or pictures come as a spontaneous flow. If I try to engage my mind at this time the tendency will be for me to try to take control, and then the flow of the river of God’s Spirit is stopped, but if I allow them to come without judging them or stopping them until they have finished then I will find that they are truly from Christ. We will discuss safe guards later if we find the thoughts are negative or harmful, but a simple rule to follow at this early stage is to say that if we look to Jesus then his wonderful presence of light shuts out the enemy. If you just let the thoughts flow in this time of listening to the God who speaks you can decide to test what has been communicated later.



⁷⁴ Hebrews 12:2a RSV

⁷⁵ 2 Corinthians 5:6 RSV

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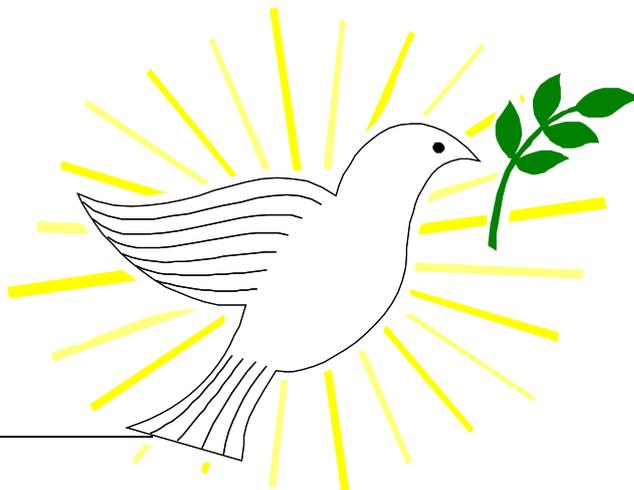
Testing them during this time will just stop the flow. However, if you are worried about opening up in this way, then you can ask God what he wants to say to you about your worries, and then you can continue in the flow of what he communicates. Remember God always wants to build a deep loving and safe intimate relationship with you, deep inside your heart.

4. Finally we come to Journaling. Habakkuk is instructed by the Lord to “write the vision.” I find it very helpful to write down in my journal the questions I have for God, and to also record the spontaneous thoughts and pictures which flow through the eyes of my heart and the ears of my heart. Writing what God is communicating to me helps me to stay focussed for longer periods of time on the free flow of the spontaneous thoughts and pictures God is giving me. It has the benefit of keeping my mind occupied so that it does not try to take control of the time, and it gives me a record of what God is saying to me, and allows me to share things with a close spiritual mentoring friend, as well as giving me a record of what God has said, and allowing me time to meditate on it, and to also test it.⁷⁶



We will next consider the safe guards which we need to put in place when approaching God in this way, but at this point I would recommend the four keys as a vital thing for the Mission-al leader to practice, and for the whole team to learn as well!

Remember that the “LAMAD” approach is based on revelation knowledge. God is the only one who really knows us and understands us. Human beings cannot sort out their hearts, lives or salvation by themselves. Humanistic approaches fail to be able to offer any lasting solutions to our sin damaged lives, or mission to those who are in bondage to self and sin. God is the only one who can save us. Jesus is the only way to Father God⁷⁷. The “Spirit of Jesus” is the only one who can bring us into a deep, healing and intimate loving relationship with the family of God! So the four keys will become important in the teaching process of all those secular people who come to faith in Christ.



⁷⁶ Virkler, 2005:47

⁷⁷ John 14:6

We closed the last session with a journaling exercise utilising the four keys to hearing God's voice which we discussed. As we went through the last session I said that we would begin this one by considering safe guards to protect us, especially if you are new to receiving words and pictures. Many worry that we are engaging in some sort of weird New Age form of mysticism. It is feared that we will let in a wrong spirit or a demonic spirit. It is thought by others that the Holy Spirit was only given to give the early Christian church a head start, and that with the passing of the Apostolic age the supernatural gifts of the Spirit were no longer available to Christians, and that the Spirit from then on would speak primarily through the Scriptures. I think that we dealt with what the New Testament model really teaches in a nut shell earlier. If you wish to explore this field in a more comprehensive way then please consult the Bibliography. I have already mentioned my view that Christian Leadership University offers some excellent courses on this which all arise out of the "LAMAD" style of learning as mentioned in the first session. So in this session we will consider first of all 5 safe guards that all must be in place before we start to explore the four keys on our own.

3.1 Safe Guards



The five safe guards may be expressed in the following way:

- A. That you are a born again Christian with a relationship with Jesus Christ, having repented of all known sins, and having trust in him, and obedient to him as your master and Lord.
- B. That the Bible is the sole standard for testing all experiences, ideas and spiritual phenomenon against.
- C. That you are committed to getting to know God through meditation on Scripture.
- D. That you submit your will to the Will of God in everything as it is revealed to you.
- E. That you have 2 or 3 spiritual advisors who you trust as good friends that you can share your journaling and spiritual growth experiences with – particularly when big decisions are involved.

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There are also six qualities which a spiritual advisor needs to possess. It must be said that Mission-al leaders must be supervised and mentored by at least two advisors. The six



qualities are:

- A. That your advisor be a good friend who you can talk to and have an open trusting and trustworthy relationship with.
- B. That your advisor has a strong and comprehensive Biblical orientation.
- C. That your advisor receives words, visions and walks in the fruits of the Holy Spirit.
- D. That your advisor has a commitment to people under his or her pastoral care.
- E. That your advisor receives counsel from others as you do.
- F. That your advisor be ahead of you in an area in which you wish to learn about and grow into.⁷⁸

3.2 Exercise



Get into groups of 3 or 4 and discuss the following questions for 10 minutes, and then report back at the end of the exercise.

A. In what ways is it important to utilise the five safe guards as Mission-al leaders?

B. In what areas does my present experience with God measure up to the five safe guards – think about strengths and weaknesses?

⁷⁸ Virkler, 2005:Chapter 1

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C. What sort of spiritual advisors do I relate to at the moment? Are they close friends? What are the strengths and weaknesses of having a close friend as an advisor in your experience?

D. What are the benefits of being open to intimacy with God through flow and spontaneity? What are some of the blocks I am facing?

At the close of this exercise after feeding back to the wider group we will then take a few minutes to pray for each other based on what each of our small groups shared.

3.3 – Utilising Vision in the Mission-al Leaders personal life and in the witnessing life of the mission team to Secular People

KEY PRINCIPLE!

What you focus on you

Magnify!

1. Focus on Jesus = Abundant life

Positive World View

2. Focus on Negatives = Enemies

Realm of Negativity, depression

& Darkness

When Mission leaders or converts try to sort out problems for themselves without reference to revelation knowledge they will find that they soon get discouraged. Mission encounters may be fruitless in terms of really having gone very far, it may take months, or even in some cases a year or two before any real breakthroughs happen with un-churched contacts. This is because we so often rely on a system or model of reaching people which is thought to be the best way to proceed because it does not seek to bring too much outside influence into the relationship as this might mean the potential convert will fear brain washing or manipulation.

It is true that this is also a major concern in the “LAMAD” approach. When we consider the way Jesus related to people he helped them to see for themselves what their needs were; that he did not treat them with disrespect. He did not force his disciples to follow him, but he invited them to follow. He did not judge the woman at the well, who was probably a prostitute with condemning words, but rather with words of invitation which she could respond to. She responded in such a big way that she brought the whole village back to

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meet Jesus saying: “Come see a man who told me everything I ever did.”⁷⁹ Notice how Jesus use of Revelation knowledge with her proved to her, and the village, that Jesus was indeed the Messiah!

The approach of Christ when he speaks to us through the spontaneous flow of his Spirit in our hearts is to share his love for us. He seeks to build us up. He delights in a relationship with us. He loves to just be with us, if you like just to hang out with us. He does not force us to do anything against our will. We always have a choice. We will discuss more about this in our next section when we consider “discerning the spirits”, knowing the voice of Christ, and the voice of Satan. But it may simply be said at this stage that the enemy always uses manipulation, or deception in one way or another which in the end comes down to a desire to harm us. The Holy Spirit’s main role as he communicates Jesus to us is to comfort us, and to come alongside and help us to make the next steps with him by our side.

So this brings us to the use of the eyes and ears of our new contacts heart as they seek new perspectives and healing of their inner most beings. And this is what mission is all about, the healing of secular people’s inner most beings!

Let us consider a situation in which your contact has a deep hurt from the past, perhaps it is child abuse, perhaps it is the loss of a loved one. They have struggled with the hurt, anger, grief and pain of this damaging event for many years. No matter how many times they try to find healing or release as they have talked about it, or prayed about it has just remained a set of unanswered questions and emotional pain. It affects their relationship with people. It makes them have questions about God – why did he let it happen?

⁷⁹ John 4:39

**WHAT VISION YOU INCUBATE IN YOUR HEART WILL
DETERMINE HOW YOU FEEL AND THINK!**



Satan's Negative

Picture "you will fail", "You will Die", "You are useless".



Jesus' Positive

Vision for you "I love you"
"You will have abundant life"

"You will succeed with me".

IGNORE NEGATIVES!



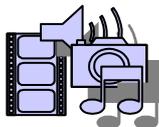
MAGNIFY JESUS' POSITIVES!

This is where the "LAMAD" approach to healing vision comes into play. The mission-al leader has **heard the story of the contacts pain, and the contact feels safe and is willing to seek healing**. Above all they want a divine perspective on it. So the counsellor uses the first three of the four keys to help the client to come to stillness, and ready to receive spontaneous vision from the "Spirit of Jesus". There are simple steps that can be taken:

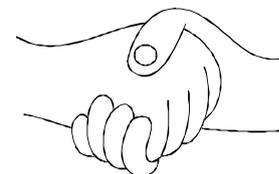
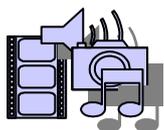


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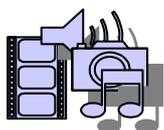
Step # 1 – The contact is encouraged to put him or herself back into the hurtful past experience. He is asked to picture the place where it happened, the people concerned, and what happened. But particularly you encourage the client to watch what Jesus is doing or saying, whilst the experience is relived.



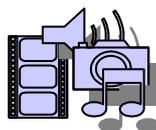
Step # 2 – Encourage the contact to take Jesus hand, or to look on at his or her self during this event and to ask Jesus to give you his reason for allowing you to go through the experience. What was he doing while you were going through it.



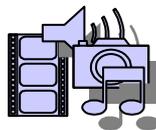
Step # 3 – As Jesus gives the contact a new perspective on what happened this may be enough in it self to transform the contacts whole outlook on what happened. Looking at things from Jesus divine perspective will enable the contact to find answers and healing which no one else could ever give. Of course there could be several steps Jesus wants the contact to take with him over a few sessions. Jesus knows best – just go with the flow until it ends.



Step # 4 – The contact may choose to ask Jesus to heal his hurts, or his anger, or to, enable him to forgive the person involved. The important thing is that the vision encounter through the eyes of his heart will not be the contact's answers, but they need to be allowed to flow through his being like a pure refreshing river of God's healing love. It will not be a controlled event where the leader suggests things to the contact, but rather the leader encourages the contact to watch Jesus, see what he is doing and saying. The mission-al leader just encourages the contact to remain in the vision until the flow of it has been allowed to cease when the Spirit has said all he wants to.



Step # 5 - It is important to end the vision session with thanks giving for the new perspective, and the healing given. It is also important to encourage the client to journal what God has done for him.⁸⁰



I would like to stress that these steps are not to be rigidly followed when seeking vision with the contact, they are rather a guideline. Anything which becomes a formula, or is used as one will be in danger of becoming reliant on methods, and human systems which will block flow. When the free flow of spontaneous pictures light on our minds looking to Jesus for vision then we can have confidence that Jesus will show up. At the most basic level I often ask contacts to invite Jesus into the past hurtful event, and to await spontaneous vision.

⁸⁰ Virkler, counselled,

Discerning the Spirits

Introduction

The “LAMAD” approach to Mission is unique in that it focuses on the spiritual realm. We know as Christians that this realm is unseen, but its effects are felt much like the wind we cannot see which nevertheless is felt⁸¹. WE soon discover that we can receive negative and positive influences as we approach this realm of ministry and mission. Because “LAMAD” is based on revelation knowledge it is opening us up to the infinite world of God, but this realm also has unseen evil demonic spirits in it too. The key verse to begin this section is:

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone into the world.”⁸²”

This is critical; we need to be able to discern the voice of the Holy Spirit, and the voice of the enemy. Doctor Mark Virkler has much to say on this. Broadly speaking his discoveries in this field of discernment boil down to learning to discern which spirit is communicating with us by learning the character of the spirit which is speaking. So he suggests that we need to know the characteristic names of Satan, and the characteristic names of the Holy Spirit and by knowing these names we learn to discern the character of the spirit speaking to us. So if our thoughts are accusing creating unrest in our spirits then this is Satan, whose name means adversary, accuser. If the influence is comforting, then we know it is the comforter speaking to us. So let’s explore this a bit more.

4.1 – The Characteristics of the enemy

A. The Accuser of the brethren⁸³



The essence of Satan’s nature is to accuse. The Greek word DIABOLOS [δίαβολος]⁸⁴ Means “accuser”. When we consider much of what we may think is an accusing conscience which leaves us feeling terrible about our failings and sins we can be sure that this is coming from the accuser. We may have thought it was God convicting us, but any sense and feeling which keeps on telling us how awful we are is not from God. For the fruits of the Spirit always major on the positive, and any correction is done to build us up rather than knocking us down. Consider the fruit:

⁸¹ John 3:8

⁸² 1 John 4:1 RSV

⁸³ Revelation 12:10,11

⁸⁴ Moulton, 1981:90

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control: against such there is no law.”⁸⁵”

“Accuser” always tries to dominate our minds with negative self judgments rather than positive fruits of the Spirit. I can think of times in my life before I understood this that many negative judgments I made about myself, “Owe what a worm am I” were not from God as I thought, but from Accuser. He tries to keep us under law and judgement. Jesus’ Spirit brings grace, love, joy, peace. Which spirit is trying to influence us? When the enemy accuses you, accuses others, accuses God rebuke him and command him to leave in Jesus name replacing the accusation with the truth.

B. The Father of lies⁸⁶. Accusation is often based on enough of the truth to make it



believable, but with some real error in it as well. For instance In the case of the woman caught in adultery in John 8 the Jewish leaders brought the woman to Jesus with the presupposition of guilt without all the information evident – for instance the people who caught her must have entrapped her first. They judged her having first of all set up the judgment, and they also wished to bring some false accusation against Jesus, if he said stone her he would be snared by Roman law, and if he let her off, he would be ensnared by the Jewish law. However, Jesus looks beyond the deception and entrapment at the real heart of the issue – “He who is without sin cast the first stone”⁸⁷. This demonstrates discernment of the Father of lies, his deception was laid bare and his accusing purposes revealed. Then the healing words come “Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no longer.”⁸⁸” Accusation and deception are always tangled together by the enemy in seemingly plausible circumstances. Look for the lies, deceptions and accusations the enemy will always put into his false revelations. Negative thoughts and suggestions are often the key clue to which spirit is speaking. Whenever you identify the lies and deceptive thoughts implanted by the enemy replace them with the words of truth from Scripture and the Spirit.

C. The Adversary and the Enemy⁸⁹.



Satan is completely your enemy. He seeks your destruction. He wants to take away the positive fruits of living by the Spirit and replace them with negatives and imprisonment of our spirits. When he presents negative thoughts in your mind immediately recognise them and replace them with the positive thoughts which the Holy Spirit will counter them with.

⁸⁵ Galatians 5: 22,23 RSV

⁸⁶ John 8:44

⁸⁷ John 8:7

⁸⁸ John 8:11

⁸⁹ Matthew 13:39

D. An Angel of light⁹⁰.



Satan attempts to make us believe his lies mixed with enough truth to make them believable in order to make us believe that we are not good enough, that others are not good enough, that God is not good and loving – trying to raise doubts about his love and nature. A shadow falls over our hearts and minds, and we lose our peace and assurance. It is important at these times to counter the enemy's mixture of seeming truth/light and error with the truth of what God has said about himself clearly in Scripture. Rebuke the enemy in Jesus name, and he is then made to leave in defeat. I have discovered that many of the things I felt convicted about which kept me feeling bad about myself were not coming from God but the false angel of light. It seemed like conviction, but it kept on making me focus on my sin asking again and again for forgiveness, the sin was rightly identified, the guilt was rightly placed, but the recycling of the conviction after confession was the lie which showed it came from the enemy and not Christ. Remember not all conviction comes from God. The Spirit rather convinces us of sin so that we can confess it and move on, the false angel of light [a demon and Satan] tries to trap us in a negative set of thought patterns which make us remain in a continuous guilt trip. Discern the spirit by the fruit⁹¹. Much of what we think is God is actually the enemy. It is only as we realise that negative thought patterns although seeming to arise from a place of light actually produce a shadow land of negativity that the enemy is keeping you in bondage and continuous guilt – trapping you, and robbing you of complete forgiveness and new power to live beyond guilt by receiving forgiveness, and thus forgiving yourself. We often get trapped doing the same sin over and over again because we believe a lie which tells us we can never get beyond our besetting sin. Where does that negative thought pattern come from? What thought pattern should we replace it with – well we need to look to the Holy Spirit and discern his voice through the names and characteristics expressed by his names. Names always express character in Scripture. We will examine these names in a moment.

E. A Thief who comes to steal and kill and destroy⁹².



He seeks to steal our Joy, steal our peace, steal our purity, steal the stability of our faith and replace it with doubts. At all times we need to take every thought captive for Christ, and to replace every negative attempt to defraud us of our liberty with the truth that Christ brings to mind in order to counter the enemy. Remember apart from Christ and the work of his Spirit working through revelation knowledge we cannot defeat the enemy. It all must come from the flow of the revelations of Christ replacing error with truth; Transforming negative self destructive thought patterns with positive life giving thought patterns, and visions of all that Christ has won for us. A picture is worth a thousand words, so focus on the positive visions God gives you in the eyes of your heart about his life giving plans for you.

⁹⁰ 2 Corinthians 11:14

⁹¹ Matthew 7:16

⁹² John 10:10

The characteristics of the Holy Spirit

- A. The Comforter [PARAKLETOS - παρακλητος] – the one called to our sides for our aid, comfort and defence].



Whilst the Accuser is trying to trouble our hearts with his negative and destructive thought patterns the Comforter brings positive counter thoughts and feelings to you. He comes to our side defending our hearts from the negative assaults – look for and listen to the Comforters spontaneous visions revealing God’s outlook on your eternal future with him. Directly deny the enemies lies however subtle they might be, and speak the truth out rebuking the enemy’s lies directly.

And this is where a simple comparison made by Mark and Pattie Virkler in their study guide which goes with the CLU course counselled by God is useful:

Holy Spirit Conviction

- a. Points to specific problem
- b. Urges you to repent
- c. Points to specific action

Satanic Condemnation

- Leads to general feeling of despair
Urges your destruction
No way out⁹³

Notice how specific, and directly identified positive actions are true of the Holy Spirits convincing influence encourages. Whereas satanic condemnation seeks to generalise a problem which mostly leads to a generalised negative self view which is designed to leave you feeling there is no hope for you, and no way out of a situation. The Comforter always aims to motivate us to specific action which is not perceived as condemnation, but as healing.

- B. The Spirit of Truth⁹⁴.



The truth sets us free from deception⁹⁵. It releases our minds to see ourselves as possessors of eternal freedom from sin, death, depression, and negative self scripts that keep on telling us “you can’t do it” by replacing it with “In Christ I can do all things”, or “I’m going to end up killing myself” with “You have passed over from death to eternal life”. Every truth about what Christ has done to save us, and what he has won for us and promised us is reinforced on our hearts by the Spirit of truth, for he speaks of Jesus and his complete victory which is already yours in every way and over against every negative lie and negative thought pattern.

The following figure is also borrowed from the study guide mentioned above:

⁹³ Virkler, CBG:9

⁹⁴ John 16:13

⁹⁵ John 8:32

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Satan's Thoughts

God's Thoughts

Negative, destructive	Positive, up building
I can't	I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me [Phil.4:13]
I lack	My God shall supply all my needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus [Phil.4:19]
I fear	God has not given me a spirit of fear, but of power, and of Love and of a sound mind [2 Tim. 1:7]
I don't have faith	God has given to me a measure of faith [Rom. 12:3]
I'm weak	The Lord is the strength of my life [Ps. 27:1]
Satan has really got me	Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world [1 Jh.4:4]
I'm defeated	God always causes me to triumph in Christ Jesus [2 Cor.2:14]
I don't know hat to do	Christ Jesus is made unto me wisdom from God [1 Cor.1:30]
I expect to get sick sometimes	By His stripes I am healed [Isa. 53:5], Jesus Himself took my Infirmities and bore my sicknesses [Mat.8:17]
I am so worried & frustrated	I can cast all my cares upon Him, because he cares for me [1 Pet.5:7]
I'm in bondage	Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty [2 Cor. 3:17]
I feel so condemned	There is no condemnation to me, because I am in Christ Jesus [Rom. 8:1]

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C. The Convincer⁹⁷.



The word which is used for convict can also mean convince in the original language. The Holy Spirit seeks to gently influence us, whereas the enemy seeks to dominate us. Satan uses demands, whereas the Spirit appeals. We might say that the spirit of the adversary seeks to drive us and the Holy Spirit seeks to draw us to him.

D. The Edifier⁹⁸.



The essence of the Holy Spirit's desire is to build us up coming to see ourselves as valued and loved people. He aims to develop intimacy with us. He wants us to discover who we really are – partakers of the divine nature – being kings and sons and daughters of God's family – who will rule at the side of Christ in eternal love, peace and joy forever more – into all infinity. The enemy wishes to tear down. Discern the spirits in other words – who is speaking to you?

E. The Exhorter/Teacher⁹⁹.



The Greek term for Exhort PARAKALEO [παρακαλεω] comes from the same derivative sense of meaning as the Comforter's name

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Virkler, CWG:34

⁹⁷ John 16:8

⁹⁸ 1 Corinthians 14:3

⁹⁹ 1 Corinthians 14:3 and John 14:26

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PARAKLETOS [παρακλητος] which gives the sense of encouragement – positive and constructive communication and positive aid to grow and develop. The teaching function of the Holy Spirit is not to hit us with destructive criticism [which is Satan’s approach as adversary], but rather to constructively encourage us to grow and find energy for positive life and being. Are you encouraged by the revelations that come to the eyes and ears of your heart? Who is influencing you?

4.3 – Group Exercise

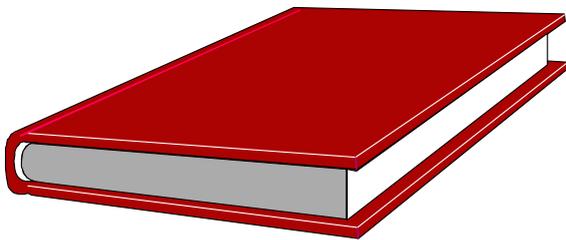


A. Get into pairs and share about your present experience with God by considering the following questions.

- i. How would you rate your present feelings about yourself in terms of your sense of feeling accepted by God?
- ii. In what ways can you identify the enemy’s attacks or the Spirit’s positive influence in your life at the moment?
- iii. In what ways can you counter the enemy’s present attacks on you by considering what the names and characteristics of the Holy Spirit do to identify where he is getting into your thought processes at the moment?

B. Once you have identified where the enemy is getting at you, pray for each other and invite God to speak to you one at a time whilst one of you listens to what the Spirit is revealing to the eyes and ears of your heart. Ask Jesus to give you a vision of what he wants to say to you concerning the way the enemy has been tacking you, and ask him to show you how he is now going to remove the enemies negative influence from you life. Praise God for his help, and choose in Jesus to live with his solutions which he has given to you. Record hat you have seen and heard from Jesus below.

4.4 – Your Journaling



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Conclusion

To conclude this training chapter I want to emphasise that in order for a Mission-al team and a Mission-al leader to be affective in their ministry to the un-church/secular person they need to know how to live by revelation knowledge, and at the most basic of levels to at least understand the basic facets of how revelation takes place.

It is vital that the mission specialist be equipped to live by the flow of the “Spirit of Jesus” having received ministry his or her self first before ministering to those who need to hear the gospel of Jesus, and before the team works together seeking revelation knowledge living out of the initiative of the Spirits’ guidance in their lives as he communicates and dialogues with them as a team as well as individuals; and with contacts.

Chapter 6 – Seating Jesus CEO at the Mission Planning Table

Introduction

When teams plan mission they can take on many different forms and approaches. Highly driven teams will be far more interested in getting out on to the coal face of mission and doing what needs to be done. Highly analytical teams will spend a large amount of time trying to think through all the implications and all the possible challenges; and this is just to think of a couple of examples. In my experience what often happens is that a team will say a short prayer asking God to guide them and then they will get on with planning an event without seeking revelation knowledge on Christ's plans for the shaping of their shared mission. We have already discussed the Acts model of mission, and it has been demonstrated that early Christians lived by seeking revelation knowledge of Christ the King's plans, and when they were clear about this they then were led by his Spirit to do and to teach the things that came to them spontaneously by the flow of the "Spirit of Jesus"¹⁰⁰.

In this chapter we will be considering the way that Christ CEO [Chief Executive Officer] taught his disciples to go about Mission.

Seating Christ at the Planning Table

In chapter 5 we considered how to use the four keys to hearing God's voice as a mission team. In this section let us consider how Christ guides his team.

The basic structure of any mission team is apostolic. When Paul was guided by the "Spirit of Jesus" to go to Macedonia to preach the gospel [Acts 16:6-10] he did so with his team; which consisted of himself, Silas, Luke and some others. A mission team in New Testament terms is at least five fold in terms of its gifting. It consists of:

"And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers."¹⁰¹

Every apostolic team needs these basic gifts. The team works together seeking God's guidance and equipping to fulfil his mission through them. We may describe each of these gifts as an anointing; in other words an anointed teacher will be the one who loves teaching as the main expression of his spiritual giftedness, and he or she is recognised as a good teacher by the team and by many people

¹⁰⁰ Acts 16:6 - 10

¹⁰¹ Ephesians 4:11 RSV

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who have been taught by him or her. So here is a definition of each of the anointed ministries for mission:

1. Anointed Apostle – the apostle is that individual who is looked to by the team as the leader of the mission group. He or she demonstrates the qualities of a team leader. Delegating responsibilities, seeking group consensus on aims and goals, exercising authority to hold the team accountable. He is the team leader. An anointed apostle is a facilitator, he or she does not lord it over a team, but seeks to facilitate and enable team members to do what they are good at doing.
2. Anointed prophet – all Christian's can exercise a personal prophetic gift receiving revelation knowledge for themselves from God with the eyes and ears of their hearts – living by flow. However, an anointed prophet not only receives Rhema¹⁰² and vision for himself but he also receives it for the team, and for those the team are in mission with. He or she will give invaluable insight from God to the team.
3. Anointed evangelist – we all can lead people to Christ through flow, Rhema and Vision, however the anointed evangelist will demonstrate the gift of winning people for Christ in a way that others do not. People who may have remained unmoved by other's efforts will respond readily to the voice of God through the evangelist. The mission team will recognise the need for a key member with this speciality.
4. Anointed pastor – All of us exercise the gift of care and support, and counsel toward others, particularly those who are close to our hearts. An anointed pastor has an overflowing abundance of love and passion for people. He or she will love to listen to people, and offer support to people in a way which gives him or her energy, and people will turn to him for help and advice more readily than other team members. The pastoral gift on the team makes the team consider the human needs of those being evangelised.
5. Anointed teacher – All of us offer some teaching on the Scriptures and the things of God, but this is not necessarily our passion. The anointed teacher has a passion for teaching the things of Christ, and he or she will always be thinking "How can we help prospective converts to understand biblical truth?" He or she will be invaluable on a team in order to help the team think about the best ways of teaching and equipping new converts to learn.¹⁰³

Every good team has these five basic gifts associated with it. Of course we may add others which the New Testament outlines, but at this stage we will stick with these by way of example.

So when the mission-al team get together their meetings will take a specific form when it comes to planning evangelism. The use of revelation knowledge will be primary to the process of the meeting. As team members sit around the table they come already being prepared for such meetings having spent much time seeking God's revelation to them selves personally as well as in terms of what God wants them to input into the meeting in the light of their anointing. All team members will have used the four keys to hearing God's voice, and they will have journaled what he has been saying to them.

¹⁰² Rhema is from a Greek word which means to speak forth – most commonly the New Testament uses this word to describe the words of God. In revelation knowledge terms it means that the words we read from Scripture have the life of God's continuing speaking words by his Spirit speaking to our hearts today!

¹⁰³ Coombes, 1996:Whole Text

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Some teams being seated around the table will utilise the empty chair method which represents symbolically the place where Christ is seated. Christ is the Servant King. His heart flows out to all with gift love wishing to enrich everyone with all they need for life, peace, joy and service to others etc. As the CEO at the table he will give spontaneous ideas to each team member, which the team will seek to clarify further as the whole team remain in flow together seeking Christ's plans and purposes for the next steps the mission-al team needs to take. A secretary will journal the items derived by revelation knowledge as the meeting commences. These journaled minutes will be read back at the next meeting, and they will also be given to each team member to reflect on between meetings. So a typical meeting may look something like this:

1. The meeting will begin with worship, prayer, Scripture and testimony and prophecy. Jesus will be invited and welcomed by every heart. Praise and worship opens the heart to flow. This is vital to begin with. Minutes may be read at the end of this time, and thanks giving may form a time of thanks giving to God for his provision and the way he has empowered and blessed mission initiatives acted on from a previous period after decisions were made.
2. The agenda will have been prepared in advance by various team members between meetings seeking revelation knowledge of what God wants discussed. This agenda is followed, but it will always make time for any other business, and it will be flexible enough to allow for the Spirit of Jesus to spontaneously lead the meeting somewhere else as well.
3. The team discuss each agenda item whilst seeking revelation knowledge and ideas – as these spontaneous ideas and pictures flow they dialogue with each other and with Christ who is flowing through each of them the various things that come to light. Where decisions need to be made then they will seek consensus in the Spirit of unity and love as to what to do when various options could lead them in different directions. Decisions are made where they need to be, and where there is a need for more time for reflection it is given.
4. The meeting is ended with celebration and praise asking God to send the team out with Christ's blessing. Consider the following early Christian meeting found in Acts [Acts 4:23 – 31]. Notice how Christ always acts when his people are in harmony seeking his direction living out of the Father's initiative.

Group Exercise

[1] Spend 10 minutes seeking spontaneous flow utilising the four keys asking God to speak to you about what we have just covered; record spontaneous thoughts and ideas that God gives you below.

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[4] Plan a time in your diaries for when you will implement the Lamad style of Mission-al leadership.

Record the date and time: _____

The Leaders' Paradigm

This section is based on the work of Dr. Mark Virkler, and will be considering the leader's paradigm. So let's consider a brief outline of the paradigm first of all:

For creative decision making as a mission-al leadership team build upon a skilful interaction with the six pillars for discovering truth, guidance and vision.

The Six Pillars of the Leaders Paradigm

Pillar 1: Illuminated Scriptures – Luke 24:32

Pillar 2: Illuminated Thoughts of the Mind – Luke 1:3

Pillar 3: Illuminated Witness in the Heart – Mark 2:8

Pillar 4: Illuminated Counsel of Others – Proverbs 11:14

Pillar 5: Illuminated Understanding of Life's Fruit – Mark

7:16

Pillar 6: God's Inner Voice through Dreams, Visions, Prophecy, and Journalling – Acts 2:17

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These are the six pillars in brief. How can these be utilised in the Mission team?

Group Exercise

[1] As a group consider the six pillars bullet pointed above and reflect on them asking the question above?

[2] What are the group's thoughts and feelings about these pillars?

[3] Individually take ten minutes to reflect on the six pillars and your discussion; utilise the four keys and journal spontaneous thoughts and pictures you receive.

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[4] Get into pairs and read your journaling to each other, and then take five minutes to pray.

An Analysis of the Six Pillars¹⁰⁴

Every Mission-al team needs to practice the six pillars as a key foundation to its apostolic team interaction and ministry to the un-churched.

Pillar 1: Illuminated Scriptures:

“They said to each other, ‘Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures¹⁰⁵?’

A Mission team needs to know the Scriptures at a different level to just treating them as a text book or devotional book; they need to treat them as the very bread of life. They need to seek the illumination of the Holy Spirit which is expressed as a “burning” in their hearts. This means that we need to read Scripture utilising the four keys to hearing God’s voice. Scripture reading is to be far more than just a straight forward exegetical and hermeneutical exercise; it is for the words of God recorded therein to become incarnate in the teams life, thought, hearts and actions. The word Rhema is used consistently to describe the words of Scripture. This Greek word means “the spoken forth word”, not just the “recorded word”, which the Greek word LOGOS better describes. Team members need to treat the words of God as they were always meant to be treated as God’s direct speaking voice for them today. Because Christ lives, his words live, as well as the Spirit of Jesus speaks through and to our hearts by bringing them to life within our contemporary situations.

Pillar 2: Illuminated thoughts in the mind:

“it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus.¹⁰⁶”

¹⁰⁴ Virkler, 2005:181

¹⁰⁵ Luke 24:32 RSV

¹⁰⁶ Luke 1:3 RSV

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A mission team needs to utilise the four keys to hearing God's voice in order to obtain illuminated reasoning guided by the Spirit of Jesus'. Remember the Holy Spirit is particularly defined as the Spirit of Jesus in the New Covenant dispensation¹⁰⁷. Just as Jesus lived out of the initiative of the Father¹⁰⁸ receiving his words and works from him as he lived by the flow of the Holy Spirit; who gave him his power to act and Speak, so we also must seek the living Rhema of Christ as he speaks new ideas and thoughts for our mission into our hearts. This is fundamental to the team's development and philosophy of practice, and ethos, as well as its mission activity, and decision making!

Pillar 3: Illuminated witness in the heart.¹⁰⁹

“And immediately Jesus, perceiving in his spirit that they thus questioned within themselves, said to them, ‘Why do you question thus in your hearts?’”.

This works in many ways within the Christian life, but particularly as a sense of an inner check within the Christian's heart if something is not right, or as a sense of inner allowance or a feeling of rightness if a thing is in keeping with the mission of Jesus for a mission team. This gift works particularly powerfully with the prophetic gift as well as the pastoral gift, although all gift types will experience it at different levels. Scripture calls this the gift of discernment¹¹⁰, and it is a vital gift to exercise on the mission-al team both in terms of planning as well as in the execution of mission and evangelism in its various contexts.

Pillar 4: Illuminated Counsel of Others:

“Where there is no guidance, a people falls; but in an abundance of counsellors there is safety.”¹¹¹

In the first place a mission-al team which has the five primary anointed ministries on it will have a good balance of insight and input into the mission of the team as each member brings his or her gifts to bear as they live by flow listening to God and seeking vision. Further to this it can be important to call in other ministry specialists to give your team illuminated insight. Further to this it is important that those who are not on what we might call the mission team executive, but are involved in the mission, have an input as well. In this way their gifts and Rhema knowledge, and experience, also keeps the team up to date with what God is saying and doing. It is important to weigh and evaluate the revelation knowledge

¹⁰⁷ Acts 16:6 - 10

¹⁰⁸ John 5:19, 20

¹⁰⁹ Mark 2:8 RSV

¹¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 12:10

¹¹¹ Proverbs 11:14 RSV

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which can be gained from outside the group. Every good mission team will make sure that it gets regular spiritual audits from spiritual advisors outside the group! This will be a good way to keep a balance between the mission teams smaller orbit of ministry, and the bigger picture of God's other workers from else where in the vineyard – so to speak.

Pillar 5: Illuminated understanding of life's fruit:

“You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles?¹¹²”.

There will be many occasions when the mission team will have to make decisions which will affect the team's composition, who keeps doing a role, or who else is God bringing to us to move the team on. During these times a key question will be to consider the fruit. Not so much the basic fruit of whether a person is a real Christian or not rather than play acting at it, but also are the fruits of their ministry activities bearing fruit which is showing a godly harvest. Are un-churched people coming to Christ through this person's ministry? If they are evangelists and they are not getting the fruit then this will be a strong indicator that something is not right. A key feature of the evangelistic gift will be people getting saved – to put it bluntly. Moving to mission activities the group is involved in, “Is there fruit of new people coming to Christ from the un-churched sector, or is it rather the case that nominal Christians are instead?” Is what the team is doing reaching it's target group of secular people? If it is not then the mission group will need to ask the question “What is our fruit or lack of it pointing us to do? Something different? Or to spend time getting back on course with the main vision of reaching secular people with the gospel?” So there will need to be a real sense of fruit analysis from times to time, seeking revelation knowledge frequently asking God to speak to your team about the fruit of your ministry, and what that fruit means to God, and if he needs you to be flexible and adaptive as various people are ministered to through you by the Spirit of Jesus'.

Pillar 6: God's Inner voice through dreams, visions, prophecy and journaling:

“And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams;¹¹³”

Peter quotes from Joel chapter 2 to demonstrate to those who are asking why they can hear the disciples speaking in their native languages what is happening. Whereas in the Old Covenant dispensation prophets, priests and kings were anointed by the Holy Spirit, in the

¹¹² Matthew 7:16 RSV

¹¹³ Acts 2:17 RSV

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Chapter 7 – The Threefold Approach to Birthing Mission-al Vision

Introduction

In this chapter we will be talking about a three fold approach to giving birth to a revelation based vision for mission, to un-churched people, which God has put into the hearts of team members. It must be noted again that the Lamad approach to ministry to secular society is different to other approaches to the extent that it seeks to base its whole approach to mission on revelation knowledge which works by a continuous dialogical relationship with Jesus Christ as he continues his mission of words and deeds through the flow of his Spirit through us; giving Rhema and vision to the eyes and ears of our hearts. I emphasise this once more because it is the fundamental difference between this approach than any other approach in this field!

Missiological books again and again seem to get lost in programming, modelling and modes of philosophy and approach. Practitioners learn much of right attitudes toward becoming incarnate in different cultural groups through these books, but they seem to be overly weighted toward philosophy and practice rather than following the New Testament model of living by flow, and revelation knowledge; as the primary basis for the continuing mission of the supernatural Jesus by means of the Holy Spirit continuing his mission with us and through us to a lost secular world!

This chapter will look at the new covenant approach to three important steps in conducting the mission of Jesus:

1. The conception of the mission vision.
2. The Incubation process of maturing the mission-al vision.
3. The birth phase of the mission-al Vision at full term.

An Overview of the three fold process of Mission vision and Incarnation

I will start by giving the following table describing the three fold process to fulfilling revelation based Mission and vision.

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Incubating Only Christ

By filling all five senses of the heart with Him

<u>SENSE</u>	<u>HOW USED</u>	<u>BIBLE EXAMPLE</u>	<u>STAGE</u>
1. Inner Ear			
[Jon 5:30]	Receives God's Word	Genesis 12:1-3	Conception
2. Inner Eye			
[Rev. 4:1]	Receives God's Vision	Genesis 15:5, 6	Conception
3. Inner Mind			
[Lk. 2:19]	Ponders God's Thoughts	Romans 4:20, 21	Incubation
4. Inner Will			
[Acts 19:21]	Speaks on God's Word	Genesis 17:5	Incubation
5. Inner Emotions			
[1 K. 21:5]	Acts on God's Words & Vision	Genesis 17:23	Incubation
END RESULT	Death of the vision "I" am unable to Bring it about	Genesis 16:2; Genesis 17:18, 19	Birth
END RESULT	Supernatural Resurrection of The Vision In the Fullness Of time God brings It forth	Genesis 21:1, 2 Galatians 4:4a	Birth

We need to fix "our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith." Heb. 12:2

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end." Rev. 22:13¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Virkler, CWG:20

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The figure above is headed: “Incubating only Christ”. In order for mission teams to have success in winning people for Christ they need to become Christ centred rather than Mission centred. This in my view is the great problem that mission to un-churched people in secular society is not meeting with great success. The reader may respond: “What are you talking about, of course we’re Christ centred – that’s what our mission is all about winning people for Christ through our missions!” And of course I believe you! However this is not what I mean by “incubating only Christ”. It is so easy for us to start a meeting inviting Jesus into our midst, and asking him to guide our meeting, and then to stop seeking revelation knowledge from him after that point. What I am talking about is allowing Christ to be involved in every part of the teams planning process – living by flow seeking Rhema and Vision with the eyes and ears of our hearts. In other words we aim to open our hearts to going with the flow of where Jesus is leading our mission to the un-churched rather than going with a mission plan and model.

What I mean is rather than putting the mission first in our minds with all of its associated concepts and guidelines – living as it were rigidly by the model’s guidelines we need to be flexible and open to go where the Spirit leads us on a particular occasion. One example from my ministry to the un-churched would be Nick. He is a local Baptist pastor in Woodstock Oxfordshire England. I first got in contact with him from a service he asked our team’s Alpha group to do at his church. We had been praying that God would open the next doors for us as we had received revelation guidance that he wished to spread youth ministry to the un-churched into the villages around Oxfordshire. It turned out that Nick was planning to run a Christian basics Elective at the local Senior School [High School]. The school had asked him to do this. This led to him asking if our team would be interested in helping teach this course. Which we did; this brought to birth the next step in the vision Christ had given us by revelation knowledge in one or the regional schools which happened to serve a number of villages around the north side of Oxford. This illustrates the very flexible and open nature of the Lamad approach to mission and evangelism to the un-churched. It does take seriously the need for Lamad mission groups to seek to reach people in their context, and the need to understand some of the processes by which this best happens, but the processes and practices are not the key thing, but rather that Jesus conceives the vision, incubates it in the teams heart by revelation and flow, and that he brings it to birth. He opens doors in other Christian’s hearts, and in the secular community at the right time, and then by flow he leads the team to walk into the next opportunity without having to try to make it happen by man’s efforts, theories and plans, but by him continuing to lead his mission as it flows through his body, his team on earth, who are his hands, feet and vehicles of giving revelation knowledge about him through the words and works which he causes to flow out of team members lives and mission activities!

So let us look at this three fold process in more detail:

[1] Conceiving Christ’s vision for our team:

The team actively seeks to discover the mission of Jesus through the use of the eyes and ears of their hearts. They seek spontaneous ideas and visions of what God wants them to do, and become for him.

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Three spiritual organs are involved in the incubation stage. These are:

1. The inner mind.
 2. The inner will.
 3. The inner emotions.
-
1. The spiritual mind seeks further revelation insight as it ponders God's thoughts which he has spontaneously given. God wants his team to take time to understand what he has conceived. He does not want them to rush into action with a half cooked revelation. He wants the minds of the team members to ponder the revelation, and to make it their own; as they seek to ask him to further clarify the vision for them.
 2. The inner will is that spiritual organ which speaks on God's word [Rhema and Vision] which God has conceived in the team's heart. The team interact with each other in meetings which focus as much on worshipping God, and seeking his will for the whole team; in terms of the roles he may want to assign to team members, as much as it does by talking about these things with each other. However, it is as we speak out what God is growing in our hearts that the team are enabled by the Holy Spirit to join together in unity of purpose, faith, hope and love for one another and Christ as he prepares them to bring the vision to life in their actions.
 3. This is where the emotional spiritual organ is primary – people will rarely act on something they have reasoned through together, but they will act on what they feel it is right to do – the greater the love and passion for it, the greater will the result be. So the inner emotions cause the team to act on the vision God has given them a unified purpose to fulfil.

People will often ask “How can we know when it is time to start doing mission rather than just incubating it and dreaming about it?” The simple answer is the more passionate and consistently driven you feel to go and start doing it is the sign that it is drawing near the time for birth; more on this in a moment.

Group Exercise

[1] On your own take five minutes asking God to tell you where your team is in this process at the moment concerning Christ's Mission through you. Use the four keys and journal below.

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[1] Before Christ could be raised he had to die for the sins of mankind. He could not rise in victory, and reign with complete power and authority at the right hand of God, sharing it with all believers unless he first gave himself up to atoning death and suffering¹¹⁵.

It is a principle that birth causes pain which can feel death like, and immobilising, until new life comes forth as a child is born and takes its first breaths. The power of the breath of life comes from God, and it cannot be given to the new born child by any power the child possesses in itself.

So in the first place it is easy for a team to rush forward into the birth canal of the new vision only to find it self gasping for breath, and seeming to not have any success. This is because “apart from me you can do nothing”¹¹⁶ Christ says. The birth of the vision is not based on the teams efforts but by living by flow, seeking Christ’s energy, further guidance and words and works to spontaneously to flow through them. This is pictured in four ways in the New Testament:

1. “The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it goes; so it is with every one born of the Spirit.”¹¹⁷”
2. “On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and proclaimed, ‘If any one thirst, let him come to me, as the scripture has said, “Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.”’ Now this he said about the Spirit, which those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified”¹¹⁸.”
3. “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.”¹¹⁹”
4. “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh; for the desire of th flesh are against the desires of the Spirit, and the desire of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.”¹²⁰”

Group Exercise

[1] On your own use the Four keys to seek what Christ wants to say to you about the four Scriptures above.

¹¹⁵ Ephesians 2:6

¹¹⁶ John 15:5

¹¹⁷ John 3:8 RSV

¹¹⁸ John 7:38, 39 RSV

¹¹⁹ Acts 1:8 RSV

¹²⁰ Galatians 5:15, 16 RSV

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[2] Share your findings in your mission group. Record the results.

[3] Spend time praising, worshipping and thanking God for what he has shown you. Seek group revelation and speak the spontaneous Rhema and vision out. Record what it revealed.

Four Scriptures Analysed

[1] In the case of John 3:8 the central principles which Jesus wished to convey was that those who have been saved, and given a new heart, will live by the motivational power of the wind of the Spirit. This is felt in the believer's heart. It is sensed as a sense of compelling to do something, or restraining not to do something. This is probably how Paul's team as they progressed through Asia sensed the movement of the Spirit in their team when it came to their mission activities¹²¹.

[2] In the case of John 7:37 – 39 the central truth is that the Holy Spirit will be felt and sensed as a flowing life giving power to cleanse the heart, and to move the mission team into action. In this case the mission team need to learn not to rely on their own reason to guide their activities, but rather on the spontaneous flow of the Spirit of Jesus' ideas, as they flow through and out of the team toward the recipients of their mission.

[3] In the case of Acts 1:8 the central principle is that of the power to act dynamically speaking and acting upon the words and works of Jesus; as they flow through the team members hearts and mission activities. The central truth is that human beings cannot produce this power for themselves, but they are to seek to allow this power of Christ to flow through all their teaching and doing.

[4] In the case of Galatians 5:16, 17 the central truth is that the team need to walk by the Spirit. In other words they must submit to the flow of the Spirit by giving up on their own efforts to succeed. Often team members can feel they own a programme, and that others do not. Pride and jealousy of personal position can become a key motivating factor; in turn this can lead to people trying to keep hold of their position or, self perceived right, to lead the team. This then is an example of a team being driven by selfish fleshy [old sinful nature] motives. There is no room for this on the Lamad mission team. The heart must be kept pure of motive by continuously having every member check their heart condition by seeking revelation knowledge from the Lord on their true spiritual condition. We have already discussed the inner check that the Holy Spirit can make in our hearts should we be acting out of our own resources or selfish motives. In my experience I know in my heart when I am doing things for the glory of God living by flow, compared to times when my heart is impure in its' motives; because I have learnt by God's enabling to discern the Spirit's prompting to action, or restraint from action within my heart.

¹²¹ Acts 16:6 - 10

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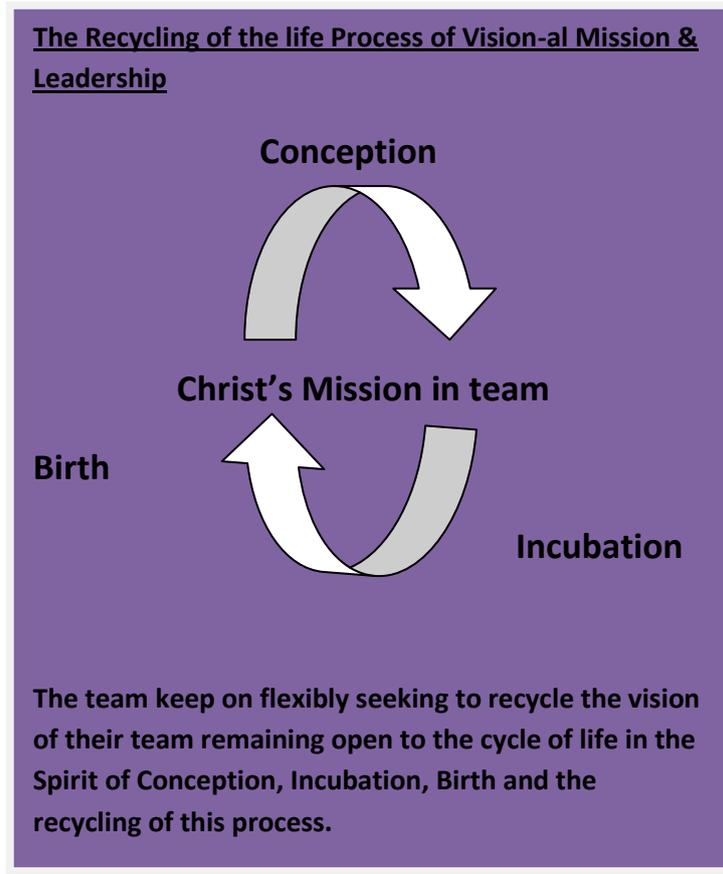
Personal Reflection

[1] Spend ten minutes to check your heart's condition against the four Scriptures detailed above. Ask the Lord what he wants to say to you as you reflect on these using the four keys to hearing God's voice.

[2] Now share your revelation insights with another, and he or she his or hers with you. Pray for each other, and make each other accountable for any issues brought to light to keep on praying for each other and periodically checking on how you are doing in this area or areas. Record what you need to remember of these below.

Supernatural Birth

All that has been said so far really comes down to this that no mission team anywhere can meet with success unless Christ brings his vision to life. Just as our continued physical lives rely on the air we breath, and the food we eat, and the God who sustains all life, so does the continued mission of an un-churched team rely on the cycle of life. This may be diagrammatically expressed as below:



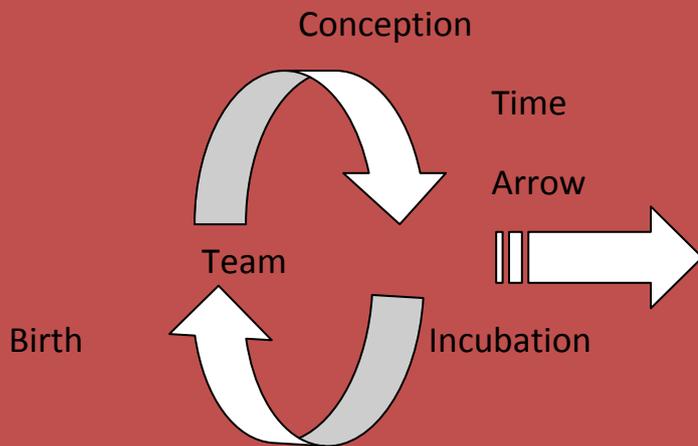
The figure above stresses the importance of keeping open to the processes of spiritual life which we of course see modelled in natural life. Indeed when Jesus spoke to Nicodemus he stressed that Nicodemus needed to understand how the natural processes of biological reproduction worked in human society before he could hope to understand how this worked in the world of the Holy Spirit¹²². A team which starts off listening to the Spirit of Jesus', living out of flow; even after the vision has come to supernatural birth, relying on the Work of Jesus to flow through it in words and works can easily forget the recycling process. All new life inevitably leads to new conception, new incubation and new birth cycles. What we are really talking about here is the pivotal need for a team to keep on living by revelation knowledge and flow – looking for next steps, and new processes of the threefold process, as Christ continues to shape what they do; and how they minister to secular people with Jesus living by flow through their ministries in words and works empowered by his Spirit.

¹²² John 3:10

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This may be pictured as below:

The time line of the recycling of life through the Mission-al Community



The Wheel of Life rolls along the arrow of Time led by the Spirit of Jesus, conceiving, incubating and birthing as a continuous cycle of living by flow!

It is this open flexible approach to living by flow; seeking continuous revelation and vision from the Spirit of Jesus', which enables the mission team to do and say what Jesus is doing and saying through the team. At no point does the team seek to live out of human ideas, and human resources, or a desire to no longer live out of a pilgrimage model opting for an institutional model; but rather they live as pilgrims on a Journey to the heavenly Jerusalem. Of course they are already eternal members of the so called heavenly Jerusalem – their spiritual home is already there, but others need to be called to their eternal home as long as this present age lasts¹²³.

Group Exercise

[1] Spend some time in worship, and open prayer utilising the four keys so that you may speak out to one another the revelation knowledge God gives you of how he wants you to work as a team in the light of the recycling process of life in the Spirit of Jesus.

[2] Record what you have learnt from this experience below.

¹²³ Hebrews 12:18 - 29

Conclusion

What we have learnt in this chapter is how the cycle of spiritual life may be practiced by flow through the mission team to the un-churched. A primary conclusion seems to be that a Lamad Mission team needs to live this way not just as a team when they meet, but because we live our whole lives through flow seeking God's visions and Rhema as he conceives them in our hearts, incubates them, and brings them to birth. We must therefore be committed to the cycle of Spiritual life as that is modelled to us in the life of Jesus, and that of his early apostles. The normal Christian life is based on this open flowing flexible cycle of Spiritual life. May our Lord Jesus enable us to do what is impossible for us, but completely possible to us as we live by flow in surrendered trust to him.

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Chapter 8 Personal Revelation which is Leading me to the next part of the story

Introduction

Revelation knowledge has always been an important part of the way I have lived my Christian life; in the sense that from the day I became a Christian I found that I started to sense the presence of God in my life, and I learnt how to recognise his guidance by the way that Scriptures would speak powerfully to my inner self in a certain area of my life, and in terms of a certain key Christian belief. I became used to receiving dreams and visions, as well as so called words of knowledge from early on, and this was particularly ironic as the church I attended in my first few years did not believe in the gifts of the Spirit being for every believer. So God became my teacher in a very real sense during this time as no one else was giving guidance in this area.

Since this time there have been many stages in my growth. As discussed in chapters 2 and 3 I was reliant on the Holy Spirit to receive revelation concerning our team's mission in Lowestoft. Exciting things happened as I learnt more and more about following the mission of Jesus by learning to discern the voice of God in my heart through the Holy Spirit. There have been numerous steps in my journey, but by far the most important part of my journey in learning about revelation knowledge has come since I have done some excellent courses on "How to Hear God's Voice" [for instance] with Christian Leadership University. I would say that their course "Communion with God" is a fundamental starting point for any mission team to the un-churched to do.

In this chapter we will consider some of my recent revelation knowledge, and how this is forming the picture that God wishes to bring to birth through my ministry and others ministries at this time!

Revelation in the Lake District Easter 2007

For the whole of 2006 I had started to get involved in a new youth ministry team in Bicester, Oxfordshire, with an organisation called "Reign Ministries". It was very providential that I met them in the first place at a baptism service which was being hosted at the home of one of our youth Alpha young people's homes. He was getting baptised in his swimming pool. The youth minister of his church was also the director of Reign Ministries, and I met him for the first time then. We had been running youth Alpha for a couple years up to this point at our home in Yarnton, a village just a couple of miles north of the city of Oxford. Through this initial meeting and because of the wonderful love of this young person's family, we started to attend their church in Bicester having left a former fellowship which did not have a strong young peoples' ministry. Within a number of months of fellowshiping at this new congregation I was approached by Kyle, the youth minister and asked if I wanted to work alongside him in the church youth group. I had been asking God to show us where he wanted us to serve in ministry and this was a real sign. I sensed it was right, in the depths of my heart, and so we went ahead. Indeed I had had a picture of Bicester as God's beacon to the surrounding district of what God was about to do to reach out into the local un-churched community. Reign had already been doing this wonderfully in local schools and with other activities

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in the community. I shared this vision with them, and they to, shared my excitement of what God was saying.

This is the background which had been fuelling my prayer life, and my search for God's will to reach secular youth and their families. So during Easter 2007 in the Lake District I received some key Revelations which have revolutionised my thinking about the next steps that God wants to take through our ministry; and I believe generally in the UK, Europe and the Western secular World!

I had been enjoying the beautiful countryside of the lakes, and had had some wonderful walks with my family enjoying nature. I had been contemplating how the church may move from a back foot defensive position to a front foot attacking position in terms of its mission to un-churched people. Three days before Good Friday I had an overwhelming sense of God's presence and he gave me a number of pictures and Rhema words.

1. He reinforced the picture of Bicester being a beacon town in which he wanted to reach un-churched youth and their families. He impressed me with the thought that he was going to do this work, and that many youth would be reached by Jesus Christ; and that this would be seen as a beacon of light to inspire the surrounding region.
2. He then also impressed me with the thought that he would do the same within the Midlands, Oxfordshire first, and then this would become a beacon to other surrounding regions which would have their beacons set on fire by what they saw in Oxfordshire.
3. Then I saw that the whole of the UK would be set alight as all the regions lit their beacons.
4. He impressed me with the picture of it then spreading to Europe and the world. Particularly it would be a second "Great Awakening" in the UK which had not been experienced since the first; during the time of the Wesley's. This excited me all the more because I have always longed that we might have another awakening like that of the Wesleyan period¹²⁴, and what happened with them had been quite literally another Pentecost in terms of the super natural manifestation of God's presence, guidance, and miracles¹²⁵.
5. That God wants to establish apostolic teams sent with a clear mission to reach secular people primarily in the first place amongst their children and youth. These teams will exist as mission-al communities reaching into secular children's, and youth sub cultures! These teams will not be authoritative, but facilitative in nature.

It is with the back drop of this vision that my journey has been revolutionised. I believe that I have my little part to play in this big picture, and this dissertation is really the by product of what God said to me then. What I am sharing in this study is what is the vital missing ingredient in the churches' mission to the secular world; the need to live in total intimacy with Jesus Christ just as he did with his Father – only doing and saying what he revealed to his Son' ¹²⁶. This is the key, and the steps which I am outlining in this book are not the answer to how we reach secular people with a programme, or model or mode of action, but rather how Christ wishes to do this as we live by flow; receiving revelation knowledge from him through the eyes and ears of our hearts.

¹²⁴ The latter part of the 18th century

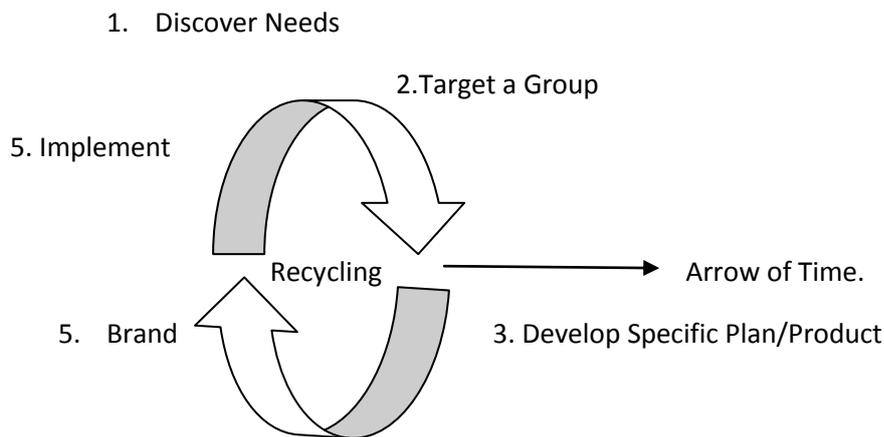
¹²⁵ Miller, ND: Whole Text

¹²⁶ John 5:19

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Having said this it will now seem like I am contradicting myself by drawing a little diagram of how this mission might work alongside churches. All I can say is this is a picture which spontaneously appeared in my minds eye during the revelations of that Easter. So here it is.

Mission-al Team Process – Guided by Revelation Knowledge and the Leaders Paradigm



This process represents the teams' openness to actively engage with the community they wish to incarnate in. The need for the team to contextualise it self to the particular needs of a cultural group are well known facets of successful mission activity. In terms of Western societies post modern stance it is important to recognise that a key factor of the post modern psyche is to find real experience of the supernatural and hence real meaning in their lives. The so called modern period was very optimistic about man's potential to find the answers to his needs through technology and human inventiveness, but people are disillusioned with this now. They realise that all modernism did was to take away the spiritual. It had an innate tendency to try to explain things scientifically, this age of optimism has passed – now people are seeking meaning and real proof of the supernatural, that there is something more to life than the dead wood of a previously embraced humanism.

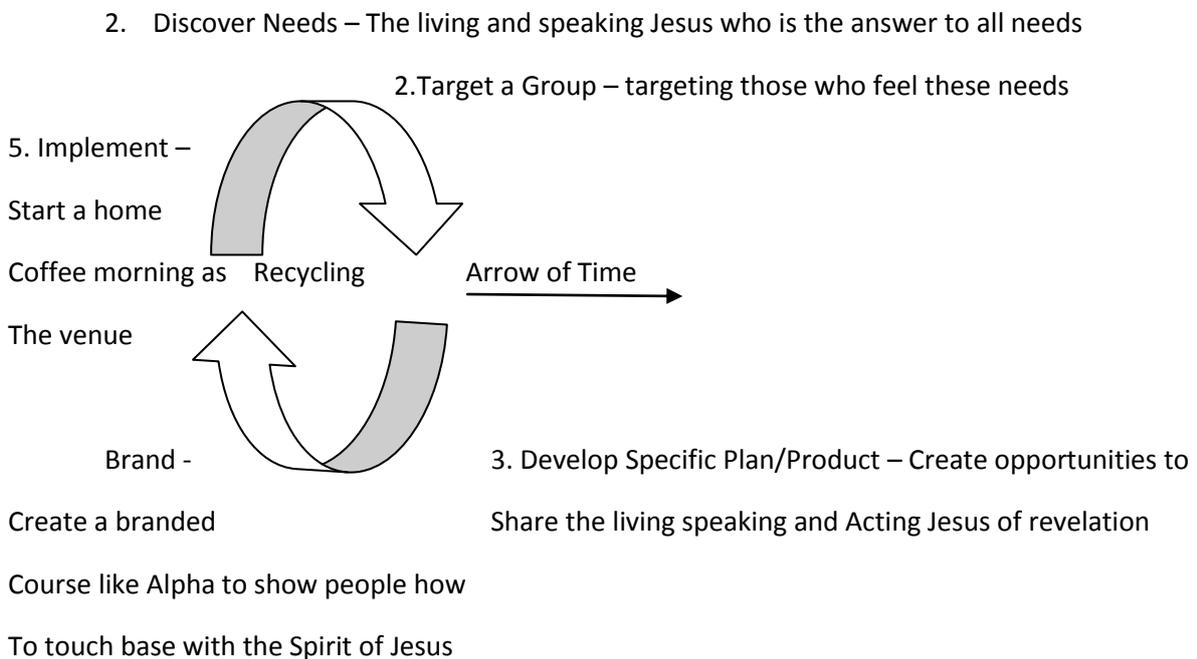
And this is of course where the New Age movement has offered one solution to this need to people. The many programmes which are currently showing on our cable televisions, "Medium", "Most Haunted" etc are but a few examples. The supernatural is big money again. This is where a restored apostolic revelation based Christianity must be allowed to happen. People will come in large numbers if God is allowed once more to flow through us via the supernatural gifts of the Spirit which are part and parcel of the normal Christian life; which the New Testament teaches us to expect as new covenant people of Jesus. We know he lived by flow, and his words and works need to flow through us as we exercise the spiritual gifts which Jesus gives to the body of Christ as normative. In the time of Rome in First Century Empire the literature of the period shows that people then were seeking for the authentic in terms of God and the gods. They had lost faith in the gods of their father's, and, there was a sort of post modern void to be filled, and what happened? When the Spirit of Jesus arrived the whole of the Roman Empire had been evangelised in 30 years by the people of Christ through the free flow of the Jesus who spoke and acted through his people. Of course this

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does not imply that the Roman Empire was completely engulfed by Christianity, but that the compass of its mission had reached Rome itself.

Today, in the early part of the 21st century, we need to seek to live by flow; seeking the voice of God. People are just waiting for the people of God to allow God to be switched on in them again through revelation knowledge, living by flow, doing and speaking by the supernatural power of the Spirit of Jesus'. If we think of the diagram above in terms of post modernism, then it might look like the one below, as we seek revelation knowledge on what God wants his church to do.

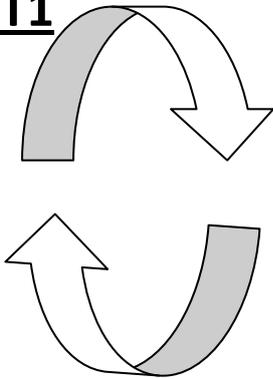
Mission-al Team Process – Guided by Revelation Knowledge and the Leaders Paradigm



The above diagram demonstrates simply how the team remains open and flexible to seek revelation knowledge implementing the recycling tool above. Each of the components in that tool came to me in a flash during that Easter period, including a new anointing to reach out to un-churched secular people; youth particularly and also their families by extension!

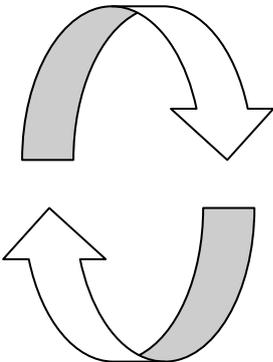
Moreover, there is another stage to what God revealed to me in this diagrammatic form, which if you like was the way he made sense of it for me. So here it is:

T1



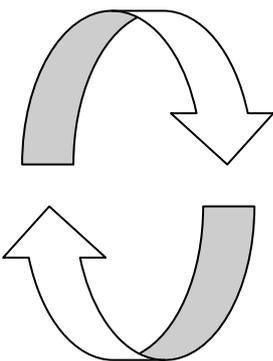
Mission-al Team T1 works reciprocally with T2 & T3

T2



Transitional Team –preparing churches T3 to receive
New people from Mission-al Team T1

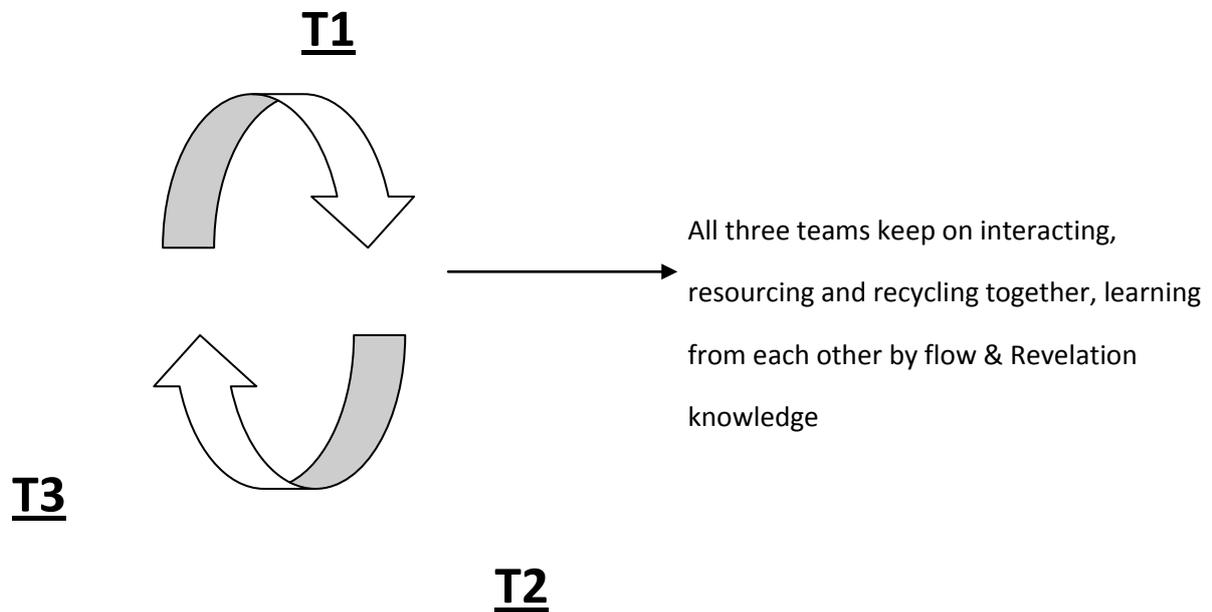
T3



Churches which create a pastoral home for new
New people, not making them churched, but it self

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Being Mission-al and working with T2 and T1



Analysed

What the diagrams above demonstrate is a vision of church which might be said to foster the New Testament Apostolic Model of church growth, church management and church mission and pastoral care.

1. The Acts church had a leadership structure which consisted of a sending community – T3

The Jerusalem church sent out missionaries, and they also established the deaconate to serve the pastoral needs of the believer's and the needs of a mission team. They established structures and maintained accountability and spiritual direction. Antioch became a second sending community after the persecution of Steven.

2. A facilitating community – deacons organising the churches activities – T2

The deaconate was far more than the odd jobs committee in the church they were men and women of ministry with pastoral care duties possessing the range of the gifts of the Spirit. They

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Mission-al Communities look to Sow and concentrate on seedlings

As I started out by saying this chapter is essentially a snap shot of what God has revealed to me about what is unique to my developing mission and teams I work with. Whilst at a conference where I was teaching degree students about mission, and the role of the Spirit of Jesus in the process, I went for some nice refreshing walks in the Cotswolds. I passed two fields as I walked without taking very much notice of them, but upon my return trip I passed them again. Upon coming to the first I sensed the Spirit directing me to stop and look out over a newly planted crop which was coming up as fresh green shoots - and being in neat ordered rows.

The thoughts started to spontaneously flow through my Mind:

“Andrew, as you look at this field I know that you are deeply satisfied by its ordered lines and rows, and particularly by its fresh green new life which seems to you to be pulsating out of every shoot. This is the field of the ministry I have called you to, and sent you to, it is ordered, and each new shoot is distinct from the other and clearly defined as new. This is the sort of mission I have put upon your heart, the mission of sowing, and ministering the gospel - to the new shoots. It is so clear they are new, there is no confusion about their fresh beauty and the wonder you feel for their fresh clear new beginning life.”

After this I walked on until I came to the next field I had passed. It was a newly planted field of cabbages, all set out in drill lines. However, the cabbages were rapidly growing and as the leaves over lapped each other the rows became indistinct. Then once again I experienced flow and Rhema:

“Andrew this field is really not you at all, is it? You don't like the confusion; it is like the whole field has become an amorphous large cabbage. The lines are indistinct and there is no clarity of which is which. This is like the church generally, once Christians become settled they can become like a large cabbage patch rather than distinct cabbages in their own right. This is not the ministry I call you to, that, is, church ministry, I call you to the un-churched to the fresh clarity of distinct new life.”

Now this revelation knowledge was spot on for me, as at the time I was struggling with the question of just how involved I should be in pastoral ministry to Christians in established church communities. The Spirit of Jesus' made it plain to me that as an un-church mission-al minister, and evangelist, I was gifted to work with new life; which made particular sense of my passion for youth, children and family ministries to the un-churched, because there has always been clarity for me about new life in Christ, and the steps that un-churched secular people generally go through when they are coming to know Christ. This also made sense that my involvement in training mission-al leaders was part of God's plan as well.

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Indeed he did confirm this to me in later revelation knowledge. What I am trying to illustrate here is the key role that revelation knowledge has played in my mission to the un-churched as I have learnt more and more to allow the Spirit of Jesus' to flow through me as he continues to do and teach. I believe it is crucial for all mission teams to secular people not to become so syncretistic, and incarnated into the communities that they are seeking to reach, that they come to fear living by flow and super natural revelation because it smacks of being too church-ed for the communities they are seeking to reach in mission.

Once again I lay the challenge to today's para-church mission-al communities that the post modern phenomenon is becoming more and more a key element among secular people in the West. I shared in chapter 2 a piece of research which shows people are even more interested in the supernatural and fundamental spiritual questions today in the UK and Europe, than for many years, as the church has declined in numbers. The post modern phenomenon is very similar in important ways to the first century Roman world's disillusionment with the gods; and with a corresponding desire for real truth and real spiritual meaning as a hunger that was met by many in the nascent church of that period. It was this hunger, which Jesus arrived at just the right time in God's plan to feed, and with the outpouring of the Spirit of Jesus' Paul could claim within 30 years of the resurrection that the whole of the Roman empire had been evangelised in terms of geographical scope[Col. ?].

This same hunger exists today. People in the West have everything, but little meaning in their lives, except the pursuit of material and intellectual gain. The prevailing relativism of the West's morals and beliefs is squeezing the life out of men and women's panting hearts. Just recently, once more in our locality, we have heard about young children who have taken their own lives because of their desperate need to be wanted rather than bullied and ridiculed. The search for significance is a high priority, and people no longer see the so called new liberated age of a previous modernistic optimism which painted a bright future for an almost omnipotent age of science which would solve every need. Reality is now hitting home, and people realise that there is only a degree of relative comfort to be gained from science and materialism, but not any lasting deep satisfaction of the massive hole which exists in a starving 21st century nebulous secular generation – which can only be filled by God. God is saying to our generation I believe,

“Are you hungry enough yet, and people look to the new age movement for satisfaction of their deep hunger but find no lasting deeper experience of their need for peace and real wholeness. God asks have you considered my Church? And people reply “We know about them, but so many say one thing but do another. They only seem to be play acting to us!” God says to his church, and his mission-al leaders “Are you ready to live only by what you see me doing, and hear me saying [John 5:19]? Are you ready for real intimacy? Have you given up on your plans and schemes, and rather are you willing to live by supernatural flow; as I speak to your hearts through your inner eyes and your inner ears? Have you leant yet that the only way is to follow me’ says Jesus? Read the book of Acts again I want to live through your hearts, giving Rhema and Vision, so that I may speak and act miraculously, then they will truly know God is among them! Apart from me you can do nothing, but with me connected to the life of the vine you can do anything¹²⁹. I am the good news of the gospel says Jesus, I am not a teaching, programme, model or idea – I AM! So once you throw down your tools, and programmes, and give up trying to make your lights shine, and rather

¹²⁹ John 15:5

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[3] Spend some time praying for each other and praising God for his power at work in you who believe!

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Chapter 9 Current Missiology Viewed in the context of Revelation Knowledge

Introduction

One of the exciting things about mission to the un-churched in the UK is that it is very obvious when new people come into a church service. As numbers of people attending churches can fall into a variety of size categories – it is particularly obvious to churches of forty odd members when some one new comes.

This happened in a church which our youth mission team were leading worship at this last Sunday. Our youth mission group is made up mainly of youth ranging in age from 11 years old to 18 years old. Our whole theme was on mission to the un-churched. As the praise songs rang out of the church doors on to the high street of the village of Woodstock, the place where Winston Churchill had lived in Blenheim Palace, a mother and her little children were dancing on the street to the music. They came into the service and carried on enjoying the worship inside with us. It turned out that this lady did not attend a church, neither her children, but the “Spirit of Jesus” gave a living example to this church of what happens when a mission-al team lives by flow seeking Christ’s presence through worship, word and works.

The great Acts teaching was very evident for all to see,

“And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” [Acts 2:47]

Current views of Missiology have recognised that evangelism happens the most effectively when the people of God incarnate with the communities which they want to reach with the gospel of Christ.

Incarnation and Mission

Reflecting on what happened this last Sunday once again taught our team that God draws people to want to be with his people when they are intentionally mission-al. Church is no longer a club for the saved, but it is a mission-al community for those who need Christ. Its’ focus is no longer to make the church a refuge for Christians who feel a declining minority group in society, but rather it is an open welcoming community to the world out side it’s walls. A minister from one church we worshipped at had a vision of a church without walls - a church of glass which all could see into, and all inside could look out of. Indeed what God revealed to him was that the church is not the building or the place where people meet, but it is the people of God who are united together in the love of Christ.

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Church is not what Christians generally think it is. It is not based on a parochial model, consisting of a pastor who keeps the Christian sheep safe, with him or her as the leader exercising executive authority in leading the church. This model entered ecclesiology through the Roman concept of church life which sees the churches' primary role as being at the centre of a communities' life; and that the community should come to it, rather than the people of Christ going to the community. The leadership style in parochial churches is driven by the authority of the pastor and the leadership team it dis-empowers the members from being leaders in their own right, at work, at play, with friends etc. It fosters the idea that there is the expert pastor and his team, and the lay members who do not have the qualifications to talk to people about their faith in Christ. This type of church structure is based on the concept that it is the pastor's job to evangelise people at a church service, and that it is the members' job to invite a friend to a service in order to learn about Jesus. This is not what the New Testament teaches about the nature of the church. The church in the time of the early Christians was not attraction-al, but it was incarnation-al.

Indeed it was messianic in its incarnation-al self definition. Consider Jesus words to the Samaritan Woman who he talked with by the well of Sychar,

“The woman said to him, ‘Sir I perceive that you are a prophet, our fathers worshipped on this mountain; and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth, for such the Father seeks to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth’. The woman said to him, ‘I know that Messiah is coming [he who is called Christ]; when he comes, he will show us all things.’ Jesus said to her, ‘I who speak to you am he.’.....So the Woman left her water jar, and went away into the city, and said to the people, ‘Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?’.....Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, ‘He told me all that I ever did.’ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, ‘It is no longer because of your words that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.’¹³⁰

And also,

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.”¹³¹

¹³⁰ John 4:19 – 26, 29, 39 – 42 RSV

¹³¹ John 1:14 RSV

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The incarnation of the Son of God into human form translated God into a human body. In the most profound way possible God came along side mankind as a human being who lived among people. He got down to our level. “He walked the walk and talked the talk.” God’s heart was translated into human form in the person of Jesus Christ. Christ ate with tax collectors and sinners. He touched lepers, he cast out demons, he comforted the sick and healed them he sat by a well and talked with a prostitute. He entered her context by meeting her right where she was at; collecting her water by asking her for a drink. Starting with this simple request, not only the woman but many Samaritans, despised by the Jews, came to the conclusion that not only was Jesus the Messiah, but that he was the “Saviour of the world”.

Jesus incarnated with the woman’s situation and transformed a cup of water into the water of saving life for the city of the Samaritans. This is what incarnation-al mission looks like – that we allow the Spirit of Jesus’ to flow through us, and to transform the cup of coffee we share with a secular neighbour, into a relationship which brings that neighbour to Christ. We no longer divide up our Christian lives into “Us in there [the church fortress]” and “Those out there [people who are not Christians]”. We take the church out to people, like living stones ourselves, and we build the house of God by seeking other stones in every tiny aspect of our daily lives; at work, at home, with extended family, in the car, on holiday, at the supermarket and when we take the dog for a walk etc.

We need to live by flow, with the Spirit of the Messiah flowing through us, as Jesus continues to do and teach by his Spirit through his mobile church of living stones; who see every opportunity as a way of incarnating with their neighbours in the context of their daily interactions with them. We need to completely abandon the parochial model of church with its so called expert leaders, and we need to become a mission-al incarnation-al community once again.

The church building, or the meeting of Christians together for worship, can no longer be considered church. Church is not an organisation, nor an institution. It is not an established meeting place - it is not the liturgy, or preaching. It is not a passive audience listening to a supposed expert preacher who is the paid minister who is considered to be the only one qualified to teach and preach. The church is wherever one, or two, or three followers of Christ are to be found. It is not a group looking inward at each other in a building called church, but it is the people of Christ looking out to share the love of Christ right where they are at any time of the day. The church as a higher archy, and institution, was never meant to exist in the way which Christendom has adopted it in its’ parochial manifestation. It is time to start to equip each Christian to be a living stone who will seek to build the house of God wherever they happen to find themselves. Consider what Peter says,

“Come to him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God’s sight chosen and precious; and like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.¹³²”

Notice Peter’s careful use of language. He is clearly not referring to the building of church buildings here, or, an institution, but rather about each believer’s role to be a “living stone”. The house which

¹³² 1 Peter 2:4 – 5 RSV

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is being built is not a house of bricks and mortar, but rather a people who all share one person in common, Jesus the key stone. These people are to be a “holy priesthood”; so each stone has a priestly role to represent Jesus incarnation-ally to the people they relate to every day. The early church met in homes, or anywhere, even by rivers¹³³, where people could share faith. Early believers did not have a parochial view of church at all. Church to them meant the people, not as it were pictured in their minds eye in a church building, but any where, any time, and any place. Church can no longer be what we picture it as being if we are to restore the church to the way Christ designed it to be as the people who naturally shared their faith in Christ; because they have a revelation based relationship with the Spirit of Jesus’ who continues to minister through them by words and works as they cooperate with him; because of their love for him, each other and people who do not know him!

Group Exercise

[1] Reflect together on what view of the church you have as a mission-al team – record your conclusions.

[2] Which of the following two figures best describes your view of church? What steps can you take as a team to move to a more specific mission-al model? Record your reflections below.

¹³³ Acts 16

The Parochial Model of Church – Figure #1

- [1] It is building focussed
- [2] It seeks to attract people
- [3] It is inward looking to meet member's needs
- [4] It is executively run by an authoritarian style of expert leaders
- [5] Members are passive rather than active in mission

The Mission-al Model – Figure #2

- [1] Church is not a building or meeting place but mission to all secular people at all times and places
- [2] It equips people to find the spiritual gifts and use them by the presence and power of the Spirit of Jesus
- [3] Leaders seek to serve every person so that they may do mission and ministry 24 hours a day
- [4] The style of leadership is to seek to discover God's voice living out of the initiative of the Spirit of Jesus only [John 5:19]
- [5] Meetings together are for fellowship, celebration and prayer to seek Jesus power to minister to human needs of believers and non believers.

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measured success to the extent that some secular youth had come to faith. The new youth that now had started attending came because one of our particularly evangelistically minded young people had invited these ten odd young people to the club.

Our youth group was not particularly attractive to the un-churched youth, who started to come, they were from a different socio economic background whereas our group was more from a so called “individualist” youth sub-culture [middle class] – who were much more orientated to an intellectual youth background. In terms of social groupings the un-churched youth fitted more to a working class background whereas the rest of our youth came from a middle class background. Typically the two rarely mix within British youth sub-cultures – yet the two groups seemed to coexist together. How was it that this had happened? When particularly seen in the light of the disparity of the contexts of the two groups.

Obviously context was not the uniting factor, or was it? It seemed to me that three factors had brought this about:

1. Some of our young people had shown genuine interest in them, and they had sought to make friends, and the un-churched group was particularly friendly with the youth group members who had been building genuine friendship with them. This incarnation-al activity, by our mission-al youth members, was the critical factor which opened the door for these new young people to come to what were essentially bible study times. There were of course varying motives among this group for coming, but primarily they were interested in finding out what made these young people so interested in what the adult members of our youth team had been doing with their contemporaries - be they Christians or not.
2. Our youth team had aimed for a number of years to enable its young people to become leaders to their generation. The primary desire of the team was that the young people become the team as equal members taking responsibility for their relationships with their primary mission-al community. They are the best equipped to be mission-al to their peers because they are right in the context of their peers. If any one can understand youth culture the best it is the youth of their particular incarnation within their context – social group, age range and perceived relative connectedness by way of age and similar background and experiences.
3. The Spirit of Jesus had clearly awakened some deep interest in these young people as they kept on coming, and showed an un-usual respect for what were still very religious activities, singing, praying, reading the Bible and speaking about God. They even brought in their girl friends, and other friends, who were less connected to their group.

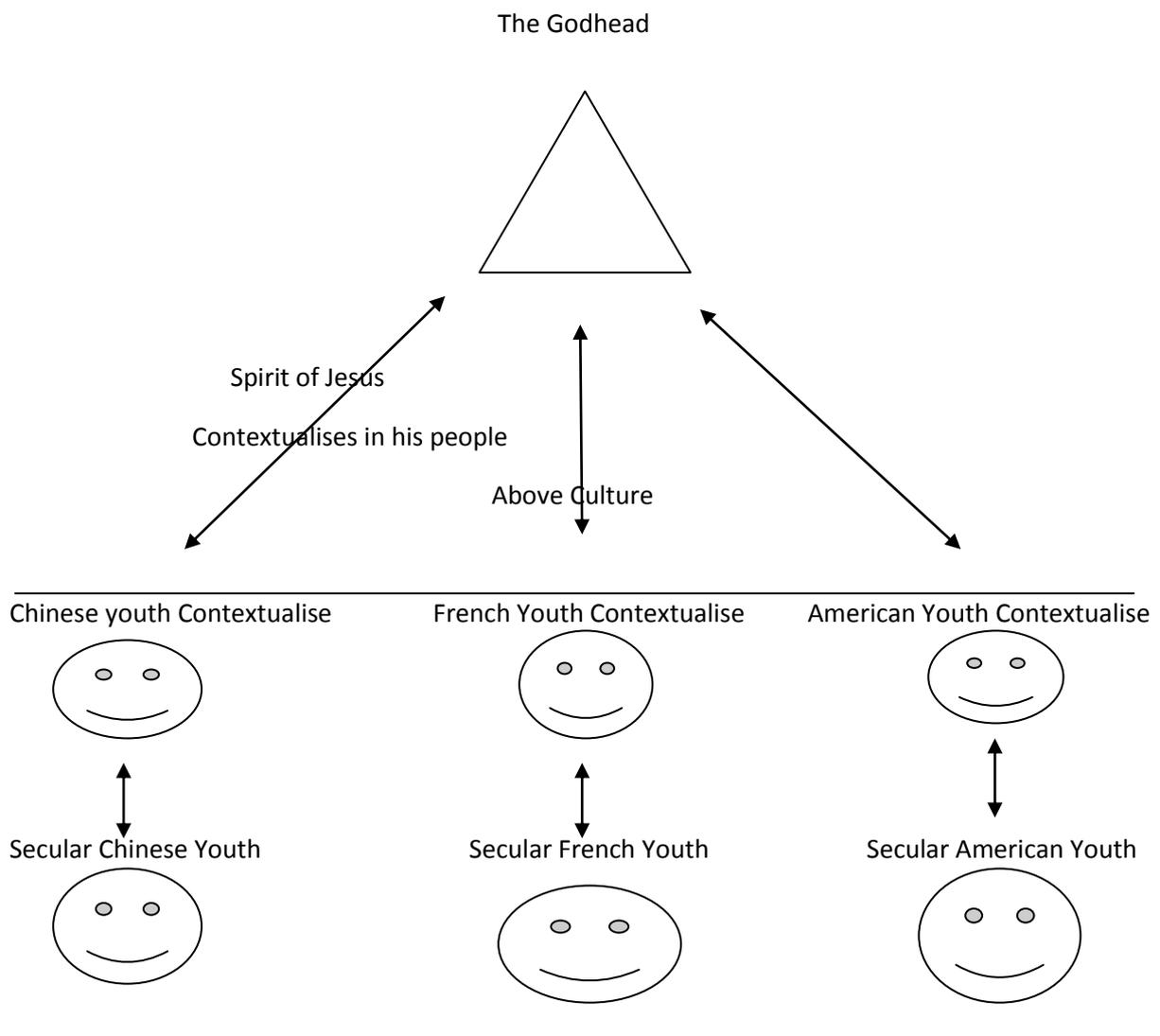
Hence it is my conclusion that context is not everything when we consider youth ministry to mutually different social groups of young people. A group of young people who are Christians can reach out to youth sub-cultures which are socially different to them and make a significant impact on their lives.

The young person who had made the invitation in the first place, to these secular youth, who were often in trouble with the local super market owner, and who had done damage to the outside and

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inside of the Salvation Army hall in which we met; ended up feeling welcome to our emerging youth mission group with its emerging youth leading youth to Christ.

Missiologists' often picture this process of cultural contextualisation in terms of how God must deal with culture. God is above culture, yet he also works among cultures incarnation-ally. In the first case through his Son Jesus Christ, and now through the body of Christ, his people, as they are naturally incarnate within every culture in the world. It was enough in the context of the case study above that the church and un-church youth interacted because of their basic cultural link; by being of the same nationality. Christ incarnated through our youth by his Spirit doing, teaching and inviting this group in. So we may picture this as below.



This figure demonstrates how the Spirit of Jesus' outside of culture incarnates in his mission-al teams' as they contextualise with the youth of their culture. Clearly within the Lamad view of

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revelation knowledge it is the Holy Spirit who enables the team to contextualise and incarnate within specific youth sub cultures as well.

Moreover, Contextualisation has implications for cross-cultural communication particularly. If a mission team is transplanted into an Eastern culture; themselves coming from a western culture, then this will have implications for how effective they will be at understanding the cultural mores of the new cultural context. This may be considered in terms of a formula. First of all let us consider the ideal formula:

$$\frac{\text{Sender}}{\text{Receiver}} = 1$$
¹³⁴

In the case of this classical definition of ideal cross-cultural communication the team from a Western culture have come to understand the customs and mores of their target Eastern culture so well that they are able to relate to the people they are reaching with clarity and acceptance. The people of the Eastern background feel comfortable with the Western team as they have respected their culture, and over time gained their trust.

In terms of Western youth sub-cultures which change rapidly, depending on the latest thing which is the “in thing”, the same kind of formula works. The best way that mission teams contextualise in this case is through youth of the same age being part of the team. If the team wish to be effective in reaching youth sub-cultures effectively then they need to become accepted at least as honorary members of their sub-culture and friendship circle. The more this can happen the more likely that the ideal formula pictured above can become a reality.

Once again it is important to remember that the Spirit of Jesus is the expert in incarnation in a way that we cannot ever be. It is as we live following his revelation knowledge, dialoguing with him in our hearts, that our teams will receive insights into the best ways of contextualising our mission efforts to youth sub-cultures. Indeed we know from the book of Acts that this principle worked with the Pauline apostolic team as they went from place to place on their missionary journeys. When Paul and Silas were locked in the local gaol at Philippi they were set free by miraculous means, and the gaoler and his family became Christians that same night [Acts 16]. The Spirit of Christ transformed a seeming impossible situation for mission to take place, into the perfect environment, by miraculous means. Miracles are those sign gifts which demonstrate that God is “for real”; and this opens the

¹³⁴ Birmingham, 2007: 41

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door within cross cultural and sub-cultural mission to reach people for Christ, because the Spirit of Jesus' is really shown to be with the team; people within these cultural contexts turn to the living Christ, and hence to his teams, to find out about him in relationships.

Every mission-al team needs to take the verses below very seriously as being part of their efforts to contextualise with cultures,

“Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs which he did; but Jesus did not trust himself to them, because he knew all men and needed no one to bear witness of man; for he himself knew what was in man.”¹³⁵

Jesus found many people wishing to follow him because of the miraculous signs which he performed as he lived out of the Father's initiative, but he did not make the interest that these signs generated the prime tool of reaching people. He knew, and knows, what is in every human mind and heart, and he understood the human tendency to want the miraculous goodies, but not necessarily the God who was performing these out of love and a desire for a depth saving relationship. A team which has miracle attend its mission-al activities as a normal and frequent part of what it does, will need to be particularly careful to check its motives, and those who are attracted to this sort of ministry, by constantly seeking revelation knowledge from the one who knows the hearts of all people perfectly. This will mean the prime reason for the teams' mission is not lost sight of, which is of course that un-churched people come to have an intimate saving relationship with Jesus for themselves!

Exercise

[1] Take ten minutes utilising the four keys asking God what he wants to say to you about our discussion above – write down what spontaneously comes to you.

¹³⁵ John 2:23 – 25 RSV

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church, and indeed from other denominations, and in my own ministerial life as well; in the eleven odd churches which I have served.

This division between the sacred and profane; between the expert spiritual pastor, and the amateur Christian lay person is not to be found in the New Testament. Of course as our Baptist friends, among many others, teach we all have a ministry, and we are all priests for Christ. However, the parochial model of Church and church leaders still persists. Hence a majority of Christian laity do not consider that they even have a ministry let alone a mission to share Christ. If anything many seem to conclude that it is the pastor's job to win people for Christ, and it is the amateurs job to get them to church to let the expert do his stuff.

However, the Greek derivative word which underpins the English concept of "Laity" comes from the Greek word λαός¹³⁶ [LAOS], which means simply "Person, or people"; more fully expressed it comes as a phrase λαου του θεου [LAOU TOU THEOU] which means "People of God". In New Testament terms it does not mean the "amateur lay people", but it means the "people of God" who have the gifts of the Spirit to minister, not on the basis of their own limited human abilities, but by the almighty power of the Spirit of Jesus' who speaks to them through revelation knowledge; and continues to do his words and works through them! Commonly the New Testament sees all believers as equipped by the Holy Spirit to do what they could never do on the basis of their human abilities. It is the expert Spirit of Jesus' who equips every believer for effective ministry, and there is no need for a college degree to train someone how to do this, or to qualify them to do this.

If any one would have taught the need for a professionally trained clergy, and an amateur laity, it surely would have been Paul; who him self was a well known intellectual having been educated by the great Rabbi Gamaliel. However, he considered things in a very different light; considering all Christians whether slaves or free, men or women, Jews or Greeks¹³⁷ as equally blessed and potentially equipped by God for ministry. Indeed in Corinth where the Epicureans and Stoics loved to debate based on their highly qualified worldly education Paul had this to say to the Christians there:

“Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?”¹³⁸

Clearly Paul did not equate learning in worldly terms with its associated sophistication and paper qualifications as the prime factor for a calling to ministry.

“For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever I will thwart.’¹³⁹”

¹³⁶ Moulton, 1981: 247

¹³⁷ Galatians 3:28

¹³⁸ 1 Corinthians 1:20 RSV

¹³⁹ 1 Corinthians 1:18,19 RSV

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For Paul the first great mark of mission was always the power of the cross. This power showed human wisdom, education and achievements off for what they were – useless to save. Mankind has the tendency to want to secure itself a place of respect, and control over its' own destiny, by creating the mystique of the learned. However, human learning is not the way God primarily equips his people, but rather he does so by them giving up on their on useless abilities to achieve the salvation of God, and they rely rather completely on the life of God which flows through their beings by the power of the Spirit of Jesus'. Jesus encapsulated this wonderful liberating truth in the most simple of parables,

“I am the vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already made clean by the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.¹⁴⁰”

This analogy says it all. It gives one of the keys why the church in the United Kingdom is in serious and rapid decline. Christ has not been allowed to flow through every believer being released to live by the Spirit of Jesus', so that he might continue to do and teach through them. A concept of Church and Laity has deified leadership. Leadership which is based on the position of executive authority over their domain, the church, and its services is held back from freeing members to do mission. Leaders have spent years getting their Bachelor in theology degrees, and their Masters degrees and their PhDs, and people look to them as the qualified, and to themselves as unqualified. The pastor/priest is the equipped man or woman who is the expert in mission, and the lay person feels that he or she does not have a hope unless they go to university and get the right degree/s. The expert pastor, however, may or may not have a large congregation, mostly in the United Kingdom congregations are so small that they are slowly declining and dying out through old age, or the Christians in a town will all get together so that they can feel some sort of security in numbers. However the figures speak for themselves. In the context of the pre teenage and early teen age group of 10 – 14 year olds 1,000 less of them attend the church every week in Britain [as noted previously]. If this trend continues by 2020 none will be coming. Only about 8% of the British population attend church regularly.

So a diagnostic conclusion can be ventured on the basis of the statistical facts, and the concept of the division of the sacred and the profane, and the division between Clergy and laity as a model and expectation of church and its' effectiveness in mission. **My conclusion is that this model of the church has completely failed to keep people gathered as communities of worshipping Christians in churches, and it has no relevance to the majority of British people, or to many of the first world European states! North America may still enjoy its mega churches, but in a rapidly changing world if it does not equip its members to live by revelation knowledge, and by the Spirit of Jesus', as he flow through their lives in ministry any where, any place and at any time, then the same trend will become more and more evident within the USA!**

Moreover, considering the parochial model with its associated division between the professional expert pastor/priest and the lay person in marketing terms if we are to make an impact on secular

¹⁴⁰ John 15:1 – 5 RSV

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people then we discover that its' product and brand name is not meeting secular people's needs and ways of life.

Firstly, in terms of their needs they are looking for a real experience of God, and they are not looking for it in the churches, certainly not in the UK. They are going to New Age philosophy, and they are seeking experiences from there. This is because New Age teaching is based on an Eastern tradition which takes heart experience and spontaneity very seriously. Hence the New Age teachers, being vastly eclectic in nature, guide their devotees to discover the spiritual world in which real supernatural experiences occur. The church, however, for the most part, has embraced Western rationalism and empiricism. It is no longer in touch with its heart, but rather with its head and its reasoning. The church has embraced this, by raising up, generations of pastor/priests who go through seminary training which is essentially rationalistically based. The higher the theological degree in the British system the more reason based leaders seem to become. This is not to knock human reason, but it is to say that some how the Middle Eastern Jesus is lost sight of.

Jesus was essentially mystical. He regularly communicated with God through the eyes and ears of his heart utilising revelation knowledge gained by the free flow of the Holy Spirit pouring out of his spirit. Every thing he did came from his heart as he lived by the Father's initiative¹⁴¹. The major thesis of this dissertation is that unless we equip the people of God to have confidence in living out of their hearts once more, turning aside from human expertise, which has led to the decline of the church in first world Europe, we will see the mission of Christ continuously declining. Why are people going to New Age teachers rather than Christian churches, because they are hearing real voices from the so called spirit world?. They are getting real experiences – be it that I believe those voices are misleading or even demonic. Why are they not turning to the Christian churches? It is because for the most part people feel disempowered to do mission, and are ill informed about hearing the God who speaks to their hearts?

Secondly, the way of life of secular people gives them multiple opportunities to engage with numerous activities and interests which allow them to use their gifts and talents. However, a church which is filled with an audience, and a so called expert pastor, does not have any interest or outlets for such people to become engaged in what is for the most part a spectator sport.

So we may diagram these two key factors in marketing terms below.

¹⁴¹ John 5:19, 20

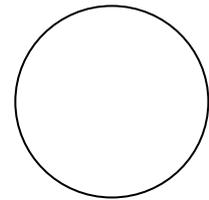
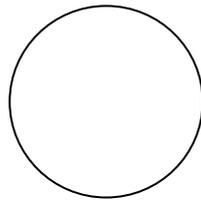
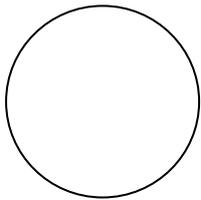
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This

Brand = Expert Pastor
& Passive Laity

Product = No
Confidence or
Experience of flow

Target Group = churched
people who have bought
into this model

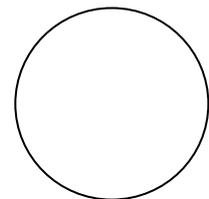
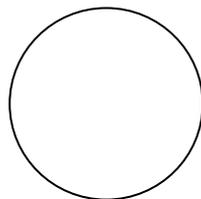
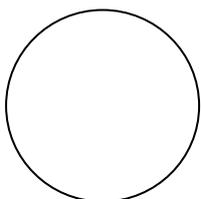


Or, This

Brand = Every believer
Equipped to minister

Product =
Confidence and
Experience of
flow

Target Group = un-churched
people who buy
into this sort of
community of believers'



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People are looking for living examples of people who are really experiencing the living, loving and active supernatural Jesus, who is there for them, meeting their needs, being their loving Lord and intimate friend and soul mate. If they cannot find this in the church then they will go to the places where they can learn about their hearts, and discovering the supernatural which is clearly real to them in such examples as New Age Mysticism; or they would not be going there. It has already been highlighted that post modern people are disenchanted with the earlier optimism of the so called modern period, in which mankind was made to believe that science, reason and empiricism were the answers to human need. Once again, like the massive vacuum which existed in the time of early Christianity in the lives of people, and also like that of the time of the Wesleys,¹⁴² in the latter part of the 18th century people want to know the God of relationship and experience; they are turning away in there droves from the churches, and have been for many years now in the UK, to find an experience that makes sense of their lives else where. The parochial model of church, with its love for a division between the sacred and the profane, and the pastor and laity, has not been the place the majority of secular people have been seeking for God for years now!

Historically in Britain during the late 18th century once the Wesley brothers, and Whitfield gave up on their human efforts in their Holy Club in Oxford, and rather had their hearts strangely warmed, did the English church and people find God in such a miraculous and evident way; to be real, that it rocked the very foundations of the nation from royalty down to peasant or coal miner. The revival that happened among the Wesley's, and the people, was like that of Pentecost. This so called first great awakening in Britain spread as far as North America as well. Now many of the prophetically gifted in the United Kingdom believe we are on the verge of another 2nd great awakening. Will the church wake up, and start to live by revelation once more – with all the people of God being equipped by the Spirit of Jesus', so that he once more may flow through every believers life out in ministry by his Spirit in Word and deed?

May our Lord Jesus Christ so fill all of our hearts with such a passion for him that we may be equipped in the inner person, with all of his unlimited infinite resources, to reach out to the lost and dying. May we be out there with the lost! May our hearts have his great compassion. May the church awake and turn aside from its imprisonment to parochialism, and the observer audiences of congregations, to live once again with the Holy Spirit's passion for the Son of God, and for those he died for! In Jesus name Amen!

Group Reflection

How does our Mission team view itself as a community of leaders in the light of the distinctions drawn between the spiritual and profane and the pastor/priest and the laity? How can we change?

¹⁴² Miller, ND: Whole Text

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Chapter 10 Win, Build and Equip

Introduction

Our Reign Ministries youth team¹⁴³ have worked with a simple, but very effective three stage approach to the way we do youth ministry. This may be simply stated as:

1. Our team seeks by the grace of God to “Win” people for Christ. We are very much aware that we are not the ones doing the winning, but it is the Spirit of Christ’ who does that.
2. Once young people have accepted Jesus as their Lord and Saviour we seek to “Build” them up in their faith. This takes many different forms, and strategies, but primary to them all is that the young person is apprenticed by one of the team. They learn just as much about the Christian life by having friendships with team members as they do by learning about the Bible, and the Christian journey.
3. Once young people have grown to the point where they start to give evidence that they are feeling secure about their faith then we seek to “Equip” them so that they too may share their faith with others winning, building and equipping them.

So key to the whole of this process is that these three steps keep on being recycled. And this process seems to summarise the essence of how Jesus and the early church worked.

Win, Build and Equip in Jesus’ Ministry

Matthew’s gospel gives some excellent insights into how Jesus utilised win, build and equip. Let us consider some examples,

“As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.’ Immediately they left their nets and followed him¹⁴⁴.”

Jesus strategy was simple. He invited people to follow him. He did not call them to take part in a training course, or reading exercises, he simply invited people to follow him. Clearly Peter and Andrew must have been aware of the baptism of Jesus and the Father’s voice; “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.¹⁴⁵” This heavenly attestation to Jesus was enough to “Win” the first two disciples’ interest as a first step. Jesus strategy for winning them was to relate to them on

¹⁴³ Kyle Mckinnon Director UK

¹⁴⁴ Matthew 4:18 – 20 RSV

¹⁴⁵ Matthew 3:17 RSV

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every level of experience which human life would bring to them as they followed Jesus. It was through relationship that Jesus sought to win people, and for the first disciples it was also due to the revelation knowledge given by the voice of God at Jesus' baptism that convinced them he was special – indeed the Messiah.

As Jesus “Built” up the faith of the disciples he did many things to convince them of who he was, and what he had come to do. Hence sign miracles and teaching went hand in hand with this process of building faith and heart understanding for the disciples;

“And he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity among the people. So his fame spread through out all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them. And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decap’olis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.¹⁴⁶”

Discipleship for Jesus was something that happened along side his disciples. He sought to build up their faith by apprenticing them, and involving them in his ministry. When he sat on the Mount and delivered the laws of the Kingdom of God his disciples had pride of place at his side¹⁴⁷. He sought to build them up so they themselves could minister to others by this process of attachment, belonging and relationship and observation of their Lord.

Matthew also records the “Equipping” of the disciples so that they moved from just being learners, to a mission team as apostles – sent with the authority of Christ to do and teach as Jesus had taught them;

“And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity¹⁴⁸.”

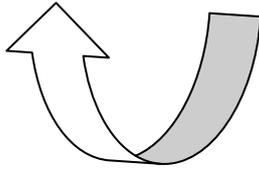
Notice the way that Christ equips his followers to do what he himself was doing. They had authority to do and teach just as Jesus had. This raises the question about this kind of ministry to day “Do we have this same equipping?”

If we are to answer this question then the best place to look is at the book of Acts. We have already discussed the teaching that Jesus was continuing his words and works through his disciples after the resurrection and ascension [See Chapter 4]. So the sign gifts are still an important part of the win, build and equip process today!

¹⁴⁶ Matthew 4:23 – 25 RSV

¹⁴⁷ Matthew 5:1

¹⁴⁸ Matthew 10:1 RSV



Build

The diagram above demonstrates how each of the mission teams T1 – T3 seek to recycle the three fold process and to establish other leadership teams who in turn utilise win, build and equip as they establish yet another leadership team. These teams will continue to reproduce themselves by their very nature.

These mission teams do not exercise authority over those they seek to win, build and equip, but rather they seek to serve these newly forming teams from underneath. This is the sort of servant leadership which Jesus established for his church;

“But Jesus called them to him and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.’¹⁴⁹”

As he clearly taught his disciples the sort of leadership which he had exercised among them was that kind which sought their highest good; as he sought to win, build and equip them by his self giving servant love. The sort of leader which the disciples followed was a servant leader who sought to give everything to them in love. Indeed this is the very essence of God’s love that he seeks to serve all of his creation and not to Lord it over any!

The threefold model defined by Jesus required leadership which sort to unselfishly equip all believers to become like Jesus and his Father. Mission-al teams are to model service and leadership from underneath; not seeking to dominate but to facilitate each new person and each new team to do the same.

This whole recycling view of wining, building and equipping new teams to do the same does away with a higherarchy style of leadership. Leaders in Christ’s kingdom serve from below. They do not seek to dominate or protect their privileged positions from the top down. Jesus turns the world up side down. Leadership comes from underneath and continues to seek to lead others to live preferring one another in love and service.

¹⁴⁹ Matthew 20:5 – 8 RSV

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In our youth mission team at present we are seeking to define how mission will work for us. We have all come up with different ideas. For me at this time I feel a bottom up model needs to look something like below;

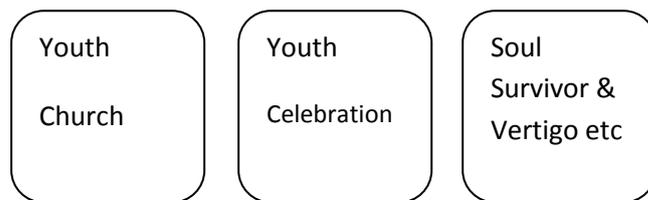
Reign Ministries UK – Winning, Building & Equipping a New Generation for Jesus

[1] L1 = The Youth leadership Team which worships together with an outward looking orientation of mutual support for each other offering team training – building and equipping – Actively apprenticing and discipling team members for L2 mission

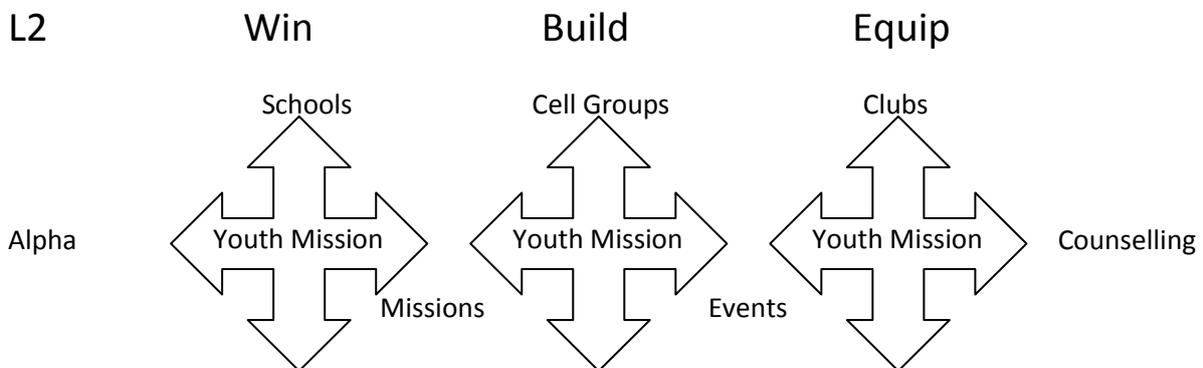
[2] L2 = Floats on the surface of L1 and implements the groups outward looking youth Vision and Mission through avenues of opportunity which the group is equipped to do with various youth mission activities. Youth are won, built and equipped to serve to do the same as L1

[3] L3 = Youth Church Expressions in local community, regional community and national and international community

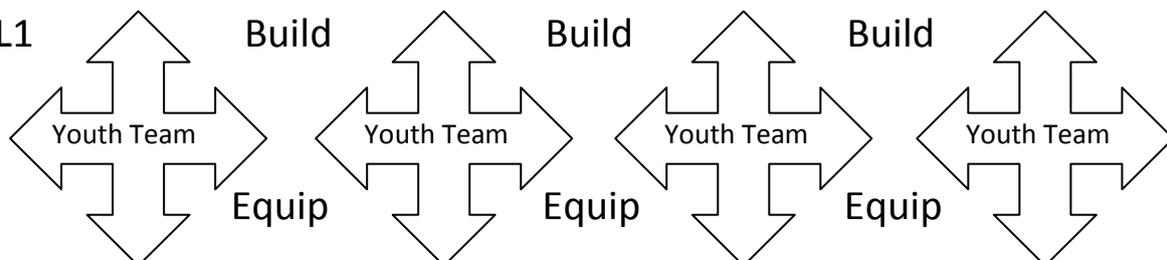
L3



L2



L1



Founded on a Spirit led Vision - Based on a Relationship with Jesus
Lived out in the Team through Flow in Words & Works!

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The figure above is meant to highlight how our new emerging youth mission-al team will seek to serve from below as youth follow our lead being apprenticed in the threefold model. It is our hope that our team will continue to seek to replicate and birth new teams who follow this pattern. The glory of Jesus servant led three fold model is that it keeps the church alive. Every one is an emerging servant leader who will model win, build and equip in their lives as they grow and come to a point where this might happen. This will always protect the church from an inevitable counter process which is well recognised in church growth. This may be diagrammed as below;

The Life Cycle of the Church

Stage 1 – The pioneering stage where the church is planted, and people are deliberately mission minded seeking to grow their numbers. Mostly outward looking!

Stage 2 – The consolidation phase in which the church has reached critical mass and it establishes a leadership which looks more inwardly to make the church organised. More inward looking!

Stage 3 – The church becomes an institution led from the top with spectator worship and participation is low. There are very few outward looking mission minded people.

Stage 4 –The church ages, becomes set in its ways and decline occurs.

Stage 5 – The church closes.

The above figure may be conceived in different ways by different church growth experts, but this is a trend which has repeated itself again and again, in fact rapidly, in the United Kingdom and Europe for the last 100 odd years, with the most worrying decline starting in the 1960s.

Mostly church communities of believers seem to fall into this cycle. Top down leadership occurs and congregations start off young and enthusiastic and end up dying because the leadership tends to age

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with the church; and becomes fixed in its ways utilising a top down executive/dominant style of authoritarian leadership; hence, as we noted in Chapter 2 In post war Britain about 70/80% of the population went to church regularly, whereas now about 8% of the population do. However, if we are to see our churches grow again, with new vital life in the Spirit, with servant mission being recycled again, then we need to follow the threefold process. We may view this in the following terms;

The Threefold Process of Servant leaders

Stage 1 – The mission team seek to win, build and equip new people so that they too may form yet another team to recycle and do the same.

Stage 2 – The new second team divides from the first team in a kind of cellular division and utilises the threefold ministry to birth another team.

Stage 3 – The newly formed next team do the same again.

NB: Simply stated this type of process with the cellular division process means that teams which are always looking away from themselves to serve others and form new teams means that the life cycle from birth to death is never a reality for the mission-al church process.

This whole process established by the Lord Jesus is the only way that the church once more may reach people for Christ. We need to stop looking inwards and start looking outwards. The prime reason for the church is to seek and save the lost, wining, building and equipping them to become servant leaders in their own rights as they are guided by revelation knowledge through the Spirit of Jesus' as he continues to do and teach through his people.

The Five Fold Ministries

It is appropriate to consider the five fold ministries outlined in Ephesians again.

1. Anointed Apostle – the apostle is that individual who is looked to by the team as the leader of the mission group. He or she demonstrates the qualities of a team leader. Delegating responsibilities, seeking group consensus on aims and goals, exercising authority to hold the team accountable. He is the team leader. An anointed apostle is a facilitator, he or she does not lord it over a team, but seeks to facilitate and enable team members to do what they are good at doing.
2. Anointed prophet – all Christians can exercise a personal prophetic gift receiving revelation knowledge for themselves from God with the eyes and ears of their hearts – living by flow. However, an anointed prophet not only receives Rhema and vision for himself but he also receives it for the team, and for those the team are in mission with. He or she will give invaluable insight from God to the team.
3. Anointed evangelist – we all can lead people to Christ through flow, Rhema and Vision, however the anointed evangelist will demonstrate the gift of winning people for Christ in a way that others do not. People who may have remained unmoved by other's efforts will respond readily to the voice of God through the evangelist. The mission team will recognise the need for a key member with this speciality.
4. Anointed pastor – All of us exercise the gift of care and support, and counsel toward others, particularly those who are close to our hearts. An anointed pastor has an overflowing abundance of love and passion for people. He or she will love to listen to people, and offer support to people in a way which gives him or her energy, and people will turn to him for help and advice more readily than other team members. The pastoral gift on the team makes the team consider the human needs of those being evangelised.
5. Anointed teacher – All of us offer some teaching on the Scriptures and the things of God, but this is not necessarily our passion. The anointed teacher has a passion for teaching the things of Christ, and he or she will always be thinking "How can we help prospective converts to understand biblical truth?" He or she will be invaluable on a team in order to help the team think about the best ways of teaching and equipping new converts to learn.¹⁵⁰

Every good team has these five basic gifts associated with it; in order that the threefold mission process might effectively happen. What has happened with the parochial model is that it has been basically structured around the pastoral gift and the teaching gift. It destabilizes parochial style priest/pastor church organisations to have the apostolic gift, and the prophetic gift and the evangelistic gifts operating in them. Parochial style congregations with the structure of authoritarian top down leadership cannot cope with the spontaneous challenging presence of prophets, evangelists and apostles. So what has happened is that these three gifts have migrated to the para-church sector. They operate outside of parochial congregations, and these congregations continue to go through the aging process which has resulted in the rapid decline of the church in general in Britain.

¹⁵⁰ Frost and Hirsch, 2007: 174

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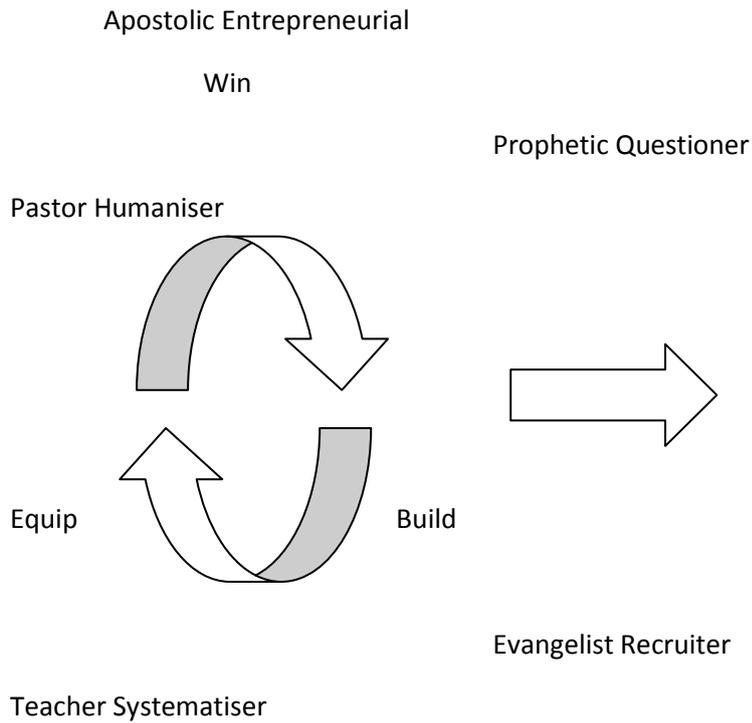
Current organisational business studies indicate that all good companies and organisations operate the best around a fivefold leadership model. This may be defined as follows:

1. The entrepreneur = the apostle
2. The questioner = the prophet
3. The recruiter = the evangelist
4. The humaniser = the pastor
5. The systematiser = the teacher

Parochial churches function basically with the humaniser/pastor and the systematiser/teacher. Basically these gifts work best in top down organisations as they seek to protect the in group from outside infiltration. Hence such organisations are mostly inward looking seeking to systematically define their organisation as a club or institution which people have to join. Entrepreneurs, questioners and recruiters are generally screened out of such organisations as they rock the boat, and tend to be outward looking rather than inward looking. Hence two basic structures exist in Christendom today, the organised pastor/teacher churches, and the less organised spontaneous entrepreneurial para-church organisations which tend to start many new ventures, but then, because they lack pastor/teachers, what they have started soon dies out, or have to adopt a more pastor/teacher style of organisation to remained glued together. Once again this migration to parochialism from para-church roots leads to parochial failure.

Obviously this is far from what business researchers have to say about optimal organisations, and clearly the Spirit of Jesus' utilised the fivefold ministries together so that mission-al groups would remain sustainable and with a balance between caring for team needs as well as caring for mission and outreach. This may be diagrammed as follows:

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The identification of gifted persons within the mission team with the fivefold gifts work in the recycling process of cellular division just as the threefold process of mission keeps on replicating itself. In order for people to be won, built and equipped the mission team must have all of the fivefold gifts operating amongst them; then the mission of the team will remain outward looking with an inward personalised care for team members and new contacts as the teams keep on replicating following this process.

The net result will be that the strengths of para-church and parochial church unite creating the perfect balance that the apostolic church had as they followed the Spirit of Jesus'.

Group Reflection

[1] Spend time reflecting as a team on the teaching above, write down your teams reflections below.

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[2] Take time to worship together and seek rhema and vision – speak these forth and record what spontaneously comes below.

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Chapter 11 Two Kingdoms and the Mission of Jesus – Our Natural Authority in Christ

Introduction

The concept of the Kingdom of God in the New Testament has been the subject of much scholarly debate over the years. I remember when I attended my first lecture on the gospels, my tutor Dr. Steve Thompson asked the question: “Do any of you understand what a kingdom is?” He seemed some what surprised when we all agreed that we had a clear idea that it was the region over which a king ruled as the primary executive authority with whom all decisions were made and finally rested.

In terms of the Kingdom of God the New Testament is clear in it’s insistence that Jesus is the “Great King” of this kingdom¹⁵¹, and that the extent of the territory which he reigns over includes heaven and earth¹⁵². There is only one choice for all those who are confronted with a choice to follow him, and that is whether they want him as their King or not. The implication’s of a decision that is expressed in the negative is that there is no place for them any where as the “Kingdom of God” is universal in nature.

It might be added that the Kingdom of God takes on a special meaning in the sense that it is first and foremost an experience of Christ entering our hearts by faith through the Holy Spirit as our Lord¹⁵³; the way that this King rules is bottom up leadership, rather than top down in nature. It is the very nature of God that he seeks to serve all life rather than rule all life arbitrarily. For instance consider the following New Testament examples,

“Then the mother of the sons of Zeb’edee came up to him, with her sons, and kneeling before him she asked him for something. And he said to her, ‘What do you want?’ She said to him, ‘Command that these two sons of mine may sit, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your kingdom.’ But Jesus answered, ‘You do not know what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I am to drink?’ They said to him, ‘We are able.’ He said to them, ‘You will drink my cup, but to sit at my right hand and at my left is not mine to grant, but it is for those whom it has been prepared by my Father.’ And when the ten heard it, they were indignant at the two brothers. But Jesus called them to him and said, ‘You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many.’¹⁵⁴”

And,

¹⁵¹ Matthew 25:40

¹⁵² Matthew 28:19, 20

¹⁵³ Acts 2:36 - 38

¹⁵⁴ Matthew 20:20 – 28 RSV

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“Let each one of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”¹⁵⁵

What we learn from these passages is that Jesus exercises a completely different type of Lordship and Kingship over his followers. It is based on seeking the best for others in gift love, and this is the very nature and motivation of the very heart of God!

The Position of the Believer in the Kingdom of God as he or she exercises authority over the kingdom of Satan

If a clear definition can be given for the “Kingdom of God”, then it can also be attempted for the designation “The kingdom of Satan”. Clearly the New Testament writers considered this to be a reality. For instance Paul speaks of the “prince of the power of the air”¹⁵⁶, or Jesus of the “prince of this world”. The term “prince” implies some power to reign over mankind. Certainly this is what is at stake when Jesus is tempted in the Wilderness for forty days. The last temptation demonstrates Satan’s real intent in tempting the Son of God when he says to Jesus,

“Again the Devil took him to a very high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; and he said to him, ‘All these things I will give to you, if you will fall down and worship me.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Be gone, Satan! For it is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.”’ Then the Devil left him, and behold, angels came and ministered to him.”¹⁵⁷

Clearly Satan identifies the parameters of his domain gained by original sin when he shows Jesus all the “kingdoms” and offers to give them to Jesus if he will worship the enemy. Jesus does not give way for a moment, but rather sends the enemy packing.

In an era which even finds many Christians no longer accepting the existence of the Devil it seems very strange that the whole concept of the “Kingdom of God” makes perfect sense of any other idea of a kingdom or kingdoms? Jesus took the existence of Satan and his hold over mankind through sin

¹⁵⁵ Philippians 2:4 – 11 RSV

¹⁵⁶ Ephesians 2:1-4

¹⁵⁷ Matthew 4:8 – 11 RSV

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very seriously and he engaged in active identification of the enemy as a force to be reckoned with; the ministry of Jesus being clearly pictured in the gospels as a step by step door to door battle with the enemy¹⁵⁸, as Satan and his demons are repelled by the King and his followers.

We only need to site one of many examples to demonstrate this,

“They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Ger’asenes. And when he had come out of the boat, there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who lived among the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, even with a chain; for he had often been bound with fetters and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the fetters he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out, and bruising himself with stones. And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshipped him; and crying out with a loud voice, he said, ‘What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of God, do not torment me.’ For he had said to him, ‘Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!’ And Jesus asked him, ‘What is your name?’ He replied, ‘My name is Legion; for we are many.’¹⁵⁹”

Notice how Jesus is recognised by Legion as the “Son of God.” Also note how these agents of Satan recognise they are subject to the higher authority of Christ over their prince Satan. There is a real sense here of the need for people to be set free from the power and authority of Satan. Christ is clearly pictured as the only one possessing that power to release this tormented man; and his power won by virtue of his death, resurrection and ascension is absolute¹⁶⁰. Yet how often mission teams do not take the enemies organisation into account when planning mission or seeking revelation knowledge. Yet the enemies’ organisation is said to exist in high places¹⁶¹. In this age of rationalism the idea that there is an invisible enemy called “Satan”; as it head, and with demons strategically positioned throughout whole regions in the whole world, is not considered with the due weight that it needs to be.

The Revelation foundation to all Mission with the Spirit of Jesus’ still continuing to exercise his authority to liberate people from the enemy is vital for our planning. We need to be asking questions like: “What are the dominating conflicts and sins which characterise this community we are seeking to reach?” and “How is the Spirit of Jesus’ guiding us to confront the enemies’ strongholds in this area?” In our next chapter on the seven prayers we will consider strategies to focus our teams’ approach to questions like these. For the time being it is enough to take seriously that the enemy is organised. He is not involved in thoughtless skirmishes but rather in broad battle plans which are aimed at restraining as many people as possible from gaining Salvation in Christ. Hence a revelation based mission team takes the insights given by the Spirit of Jesus’ very seriously when it considers the enemy strongholds in a district. And it seriously considers discovering the Lord’s overall strategy for over throwing these enemy strongholds in a district or region.

¹⁵⁸ Matthew 4:23 - 25

¹⁵⁹ Mark 5:1 – 9 RSV

¹⁶⁰ Matthew 28:19

¹⁶¹ Colossians 2:15

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It is not a leap of the imagination to consider that the continuous decline of the Christian Church in Britain and First world Europe has been down to large degree to the failure to confront these strongholds effectively.

Our Natural Authority in Christ

We may start this section by considering four keys Scriptures,

1. "Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do men say that the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter replied, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of death [or hell] shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'¹⁶²"
2. "Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven."¹⁶³
3. "And what is the immeasurable greatness of his power in us who believe, according to the working of his great might which he accomplished in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come."¹⁶⁴
4. "And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity."¹⁶⁵

What these four passages demonstrate is that the revelation led Mission team does not need to pray for what has already been given to it naturally. It is not natural for the person outside of Christ to have complete authority over the enemy and all his agents, but for the Spirit anointed Christian it is. In other words we have the power and authority of Christ flowing through us by the Spirit of Jesus' to overcome the enemy in every single one of his strong holds.

It is not a leap of imagination to wonder if this is why the church has not taken ground back from the enemy because it has let go of a belief and confidence in its already delivered authority over the enemy; and has rather retreated into its fortress churches which primarily exist to protect those in there against "those out there!"

¹⁶² Matthew 16:13 – 19 RSV

¹⁶³ Matthew 18:18, 19 RSV

¹⁶⁴ Ephesians 1:20 – 21 RSV

¹⁶⁵ Matthew 10:1 RSV

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It is time that mission-al teams take back their natural authority which is already delivered to them; and to boldly claim what Christ has given them. Hence we will heal in Jesus' name, we will cast out demons in Jesus' name, we will raise the dead etc. What we need to pray for is what the early revelation based church prayed for, a ministry based on the words and works of Jesus by his Spirit',

“When they were released they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and the elders had said to them. And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, ‘Sovereign Lord, who didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who by the mouth of our father David, thy servant, didst say by the Holy Spirit, “Why did the Gentiles rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth set themselves in array, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed,” for truly in this city there were gathered together against thy holy servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever thy hand and thy plan had predestined to take place. And now, Lord, look upon their threats, and grant to thy servants to speak thy word with all boldness, while thou stretchest out thy hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of thy holy servant Jesus.’ And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness.”¹⁶⁶”

It is this same Holy Spirit who delivered boldness that we need as mission teams to secular society again; in this day and age, claiming the power and authority which has already been delivered to us to continue the spoken forth living words of Jesus to our Generation. We need to continue to exercise his authority to do miraculous wonders and signs and to overthrow every stronghold of the enemy!

Group Exercise

[1] Reflect as a group on what you have learnt and record your reflections below.

¹⁶⁶ Acts 4:23 – 31 RSV

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[2] As a group spend time in prayer and worship asking God to enlighten the eyes and ears of your hearts with his spontaneous Rhema and Vision concerning what the strongholds in your mission teams' area are. Also ask him what strongholds may be holding you team back personally from exercising your natural authority. Pray for boldness to act on what the Spirit of Jesus' communicates. Speak forth Rhema and Vision to each other. Record your revelation knowledge below.

Chapter 12 Seven of most effective prayers that Mission-al Leaders ever Pray

Introduction

The thesis to this dissertation has been to demonstrate the need for a living two way dialogue with God utilising revelation knowledge through the Spirit of Jesus' to reach out in mission to the un-churched/secular people of the world particularly. In this chapter we will be considering the need that the mission team has to be free from sinful habitual bondage in every area of their lives, so that they may then minister un-impeded deliverance to secular people without the background noise of un-delivered areas of their lives impeding mission. Hence we will talk about prayer ministry, some key areas for deliverance, and how the team may utilise this personally and mission-ally.

It probably seems strange to talk of seven prayers as the most effective prayers that can be prayed. And indeed in a sense this is true. There is no magic formula prayer/s that one has to learn as some kind of secret gnosis. The whole doctrine of salvation through the grace of God would immediately be violated by any such proposal. We are "saved by grace through faith"¹⁶⁷, and that is the one truth that all other claims that Christian practitioners of mission and ministry must have their work checked against. Anything which nullifies the grace of God in the human mind by adding another factor is "anathema"¹⁶⁸.

However, prayer is vital, and what we mean by effective prayer is important to define if we wish to identify key areas which need identifying for prayer to focus on. On this level we are not talking about prayer as the thing we must do to be saved, but rather praying for areas which need special focussed dialogue with God about – so that his free gift of deliverance may remove all hindrances and barriers that may exist within a person's life.

So what are key areas which need identifying for prayer deliverance ministry?

Seven Strands that can keep us from reaching our full potential in Christ

When theologians consider salvation they identify four key phases in the process:

1. New Birth ¹⁶⁹– this is the point where the newly converted person invites Jesus to enter their lives as their Saviour, and he at that point renews their spirit [their real deep inner self] so that they now want to follow Christ and have a relationship with him.

¹⁶⁷ Ephesians 2:8

¹⁶⁸ Galatians 1:8

¹⁶⁹ John 3:1 - 16

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2. Justification¹⁷⁰ – this is an objective act on the part of God where he no longer sees the believer as a sinner, with his or her still remaining sin damaged body and soul, but rather he sees Christ's perfect life as a garment of perfection covering them meaning all their sins past, present and future have been forgiven and wiped out in God's sight. This is known as the completeness of the atonement.
3. Sanctification¹⁷¹ – which is the work of a life time; we never go beyond the point in this life time where we are permitted to say that we are without sin – we find ourselves in need of continuing confession and cleansing¹⁷² as we grow and mature as followers of Jesus. Sin does rear its' ugly head, and we need to keep open to the voice of God in a relationship in order to grow and leave sin behind as we grow and are purified in our journey.

Each of these first three aspects of salvation are part of what is known as the "Now and Not Yet" tension we live in. We are now saved eternally, but we are still in a sinful world, and we are still in need of growth and sanctification. God does not just wave a magic wand to get rid of our sins, but he helps us to grow step by step closer to him in purity by a loving and trusting relationship – so that our hearts and minds can choose his nature, his love and his ways intelligently with heart, mind and soul. So the "Not Yet" aspect is that we are not yet perfect, sin and Satan still can get holds over the Christian habitually, and through other routes which Scripture indicates. The fourth element is when the "Not Yet" becomes "Now" for us, when there is a new heaven and a new earth, where we will then be free from sin, Satan and sin damaged nature and all that can easily get tangled up in the Christians life with sin;

4. Glorification¹⁷³ – Jesus comes again and our corrupt bodies take on in-corruption; which means the end of sin and Satan for ever.

So it may be said that there are possible routes of attack that sin and Satan may utilise to gain a manipulative hold over the Christian whose spirit now is eternally secure in Christ. These may be termed:

1. Generational sins and curses which are passed down through the family line.
2. Ungodly soul ties stemming from a covenant or contractual relationship/s which passes sin energy from one person to another holding them in bondage to a sin.
3. Negative expectations or negative belief systems that generate sinful habits that pressure a person toward sinful acts.
4. Inner vows which galvanise a person's purpose in life, which sinful negative desires can cause pressure to do sin because of a vow in order to keep it.
5. Traumatic inner negative pictures from the past stored in the memory which can produce sinful behaviour or open the door to demonic influences. These pictures can create the pressure to act in a sinful manner.

¹⁷⁰ Romans 3:23 - 26

¹⁷¹ 1 Corinthians 6:11

¹⁷² 1 John 1:9

¹⁷³ 1 Corinthians 15

6. Demonisation – a person although a Christian has opened the door to demonic influence which has formed an avenue through which a demon/s may exercise influence that leads to sin.
7. Enslavement to sin – habitual failure to overcome besetting recurring sins, the person cannot seem to lose the power of the pressure of certain habitual sins.¹⁷⁴

Having given the broad sweep overview here now we may consider each in more detail.

Seven entry routes of sin analysed

1. Generational sins and curses that are passed on through the family line.

That Scriptures teach us that sins and curses are passed down the family line is clear. It was a concept well known to the Jewish people through their Scriptures, and it was certainly a possibility that the disciples accepted, and Jesus recognised, but nevertheless not always identified, as the root cause of every person he ministered to with health issues and deformities. For instance a Jewish blind man who he healed did not owe his condition to a generational sin or curse¹⁷⁵, whilst his disciples wondered if he did, as did his family [probably]; whereas in the case of the paralysed man that was brought to Jesus for healing Jesus identified that his condition was related to some sort of sinful background – possibly generationally derived¹⁷⁶. The best example of sins and curses being passed down the family line is that the Jewish people, through their leaders, continued to do what their forefathers had done before them by murdering and rejecting the ultimate prophet of God– Jesus Christ¹⁷⁷.

In the book of Genesis when God promises Abraham that he will be the father of many, and that he would receive the land of Promise as his nations birthright, he is told,

“As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram; and lo, a dread and great darkness fell upon him. Then the LORD said to Abram, ‘Know of a surety that your descendants will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and will be slaves four hundred years; but I will bring judgment on the nation which they serve, and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. As for yourself, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a

¹⁷⁴ Virkler, PHH, 2001: Chapter 3

¹⁷⁵ John 9:1 - 3

¹⁷⁶ Mark 2:5

¹⁷⁷ Matthew 23:32

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good old age. And they shall come back here in the fourth generation; for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.¹⁷⁸”

What this demonstrates beyond its obvious Old Testament notion of sins heaping up on the scales of judgement, to the point where judgment occurs, is that the already known sins of the Amorite people would be passed on intergeneration-ally until the fourth generation from the point of the vision when they would be judged. The other example of sins and curses being transmitted down family lines is that well known passage in the Ten Commandments which talks of the sins of the father’s being passed on to the third and fourth generations¹⁷⁹.

As alien as this is to our present day Western culture as this seems, it is nevertheless something that the Middle Eastern Jesus, and Jewish people, believed.

We may say that it is like the baggage that we bring with us when we become Christians. God does not suddenly change us in a flash of lightening into completely new and different people that no one can recognise anymore, but rather he takes us on a journey through which we knowingly and understandingly engage with him in as we are transformed into the wonderful likeness of Jesus¹⁸⁰. Part of this baggage is that we can carry curses, and sinful pre-directions, in the DNA of our spiritual/physical beings. Below I include some questions and answers which might engage the student with some other aspects on this concept;

1. Name two important features which are common to both blessings and curses, and discuss the significance of these, both generally and personally.

The two features common to both are:

- i. There effects are not limited to individuals, but to families/lines, tribes, communities etc.
- ii. Once a blessing or curse becomes related to an individual in a family line they tend to keep running inter-generationally

“The general significance of the transmissible nature of a blessing or curse through family lines is that we all carry these as living realities within our beings, or attached to our beings. If a husband has one, then the children will almost certainly have it passed on them. If I take on a new blessing or curse from either God or the enemy then I transmit those to future generations, and to my present family. I certainly have had a number of generational issues that have needed healing and removing throughout the past 26 years of my Christian life.”

¹⁷⁸ Genesis 15:12 – 15 RSV

¹⁷⁹ Exodus 20:5

¹⁸⁰ 2 Corinthians 3:18

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2. What is the main vehicle of both blessings and curses? Give examples of other vehicles which may also be used.

“The main vehicle is words which are uttered. So often we focus on negative words, but I also emphasize the positive ones. Our children have grown up with many words of blessing spoken over them from us and grand parents, and friends. Their lives are a testimony to that blessing. People recognise that they have been with Jesus – so to speak! I know these can be written blessings or curses as well passed on in Wills and Trusts. In our own family if we have said negative things wrongly to our children, we always make it a policy, in our Lord Jesus, to revoke any possible curse by repenting to our children and to God asking for forgiveness. They have benefitted from this simple Scriptural principle.”

“Physical objects can deliver a curse, or a blessing. Not so tasteful to protestant evangelicals I know, but I know it’s true. I had a few books on my shelves which I felt were border line and the Holy Spirit kept on telling me to destroy them, so I did, then I had peace in my spirit.”

“The emblems of the Lord’s Supper deliver a blessing to those who partake worthily. If someone eats un-worthily with an un-repentant heart then he or she brings corrective judgment on themselves, Paul indicates in 1 Corinthians 11 that is why so many of the Corinthian Christians were suffering from ailments.”

1. Give two reasons why many Christians are enduring curses rather than enjoying the blessings of God.
 - i. Many Christians do not know what a blessing or a curse is, or that it exists, or how to discern them.
 - ii. If they do have a curse they do not understand the steps that need to be taken to be released from a curse.
2. State the unchanging qualification[s] for the blessings of God. Give an Old and New Covenant reference which indicates this.

The two simple things we need to do to live in God’s blessing are:

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- i. To listen to his voice utilising revelation knowledge
- ii. To do what he asks of us as he empowers us to therefore do things for him.

An old Covenant example of this would be Abraham; he listened to God's voice to leave Haran and go to Canaan. So he listened and then acted.

A Classic new covenant example would be the Apostle Paul – He heard the voice of Jesus on the Damascus Road, once raised up with new sight after his conversion he went ahead and did what Jesus had commissioned him to do by preaching in the Synagogue that “Jesus is the Christ”.

3. What are the symptoms of generational sins?

- i. That a habitual sin pattern, illness or disease may be dominating a person's life to the extent that it is always there in the background as a felt issue.
- ii. That as you consider your grandparents, siblings and parents and cousins there is a family trait that is shared by many family members.

4. What is the treatment plan and prognosis for generational sins and curses?

- i. They can be removed by the ministry of the Holy Spirit flowing through a person bringing Jesus power to do so.
- ii. The plan simply stated needs to recognise, accept and seek deliverance through Christ.
- iii. The long term prognosis is that once a generational curse is broken it will no longer figure in the background noise of a person's life.

What I have attempted to do with these snap shots is to give a taste and tell approach to how one might ask these questions and to be stimulated to explore meanings. Once we have gone through the seven possible routes of sin that can still influence the Christian, in this section, then we will consider how to minister to them in prayer. Like any diagnostic system, whether that be clinical or spiritual or structural, it is important first of all to discuss symptoms and causes.

2. Ungodly Soul ties

Soul Ties may be defined in many ways however Bank's gives a simple and useful brief definition,

"A soul tie is a cleaving together, a relationship whereby two souls are joined or knitted together, and in a sense become as one.

[1] The four main kinds of negative soul ties are; firstly, we may speak of a negative spirit to spirit connection between people that is united through a negative Satanic spiritual link. This can be seen in the way that so called ESP works, or where a person knows what a person is doing or feeling. Secondly, I would agree there are platonic soul ties between a mentor and the mentored, or a teacher and a student. It can be negative if the tutor develops a god complex, or the student highly regards the tutor in a god-like manner. Thirdly, there are certainly emotional soul ties. I have often found negative soul ties to exist between the abuser and the abused, to the extent that the abused takes on the spirit of the abuser and becomes one him or her self. Fourthly, erotic physical soul ties are found when two or more persons engage in sexual encounters with one another. This was sadly the case in one seminary I taught in about 18 years ago – young men and young women sneaked into a communal room and were involved in group activities. I sensed in the Spirit that there was a lustful and evil understanding and tie between them.

[2]What is to be our primary soul-tie, and what are the benefits which come to people as a result of it.

"Clearly the primary soul-tie is that which is to exist between us and God. Our spirit's are united with his Spirit through our Lord Jesus Christ, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit, as he lives in our hearts; this joining together results in us sharing all of the infinite love and resources of Christ who mightily inspires them in us. The extent of the cleaving together means that:

- i. We become **like** Christ in, love, in faith, in hope and in purpose
- ii. We take on a nature **like** his – we become partakers of the divine nature
- iii. We are purified from sin, not just forgiven for sin
- iv. We are set free from every form of evil bondage to the enemy as we grow in the Spirit of Christ
- v. We have eternal life
- vi. We have eternal security

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- vii. We have eternal election
- viii. We have all the resources of God to fulfil his will and purpose in the ministries he gives to us.
- ix. The enemy is defeated, and we have authority over him in every way – it already belongs to us in Christ

More could be said, however, I feel that the best summation of what we have in Christ is defined as we have his infinite love; and we are part of his infinite unlimited desire to give us all things in the God-head unlimitedly.

[3] Now I will give examples of other God-designed soul-ties – for soul-ties can be positive and are part of our human communal life.

- i. Marriage is an example of a God-designed soul tie as we cleave and become one
- ii. Parents and child/ren are another example as we become one family facilitating by the Spirit the growth of the child in a free open relationship within the family, and the family of God
- iii. Friends can cleave together in a way which is godly as Jonathon and David did
- iv. Community groups can positively cleave together in mutual aid and support to one another
- v. Support groups for bereaved people can cleave together for mutual loving care and support
- vi. Churches are the body of Christ and they are joined to the one body with the one head Christ
- vii. We can be joined to the environment and the spirit of that environment in a positive way – in the sense that God can bless us through nature, through a godly village founded on godly principles etc

More could be mentioned I am sure. But the most significant aspect of all of these examples comes down to this that there can either be godly soul-ties or ungodly ones. They are godly if they are founded on goodness, love and the facilitating Spirit of God'. They can be ungodly if they are driven by fear, manipulation and accusation coming from the spirit of the enemy.

[4] What are the symptoms of ungodly soul ties?

- i. There is an inner feeling of bound-ness to another person which seems more important than the Christian's relationship with Christ.

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- ii. This inner sense is almost habitual in nature in that the person, activity or sin which a person shares with another, is an obsession and compulsion pressurising the Christian into sinful action, thought, feeling and even a false worship of the other with whom the soul-tie exists.
- iii. That a person will often have a sense of what the other is doing, when they will phone, or what they are feeling. The significant thing is that these shared feelings will produce negative sinful energy and pressure within the Christian.

We will discuss ministering to ungodly soul-ties in the next section.

3. Negative Expectations and Belief systems

Clearly there are two ways indicated in this heading which really boil down to the same outcomes; which may be viewed as two rails on the train line each needed for the train to remain on course, but each being separate but leading to the same destination.

- A. Track # 1 – Negative Expectations – We can obtain negative expectations from many different sources, and there can be many tributaries that can feed into them. Human beings are very prone to acting on first impressions which can set up their view of another person even for life. If a person was grumpy when you first met them in the new office you started work in, then you may avoid them for your working life in that office – based on that negative first impression which probably was a tooth ache, not a grumpy disposition. At this level we all have made errors.

However, we are talking about a more serious level on a personal level than this. It is when we have had something said to us that hurts, us, and we set up a self protective negative expectation which becomes unconscious eventually if not dealt with early on which makes us expect a similar negative outcome generally in many of life's situations. An example would be the child who is told not to talk in church who is so hurt by the way it was communicated never offers to do anything to do with speaking or singing in a church because of a deep sense of rejection thus leading to resentment of the church, and the stunting of that emerging persons potential gifts to be a blessing through sharing in all sorts of helpful and healing communication that he or she might have engaged in if it had not been for the negative expectation brought about by the pain of perceived rejection!

Negative expectations can hold us captive to sinful habits, and sinful thoughts and feelings for years; as all sorts of associated negative emotions and expectations can grow around the initial negative expectation. The initial rejection which said "shut your mouth in church" transforms into "I am not wanted here", to "I am not loved by these people", to "God does not love me". From this we may conclude that negative expectations may have a hold over all of us in some fairly fundamental ways, and many of these will be unconscious and the Holy Spirit will have to identify them for us before we can seek healing.

- B. Track # 2 – Negative Belief systems – These can often operate where false Christian teaching about almost anything can cause us to be moving in a direction which contradicts the nature of salvation by Grace [free gift, unconditional forgiveness and love] rather operating on salvation by works [seeking acceptance by what we do]. An example comes most readily to mind from one of my counselling contacts of about 12 years ago. A young woman told me of how her mother had beaten her with the buckle end of a belt from age two years whenever she did something wrong – which mostly were down to child hood experimentation. The mother believed the proverb “Spare the rod and spoil the child” so much that she beat her two year old black and blue! Where was the grace in that? However, one can imagine that the mother’s negative belief system had arisen inter-generationally having been raised in this way, and she did not have a model of the grace of God in the way her parents treated her. It must be said this young women received release by the Holy Spirit from these painful past memories, and also very importantly from a negative belief system which had made her believe deeply on an emotional level that God was a wide eyed mother type figure chasing her around a room, as she hid under tables, beating her. This picture and associated rational and emotive inner belief system and picture of her mother had dominated her destiny, although a Christian up to that point. She had followed the God of fear of punishment [the Devil really], and once she discovered the real meaning of the grace of God, and had her memories healed through prayer ministry [to be discussed in our next section] she was revolutionised and fell in love with Father God, not just with gentle Jesus meek and mild.

4. Inner Vows

When a person has been deeply hurt, particularly, there is a strong tendency to promise oneself never to put oneself in a hurtful situation like that again. This self promise is motivated by a deep emotional decision not to make oneself’ vulnerable – hence we may call this an inner vow. It is not evident to others, only to our selves and God, but it is based on a negative experience, memory and set of very painful pictures and experiences. An example could be a 16 year old young woman who goes out for her first date with a boy who she thinks she can trust, but it turns out that he is only interested in taking out for sex; whilst she valued their friendship and her trust of this young man; she had thought she had known at school as a genuine friend for some months or years. She vows never to trust men again. This opens the door as the months, and then years pass, for her to resent men, not to want to trust them, when she does get married she doubts her husbands love often, she punishes her sons when they act out of selfishness, and she is unable to praise them or encourage them. Obviously a vow leads to all sorts of negative and harmful outcomes. And this too needs healing at its root causes. Further to this sort of vow matrix we may also add,

1. We can make vows as we join a secret society - like the Free Masons – to fulfil certain obligations which contradict faith.
2. We can make vows to a business partner, or by contract to a company which end up entailing us in dishonest deals.
3. We can make vows to keep silent about a shady deal or unlawful activity. Etc.

Other examples could be given, but people can be held subject or in bondage to vows they have made, which will need revoking.

5. Traumatic memories/scenes from the past

The language of the mind is reason, logic, calculation etc. The language of the heart is through pictures and emotions. The good memories we have from the past are stored in the heart alongside the happy pictures and positive emotions of those events. Likewise the traumatic memories from our past are stored as pictures with associated negative memories. All counsellors and therapists would probably agree that significant traumas with their associated pictures and negative emotions can haunt a person and dominate their destinies for life. These emotive pictures can become the place that you are stuck at in your inner psychic life for life. Instead of living by flow and with real emotional freedom the person is stunted, traumatised dead inside – almost every day of their lives.

An example could be a man who was always put down by his father being called “useless” during his childhood and adolescence. His self image is based on a dominant inner emotive picture of his father calling him useless and he therefore, always expects to fail at what he does. Even when he makes successes he will not accept that he has done well because he is caught and immobilised in a static state by that traumatic picture. Once again we can see an example of how sin damaged inner images can stop us from living by the flow of the Spirit of God’. Hence we find another area of deliverance.

6. Demonisation

The whole area of the work of Satan and his angels, which are termed demons in the New Testament, and the Inter-Testamental literature, meets with many differing responses within the church today. Probably these responses may be termed general outlooks based on personal epistemologies. So I will attempt to highlight these views below;

1. That Satan does not really exist and he was the invention of pre-scientific people who needed to make an explanation for their evil obsessions and compulsions; it was far easier to put the blame on a being called “Satan” rather than taking responsibility for their own sinful actions and thoughts for themselves. Hence there is no such thing as demonization.
2. That Satan was defeated at the Cross and that he should not figure in our language or our thinking because he cannot get control over a true Christian.
3. That Satan is a powerful being who Christians should fear and that every motive and every action of every person and believer is suspect because Satan may be getting a foothold in the believer’s life otherwise.
4. That Satan and demons are real. He is defeated, and he cannot take ownership of the Christians new heart/spirit once he or she is born again, but he can get a foothold of negative influence in sinful behaviours, and so called besetting sins, via some sort of

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attachment. This attachment is not ownership, and it can be broken simply by the power of Christ's authority over the enemy, but the Christian who is in some way oppressed or held in check by a besetting oppressive sin needs to repent of the sin, and send the demon away in Jesus' name, and fill the void which the sinful need was filling with the fruit of the Spirit of Jesus'.

We could offer other options here. However, the above list covers much of the ground. For years I would have put myself in option number 2. I had problems when I went to large Christian conferences when I saw believers' of many years standing going up for deliverance from demons. For instance in one big top meeting I saw 300 people go up for deliverance, and they were convulsed, thrown on the floor, screamed, swore, blasphemed, threatened etc; until the demon was cast out. My problem was a legitimate theological one - the term used was that these Christians who belonged to Christ, presumably, were "demon-possessed". My problem was that I could not agree with the theology of possession when Scripture clearly said,

"Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come."¹⁸¹

How could a new creation be demon-possessed? I was able to accept the idea of people being tempted by demons, and even oppressed by demons, but not possessed and owned by demons. Since then I have come to understand a far more helpful view; and a far more mature view, which says Christian's can be "Demonised" but not "possessed". In this view people can have demonic negative influences driving certain habitual sins, illnesses etc in their lives whilst being Christians. It is the churches' failing, I'm part of this, that has not taught Christians and new Christians that even Christians can be oppressed, or be held captive to sinful habits and things like these, without being possessed and owned by the enemy. They are eternally saved, but there are inner pressures which never seem to leave in terms of compulsions and obsessions with besetting sins; however many times they pray for help and forgiveness.

It is when these inner pressures exist, and never seem to get better, or leave, that there is a sign of a need for deliverance from a tie to a demon/s. Because the church has broadly ignored this it does not stop people from having these problems; and it does not stop the problem from being there.

- A. Does this view go against the completeness of what Christ did for us on the cross, by saying we have to do something else to be saved? "No" because the Christian is saved.
- B. Does this view match with the idea that we can never say we are personally without sin¹⁸²? "Yes it does" because we are in a constant battle. Although Satan cannot take ownership of us again, he can stop us from enjoying the liberty of our Christian lives, and he can hold us back from effective mission and ministry to the un-churched/secular world.
- C. Does this idea contradict the concept of regeneration and Sanctification? "No", rather it teaches us that we are responsible by the intimacy of our relationship with the Spirit of

¹⁸¹ 2 Corinthians 5:17 RSV

¹⁸² 1 John 1:9

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Jesus' as he speaks to the eyes and ears of our hearts to become pure, and free from every bondage to sin and Satan; so we may serve Christ in purity! Remember sanctification is the work of a life time in which Christ wants us to take part in understanding our increasing freedom as we grow in the purifying presence of his love.

I hope that this short theological excursion may help you to process this matter.

7. Enslavement to Sin

This category by its very title is open to various kinds of interpretation. The Pauline teaching here is clear. In Romans chapter 7 he speaks about the struggles of the new Christian man or woman with their new Christian mind/heart being continually put under pressure from the innate sinfulness of their old sinful natures. Romans 8 pictures the way to liberation from our sinful natures by no longer utilising our efforts to overcome and do and think what is right, but rather to let the "law of the Spirit of life" do this¹⁸³. There are two laws at work, if you like, one which produces "sin energy", and the other which produces "Spirit energy". To engage our sinful natures "sin energy" by trying to do it in our strength, in any way at all, is to be using "sin energy" to try to stop "sin energy" working in us – hence every single effort we make fails.

What we need to do is to give up 100%; totally and absolutely, on using our "sin energy" [our fallen natures remember] to overcome sin. Instead we need to use 100%; totally and with faith, "Spirit energy" and what we could not do for ourselves the Spirit of Jesus' does by coming to live in our hearts and flow through our hearts enabling us to become free from "sin energy"; and to live now with the "Spirit's energy" flowing through our beings. Hence the Spirit of Jesus' liberates us.

Personal Reflection

[1] Utilising the four keys ask Jesus what he wants to say to you about the teaching above, both personally and in terms of your mission-al activities. Record the spontaneous thoughts and pictures below.

¹⁸³ Romans 8:2

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[2] Reflect with another team member on what the Spirit of Jesus' revealed to you. Record your reflections below.

A Seven the Step prayer ministry to heal the Heart¹⁸⁴

What I am outlining in this section must be considered as a basic introduction to the way that healing needs to be sought for the areas detailed above. I would say a vital tool which the mission team should obtain is the book "Prayers that Heal the Heart" by Mark and Patti Virkler [see on Bibliography]. This book sets out a ministry plan which this chapter, because of limitations of space, cannot do. My hope is that the mission team will work their way through Mark and Patti's book.

Having said this let us consider the prayer ministry model which in its basic form will be pragmatically outlined.

¹⁸⁴ Virkler, PHH, 2001: 134 - 137

1. Generational Sins and Curses

1. How do I know that I am suffering from a curse that has come down the family line?

The answer to this question needs to be sought utilising the four keys, and with someone who is used to prayer ministry that identifies these things. Ask the Spirit of Jesus' to give you discernment of your family line. What sins or curses come to mind spontaneously as you think about them? Consider grandparents, uncles, aunts etc. What comes to mind? Sometimes there are well known family curses, such as many of the women have suffered from breast cancer. Or depression is something a large number of extended family members suffer from as you do. These may be termed "curses".

2. How do I pray for these things that have been passed on to me?

Really it is very simple. There is no magic about it. Once a doctor gets the diagnosis right then he can treat the illness. All the patient has to do is accept he or she has the illness. Praying for generational curses needs a prayer something like this:

- A. Specifically identify the sin or curse which has been passed down the family line which you are struggling with. Repent for your part in keeping it alive.
- B. Ask for forgiveness and forgive your ancestors.
- C. Picture yourself in your mother's womb and ask Christ to put his cross between you and the ancestors.

It is the atoning death of Christ which saves us from every curse and every sin or oppressive bondage. When we specifically pray for particular identified curses and sins the Lord Jesus will minister to these for us. Remember this does not mean we are saved all over again, we already belong to him, but this is part of sanctification.

People often find that they receive healing from something like depression by the simple virtue of cutting off this generational route into their lives. We are not blaming the ancestors by doing this, in fact positive blessings which we have received from them we never cut off. What we are doing is identifying an avenue of negative influence on our lives which we no longer want as Christians.

2. Ungodly Soul-ties

It may be useful to itemise some clues that indicate a soul-tie, and these can really be applied to all seven areas we have discussed above. They are:

1. Pressures within that feel like they are being held in abeyance but have not really gone after [let us say] prayer for generational curses.

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2. You may have issues that come back to haunt you regularly.
3. You may be experiencing habitual or stubborn patterns of sin.
4. You may suffer from weaknesses in any of the following areas, mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically.
5. Anything which is within that is contrary to the peace of Christ, faith, hope or love.
6. Anything within that lines up with any activity of Satan.
7. You may suffer from addictions to sex, drugs, alcohol, pornography – in other words any out of control area in your life is a symptom of something you need healing from.¹⁸⁵

Ungodly Soul-ties operate when we have got a connection with somebody else which takes away our natural freedom to serve Christ without sin dominating our lives, or any other person being put first.

To break an Ungodly Soul-tie it is important to once again identify the source of it. Utilise the four keys and seek revelation knowledge for the source of the soul-tie. Once again it is important to seek guidance from someone who understands this sort of ministry. The soul-tie may be a former sexual partner from the time before you became a Christian. It could be an old teacher who had had a strong influence on your thinking which established attitudes which make you look down on matters of faith.

Once you have specifically identified the soul-tie, and where the particular avenue or, opening to this person still exists you need to remove it.

So a prayer like this is the most effective in terms of what it asks for,

- A. Confess and repent of your ungodly soul-tie with the person concerned [name him or her], and of your anger and resentment against them, or for that matter God if you feel it.
- B. Forgive that person by name for their involvement in the sin concerned. Ask for forgiveness for yourself. And ask that God will enable you to forgive yourself for what you did.
- C. Ask the Lord to sever the ungodly soul-tie between you and that specific person. Ask God to destroy anything evil which has come into you through that soul-tie. Ask him to return to you that which you lost by way of it, and ask him to give back to the other person anything which you took from them.

You will almost certainly feel a weight lift in your being as this happens, and you will find that the negative energy which has felt held in abeyance will dissipate.

¹⁸⁵ Virkler, PHH, 2001:95

3. Replacing Negative Confessions and beliefs

We have already discussed some of the dynamics of negative beliefs and expectations above. So we may consider how we go about identifying them. Once again utilising the four keys and an experienced prayer counsellor ask the Spirit of Jesus' to reveal specific negative beliefs you hold and expectations. Then pray through them one at a time something like below;

- A. Confess and repent of your sin in believing the lie which is always false beliefs and negative Confessions. Be specific in your confession taking responsibility for your part in keeping them alive, basing your life on a lie.
- B. Forgive any person who has contributed to this or fed it. Ask for forgiveness for your part in keeping it alive, and ask God to enable you to forgive yourself for what you once thought and are now revoking.
- C. Confess the countering divine truth to the untrue belief or negative expectation you have held and ask God to enable you by his Spirit from now on to live by the truth which he has planted in your heart instead.

4. Renounce your inner vows

We have discussed how a vow usually comes about because of an associated hurtful and painful experience which we hope to avoid in the future by making the vow. The greater the injury the more powerful the hold the vow has over us.

Once again ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the vows which you have made specifically, then pray a prayer something like the one below,

- A. Confess and repent of your sin of making the specific vow you are bringing before God for healing.
- B. Forgive those who hurt you and contributed to your vow, and ask for forgiveness for your part in it, and for making it. Ask God to enable you to forgive your self for making it.
- C. Instead, propose by the power of the Holy Spirit to live free from the vow, and speak a corresponding Bible truth into the void which revoking the vow has left open.

5. Receive Divine Visions

I have already outlined the process of vision healing to heal hurtful pictures from the past [in chapter 5]. Hence refer to this chapter to first of all do a vision exercise for healing painful memories and pictures from the past.

Here is a brief summary of the vision prayer approach to healing hurtful memories,

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- A. Confess and repent of any anger or bitterness you have against those who hurt you, God if you blame him some how. Ask him to forgive you and that you will be enabled to receive his forgiveness.
- B. Ask the Spirit of Jesus' to take you back in your minds eye to the appropriate memory that underlies the issue you are specifically focussing on.
- C. Ask the Spirit of Jesus' to show you where he was in the scene [look to see where he was]. Ask the Holy Spirit to take over this scene and give you a vision showing you what Jesus was doing there [respond to what the Lord is showing you he was doing].
- D. Healing comes in this process because once Jesus enters the vision he brings healing. You may not have known what he was doing then, but when you see it you get a new healing picture that moves you on to healing.

6. Cast out Demons

I include, to begin this section, some exercises which I did as part of a course I did with Christian Leadership University called "Prayers that heal the heart". I include these exercises as I feel they answer some questions which I had prior to doing the course.

1. What is the meaning of daiminizomai¹⁸⁶, and why is it impossible for the King James Version to translate it "demon possessed"?

It is correct as the Hammonds' suggest that daiminizomai is best translated to be demonized rather than possessed. The Christian cannot be owned by Satan because he is owned by Christ as he lives in the heart as Lord through the Holy Spirit.

2. Briefly and in your own words, discuss the meaning and significance of the four expressions used in Ephesians 6:12 to describe our enemy.

"Principalities" demonstrates that there is a highly organised structure to the Satanic organisation. As the Hammonds' mention there are demons of different ranks that are assigned to nations, kingdoms, areas churches etc. One example is Daniel chapter 10. The Kingdom of God is so organised that even a four year old child who is born again can order any demon to leave through Jesus name'.

"Powers" is a translation of εξουσια¹⁸⁷ which means 2right or authority, possession of power that makes authority to act possible". The Satanic organisation has power delegated from Satan to other lower ranking demons to exercise authority over those who open the doors to them. However, as Christians we have authority in Jesus' name to annul that supposed authority.

¹⁸⁶ Moulton, 1981:84

¹⁸⁷ Moulton, 1981:148

“The rulers of darkness of this world” may be translated as “masters or lords of the world”. Essentially it describes Satan’s intention to control people through manipulation etc. He is spoken of as “prince of this age, or god of this world”¹⁸⁸. He is a completely defeated foe who has no power over us as Christians; for we are now living the life of the future in the present¹⁸⁹ in the Kingdom of God. We only give him opportunity if we open the door to his manipulative influence. He cannot take our salvation away as we are owned by Christ, but he can seek to get at us through our sin damaged bodies and souls.

This Satanic organisation is also termed “spiritual wickedness in high places”. The term expresses a desire to do¹⁹⁰. This means we have to be involved in the ministry of spiritual warfare – for Satan surely is. We will overcome him if we use discernment and our natural authority in Christ ¹⁹¹.

3. Discuss how demons may enter an individual.

To begin with this is where many get confused because they say if we cannot be possessed then how can demons enter our bodies? Well as Paul says in Romans 7 our bodies can be resistant to the new heart, and for us to live in open sin, let us say lust, is to let the demon of lust have an oppressive foothold, although at the same time he does not possess our spirits’ which belong to God eternally. Yet as things come to light in my life through revelation knowledge they come into light from darkness, and then I choose by the Spirit’s enabling to close the door to the selfish demon who until then has oppressed me in a certain area of my fleshy self. So the primary ways of entrance may be said to be:

- i. Through deliberate sin
- ii. Through sins of omission
- iii. Through sins of connection – books etc
- iv. Through false doctrine
- v. Through majoring on one area of truth and neglecting others
- vi. Through former membership of a cult or association with some one like a fortune teller.

Etc

4. How does one determine the need for deliverance?

I like Mark Virkler’s logic here that the best assumption is to assume we all have some demonic oppression. Some signs might be,

¹⁸⁸ 2 Corinthians 4:4

¹⁸⁹ John 5:24

¹⁹⁰ John 10:10

¹⁹¹ Matthew 28:19 etc

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- i. Emotional scars
- ii. Emotional uncontrolled outbursts,
- iii. Mental illness
- iv. Besetting habitual sin – pornography etc
- v. Self destructive thoughts
- vi. Un-forgiveness
- vii. Obsessions,
- viii. Illnesses with no clinical diagnosis etc. The biggest sign for me is to discern the need for it by the Spirit. Also definite resistance to a work or proclamation of Christ!

I could also add: Religious error, speech problems, sex problems, addictions.

5. What are the seven steps to deliverance?

- i. Honesty – bringing hidden demonic things to light
- ii. Humility – Recognition of complete dependence on God
- iii. Repentance – specifically repenting for known sins and leaving Satan behind by turning from the sin and selfishness of the enemy.
- iv. Renunciation – means to completely separate self from the sin and previous demonic influences.
- v. Forgiveness – Confess all known sins and to completely forgive all who have wronged us.
- vi. Prayer – Ask God to deliver me, and ask God to enable me to live by the flow of the perfect life of the living Jesus.
- vii. Warfare – Identify spirits directly, and by specific names, and command them by the authority we all possess in Christ to leave and to never return. To make sure the void is filled with Christ!

6. What must one do to retain deliverance?

Mostly I think it is to live by the free flowing power and presence of a two way relationship with Jesus who will keep me in the light of God's presence.

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Seven things keep me delivered:

- Putting on the whole armour of God which is so well known from Ephesians 6. It is to live through flow by these in Christ,
 1. To confess positively who I am now in Christ, to no longer allow negative confessions to shape my mind and heart.
 2. To stay focussed specifically on the flowing Rhema as the Holy Spirit makes the Word of God live within me.
 3. To crucify my flesh, by walking by the law of the Spirit of life.
 4. To maintain a life of fellowship with other Christians and to keep involved in spiritual ministry to others, as well as receiving it my self.
 5. To develop a life style of praise, worship and prayer
 6. To be totally committed to Christ in every aspect of my life without question!

- 7. As if you were talking to a new Christian, explain why the “house” must be filled after deliverance, and how this is done.

“Well John now that you have experienced this ministry it is important to make sure you close the doors which we identified which originally let the enemy in. We noticed how you had had a real problem with your boss who used to be a Christian, and had started to do and say unfair things to you at work. Jesus helped us to discover that you had developed an attitude of real hatred toward him, and a deep seated resentment. You couldn’t even think about forgiving him when it all came to the surface. In the end we discovered a number of demons who had got a real foothold in you..... . You are really feeling good about this now, and it probably seems like you feel you don’t ever want this to happen to you again. And I believe that is true. However, you need to fill some of the holes left in you with the Spirit of Christ’, and this means that you will need to really start to live a life of praise, worship and a two way relationship with Jesus, so that those holes can be filled with him completely. The best way to keep the door of your self locked to demonic oppression is to be so full of the presence of Jesus that you won’t even open the door a little. He will fulfil the needs which you used to feel that the demonic/sinful things used to fill in your life before.”

I can take a little time with his wife and family as well, if they wanted, to learn how to hear God’s voice clearly and how to live with Jesus filling every part of their lives. For John the most important thing would be to choose to invite Jesus to be his teacher, and to fill him with his Spirit. I would share the four keys, and take time to help him to learn journaling. Above all I would want him to practice bringing every secret of his hearts to light before Jesus; thus making sure doors are kept closed to the enemy. I would want to attach him to a more mature mentor who could also befriend him.

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8. In your own words, describe the benefits and drawbacks of both public and private deliverance ministries.

I have been part of both. I never felt comfortable to join a big queue just because everybody seemed to be doing it, whilst others find that the best way in large meetings. So my experience has been the personal stuff toward me and with other people individually.

I think the big event makes the most dramatic impact as people are encouraged to go forward as they see others being delivered. In our last 12,000 strong youth Soul Survivor Conference many were released of demons every day. 1200 young people gave their lives to Jesus in two nights. Deliverance played a big role, and the power of the Spirit was manifest. Some of the young people who had been in bondage to all sorts of fears, and reasons not to commit to Christ, went home and parents were emailing me saying “thank you for taking them, what a difference!” Or, “Wow we have never seen anything like it. Give me some of that etc.” So for young people the large event creates enough anonymity, as many are being delivered, and filled with the Spirit at the same time. At Soul Survivor the emphasis is on delegation of ministry so that, as in my case, we continued to work with our 20 or 30 young people at a later time. So a combined process works well. Not every one will receive enough ministry in a large event, some barely enough, and others nothing. So a smaller referral network of local pastoral ministries is vital to mop up, or implement the same, as in the large event. Any way if there is not personal fellowship after such events many will soon be even more oppressed. So the personal fellowship, support, and having equipped ministers to do the deliverance is vital for training, discipleship and growth. I guess local situations are challenged when a person comes back baptised in the Spirit and the church is not. Mostly this seems to be more positive and negative for the church when suddenly young people are delivered and come back full of faith and power.

9. In your own words, discuss why self-deliverance is possible and necessary, and how it could be accomplished.

Simply stated self deliverance is possible if a person has an open and willing heart to bring everything to light through Christ as he opens the doors of our hearts bringing everything into his light. Every Christian has a God-given right to personally claim deliverance through the authority of Jesus' name. Any other teaching would be anti Christian as everything is equally every Christians to personally claim in Christ. It is necessary as God wants us to develop a mature and open personal relationship with Him as Lord, and this maturity is the aim. If we learn of our rightful authority in Christ then as we live in intimacy with him he will be the complete answer to our salvation and sanctification in its on-going sense. It is accomplished by developing a heart, through Christ which is open to flow, Rhema, discernment and Vision.

Having recorded this, here is the type of prayer that is the most effective,

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- A. Make sure that you have gone through the other steps of prayers 1 – 5 before you seek deliverance from a particular oppressive demonic stronghold. If you have sought healing for a specific sin problem in each of the five areas above then deliverance will be a whole lot easier. If the demon does not come out then go back to the above five prayers because something has been missed. Ask God what has been missed and respond as he leads you. Ask God to name the demon or stronghold which has been oppressing you. If it is pornography then call the demon “pornography”; if it is jealousy, call it “jealousy”.
- B. Then pray this prayer: “In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I renounce and break all agreements with the demon/s [strongholds] of _____, _____, etc”
- C. “I take authority over the demons [strongholds] of _____ and I bind you and command you to leave me now in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

7. Experience the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus

Make sure that you have specifically identified the way you have been trying to live the Christian life by your own strength by seeking revelation knowledge on this utilising the four keys. Then pray a prayer like the one below,

- A. “Lord God, I cannot overcome the sin of _____ in my own strength at all, so I surrender my whole life to you in this area and I confess that the power to overcome the sin of _____ comes only from you through Jesus Christ your Son and my Lord and Saviour.”
- B. “I turn away from my self-effort to save myself from the sin of _____ and I open my whole being to embrace the power of your Holy Spirit to flow within me and do what I cannot.
- C. Jesus, I give you permission to set me free by the flow of your Holy Spirit working through me, to overcome the sin of _____ completely [Some people do this during vision prayer counselling].

I would like to complete this section by including my testimony of what God did for me as I went through this sort of process whilst I did the course “Prayers that Heal the Heart” with Christian Leadership University. I did it in the form of a paper, and I include it as a personal testimony of praise to God for what he has done for me through the Spirit of Jesus’.

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Final Paper for: "Prayers that Heal the Heart" – COU 501

By: Rev'd Andrew R. Hardy

The purpose of this paper is to discuss and to reflect upon the ministry I have received as I have studied "Prayers that Heal the Heart"; and how it has affected me as I have sought revelation, healing, deliverance and so on.

In the first place I have found the course a vital incentive to seek ministry and further healing in my life. I was somewhat overawed by the scope of this ministry and what it might mean to my life over the time I did it at the beginning. However, once I got started into it seeking revelation and flow; God showed up many times to complement the course as I was taking it during this time, which showed it was in his plan for my life to do the course at that time. So I have received dreams identifying ungodly soul-ties, and areas in which the enemy has had a foothold in my life. God has continually spoken through the literature to me, and I have found myself dealing with:

- [1] Generational sins & curses
- [2] Inner vows
- [3] Negative expectations
- [4] Ungodly soul-ties
- [5] Unhealed inner traumatic pictures
- [6] Demons
- [7] My sinful nature

In fact there are three main areas in which I have received ministry. I am going to reflect on two of them in this paper- although I could reflect on others as well. But these do represent significant areas of ministry I have received whilst doing this course.

A Spirit of Timidity

Although I have always been a forthright person I have also been incredibly reserved in certain areas as well. I have always been able to share my Christian faith openly, and to teach and preach the Word of God. However, when it has come to boldly claiming my

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natural right in Jesus Christ to minister in his power and authority over the enemy and his traps I have been amazingly timid.

And there have been a number of things which God has revealed to me from the 7 areas, which the 7 prayers cover, that have liberated me to seek more and more confidence and boldness to minister without anxiety of failure to those who need miracles in their lives.

In the first place the Spirit revealed to me that some negative failure to minister had come to me through my father, and through the generations. Mainly however, through my father, who had timidly refused a calling to pastoral ministry in his youth. He confessed this to my mother and I near the end of his life, and I had always wondered why he had been so against religious leaders. Thank God toward the end of his life he gave himself to Jesus and is now at home with the Lord, along with my mother. However, I had to put the cross between me and my father from the womb with regard to my father's timidity. I also had to revoke the ungodly soul-tie with my father which had made me keep on experiencing a drain on my ministry practice. I even experienced burn out because of it 13 years ago. I also had to replace a negative confession where I saw myself as failing in ministry, with a new confession that I am now living by flow – out of the Son of God's initiative rather than my own. Certainly a demon of timidity has been a work in my life, as well as a lack of confidence, an expectation of failure, and an outlook of mediocrity. I have taken authority through Christ and they have been sent away.

Jesus gave me a picture of a large white steal unbreakable door as the symbol of the door to my heart, and my inner house. It has three keys, faith, hope and love. Each time a demon has been cast out, and each time ministry has taken place, anything negative or demonic is cast out by Jesus and then he locks the pure white almighty door by his arm of strength with me by his side, his hand over mine as I lock each key. In fact so powerful has his work been in me that demons come out without any real fuss – just by a word as it were. I praise God for this because it shows me he has given me a humble heart which does not rely on my human strength but the almighty victorious strength of Jesus. I enclose below a summary of my New Truth Bible Meditation Sheet and my memorial celebration for the new authority Christ has given to me¹⁹².

In fact during a recent conference it was a real privilege to receive direct instruction by the Holy Spirit on how to even more so practice the principles I have been learning by boldly praying for the release of various students from oppression. One young lady was liberated and healed from a stronghold of oppression in her life which had been holding her in a place

¹⁹² The course teaches the student to do three things essentially as work sheets to keep counselling on course.
1. A contributing strands work sheet – with a new truth Bible meditation and to record a memorial of what the student has gained victory in Christ over. Should the student wish to do the course "Prayers that Heal the Heart" then see on Appendix .

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of confusion and depression and anxiety for months. She was healed by Jesus within 1 hour. So each time I take bold steps, there have been other recent cases, Jesus has honoured the authority he has already given to me to bind and loose people I know from oppression. So here is my meditation sheet and memorial to conclude this section.

New Truth Bible Meditation Work Sheet

The particular issue which God is helping me with here is to move from timidity to authority in Christ.

These are the ways that he has dealt with this for me.

[1] Complete Healing is possible over every hindrance to my spirit bearing witness with Jesus Spirit that I am a son of God.

Romans 8: 12 – 16 – when our true natures are restored by the law of the Spirit of life we then have victory over every besetting sin, through the generations, ungodly soul-ties, negative expectations, inner vows, Negative pictures, Demons, Sinful nature.

[2] Jesus perfect power and life through his Spirit gives me all the power of Christ's perfect life to defeat sin and the enemy at every step, and to give me perfect healing in my spirit, body and soul.

Ephesians 1:19 – 23 – Christ has accomplished complete victory over every sin and device of the enemy and his power is at work in me.

[3] Jesus has all power and authority in heaven and upon the earth. He wants my heart to keep on praying for revelation and power from him so that his will may be done on earth as in heaven. He has delegated all authority to me [all disciples] over the enemy, sin and every disease and high and self exalted thing which wishes to set itself up against him.

-Matthew 28: 18

-Matthew 10:1-4

[4] Whatever power of evil or good thing that is established by the Spirit on earth is bound here and in heaven. Set in place, or stopped from evil action. Whatever is set free on earth is set free in

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heaven. This authority has been delegated to born again believers. We do not need to pray for it, but just to claim it. We don't have to pray for something which is already ours in Christ.

-Matthew 16:19

[5] I destroy arguments and every proud obstacle to the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ by his power at work in me, and my submission to the flow of it through revelation and his power and authority.

-2 Corinthians 10:5

This is the first new truth which has struck home deep in my heart at this time and I intend to live by the authority of Christ's delegated authority and power by his Spirit in my life from now on.

My Memorial to This New Truth is.....

This is a picture drawn by my daughter which I have on my wall from when she was very young. It shows the sun with its bright rays coming down on her and she is cutting a tree down with an axe. This symbolizes the glory and power of God's flowing light destroying darkness by his authority in my life and ministry. It always makes me smile, and think of how wonderful God is and the greatness of his victorious life in me.

Victory over Depression, Anxiety, SAD, and Oppression

I was very surprised to receive a dream one night where I saw a field of demons all in unison following orders and doing what seemed to be a tribal dance. Next I saw the chief demon with his officers and myself as if I was a medical examiners model with removable organs. The chief demon was squashing my brain in my head, and taking parts out and abusing it. Then the dream ended.

The Holy Spirit gave me the interpretation the next day. He said that a whole legion of demons had gained access to my life through my parents, through ungodly soul-ties of the past, through negative expectations, and inner vows, and deeply wounded areas of my inner vision of myself. I have prayed through and worked through many aspects concerning all these things, removing connected demons and soul-ties as I have progressed through the course. Jesus gave me the dream when I had by his leading removed all the contributing strands which had fed the demons. Then on the day when he gave me the interpretation of the dream he gave me the vision of the white door to my heart mentioned above. He led me to command every demon and associated demons to come out and finally to order the officers and chief to come out. For quite some time I saw a steady stream coming

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out the door which Jesus was holding open for them to leave by and when the chief and all had finally gone he closed the door bolting it by his mighty arm; with faith hope and love. He told me I am completely healed from them and he will never let them return again.

It was a couple of weeks after this that he told me there were no more major things to deal with in my life and that it would be about living by flow from now on and watching the door with him, and yes ministering the same release to others through his almighty name.

So I praise the Lord Jesus for he has healed me. I am free and excited about the road ahead even more so now. I know he is filling the vacant spaces with so much. A large part of that space is to be given to ministering to others and not giving myself time to get caught up with the enemy – although I know he has said we must guard my heart together, and he is the inner guest in my home. In fact I am at home with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; they are making their with me and all of their sons and daughters – praise God.

To finish this section I include a summary of my new truth bible meditation and memorial celebration.

New Truth Bible Meditation Sheet

Light , joy and peace from Christ instead of depression, anxiety and oppression.

[1] The Gadarene demoniac was completely healed of the oppressive legion of demons. He was so completely healed by Jesus that he went off and told all of his countrymen about Jesus and his power. He did not feel the need to keep close to the physical presence of Jesus because his healing was complete, although the Spirit of Christ' by implication kept his body, mind and spirit free from the enemy after that.

-Matthew 8:28 – 34

[2] Christ's light fills my spirit and it illuminates every dark place. He said to me just recently "I have finished what I want to set you free from and heal you from for this time". His face shines brightly in my heart and as I live by Flow, Rhema and Vision; I see his wonderful face shining brightly in my heart, and he expels all the enemies darkness as I look to him. I was given a picture of a large white steal door – unbreakable by all the power of the enemy. It has three great locks on it which each have one of the following names, "Faith, Hope and love". Every time I deal with a demon or ungodly soul-tie etc I cast it out in the name of Jesus, and then I see Jesus closing the door and locking each lock. A couple of times we have gone for a walk out side and I have walked on the ashes of the

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enemy and some grass has even started to grow outside this white door – so effective and total has his deliverance been.

-2 Corinthians 4:1-6 – I see the light of his face instead of depression, anxiety and depression

-1 John 1:5 – 10 – He has given me light instead of darkness and cleansing from all sin for all time

-Revelation 20:1-3 – He has locked the devil and his cohorts in a bottomless pit

-Revelation 21:1-8 – He is making all things new in me

-Jesus has saved me completely – my name is written in his book from the foundation of the world, and I was personally foreknown as one of his eternally saved elect before the world was made – this is irrevocable.

-Jeremiah 1:4

-John 5:24; 10:27 – 30

-Romans 6:23

-Revelation 13:8

-Ephesians chapter 1, and particularly verse 3,4, and 2:6

-Romans 8:28 – 38

[3] I therefore propose to live, healed, from all the darkness of the enemy by the grace and complete healing given to me in and through Christ, and from now on to give all my troubles to him for apart from him I can do nothing. He dealt with my oppression, depression and anxiety on the cross, and when he rose again and ascended he took me with him; through his victory and the work of his Spirit to be seated with complete victory over all the power of the enemy. I am seated with him there which in the ancient world was a symbol of the king not needing to arise to fight battles for he had no enemies left to beat. I as one of the princes of heaven claim that seated right of shared humble submissive rulership under Christ as I live by the free flow of his Spirit utilising Rhema and Vision.

My Memorial Stone is.....

This is a picture of my son Timothy which I have on my bedroom wall from when he was about 7. He is holding a cut crystal ornament in his hands, he looks radiant and so proud and awe inspired by its beauty. He is standing there as it were completely safe in the multifaceted security of its radiance. This is how I see myself and my family in Christ seated in heavenly places. No more darkness, depression, anxiety, SAD, oppression. May it be so Lord Jesus – Amen!

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Conclusion

Although I know there are battles ahead, they are completely won battles as I sit at Jesus side in heavenly places; through his Spirit in complete victory over all rule and authority [Ephesians 2:1-6].

Group Exercise

[1] As a group reflect on the teaching above – record your reflections below.

[2] Get into pairs and spend time praying for each other starting with Generational sins asking the Spirit of Jesus to reveal one specific thing each that has come to you as a curse or sin from your family lines; then one act as prayer counsellor and the other as counselee and go through the seven prayers seeking deliverance from this one specific curse or sin. Swap roles and start again. Record what happened below, how you felt, how you now feel etc.

[3] End the session in your pairs with praise and thanksgiving for deliverance.

[4] It is my suggestion that every mission-al team obtain a copy of “Prayers that Heal the Heart” and work through it as a team both personally and corporately in order to understand this process personally before ministering to secular people with it as a team policy. Consult the Bibliography for details.

The Importance of Deliverance Ministry utilised by the Mission Team

Broadly speaking the seven fold prayer counselling model is a vital tool for two big reasons. These are:

1. That the team itself needs to be freed from any sin, or curse or oppressive hold that there is in their lives, and they need to remain delivered. Jesus fought a door to door battle against the enemy. He was tempted himself. The enemy is an organised practitioner of putting the spanner in the works of any mission activity which we undertake in the name of Jesus. If team members are in bondage then this will inhibit the free flow of the Spirit of Jesus’ in the life of the team. So each team member has a responsibility to get delivered in the light of our forgoing discussions.
2. Unless the team has received deliverance ministry itself in a comprehensive fashion it will not be able to minister deliverance to secular un-churched youth. As the central thesis of this dissertation is that the church is perishing for want of a vision in Britain and 1st world Europe today, where revelation and the supernatural have seemed to die out, it is not a surprise [I hope] that this sort of deliverance ministry is vital to mission and evangelism.

Hence I propose to the mission team/s which read this dissertation that they seriously consider the contents of this chapter and utilise them.

Group Exercise

[1] Reflect on what you have read above and record your reflections.

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[2] Spend time as a team worshipping God and speaking forth the spontaneous ideas and thoughts that he gives to you about the above for your team. Record these below.

Chapter 13 Being Flexible as an Approach to Mission – God has Infinite ways to Express Mission through Mission-al Teams – A Synthesis

Introduction

The central aim of this dissertation has been to discuss the role of the Spirit of Jesus' as the primary energiser of mission to secular youth. It has been my purpose to explore the ways that revelation knowledge may be utilised as we have explored various facets of the mission team's operation. It has not been the aim of this dissertation to sell a particular model of how mission-al teams should operate but rather what seems to me to be the key aspects of how the Spirit of Jesus' may be facilitated by creating openness in teams to listen to him – so that he may continue to flow through their hearts by the Spirit; as he continues to do and teach.

This short chapter will discuss some guidelines which will help the mission team synthesize what we have been discussing.

Flexibility

“Neither is new wine put into old wineskins; if it is, the skins burst, and the wine is spilled, and the skins are destroyed; but new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.¹⁹³”

This verse is pregnant with meaning. Here are some truths we may extract for it:

1. Old wine skins are inflexible and when the fermentation takes place they split open. The mission team needs to make sure that it is ready for the work of the Spirit. It will lead to explosive challenges as the team invites him to anoint their work.
2. The team will need to make sure that each member of the team is open to only do Jesus initiative, as Jesus did, when he followed his Father through the Spirit; or the team will split apart [John 5:19]. Each heart needs to be right completely committed to Jesus in every area of their lives.
3. The team needs to be filled with the love of Christ because where diverse gifts exist between team members there will be different ways that people approach team activities. As I have pointed out before each gifted individual has his or her own focuses, and this means it will affect the whole team's focus as well. Let's itemise this briefly:

¹⁹³ Matthew 9:17 RSV

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- A. The Apostle entrepreneur Vs The Teacher systematiser
- B. The Prophet questioner Vs The Teacher systematiser
- C. The Evangelist recruiter Vs The Pastor humaniser

I could say more here. The basic truth is that entrepreneurs often find themselves on a different page to systematisers because Apostles work with creative openness starting ventures and creating challenges of how it can be sustained, whilst the systematiser wants to set up a structure which can make what has been started work. The questioner can often ruffle the feathers of the systematiser as he or she asks questions which challenge the neat structure the systematiser has been working on. The recruiter often has more concern for playing the numbers game than playing the caring game when it comes to new people coming to faith. Whereas the humanising pastor wants to make sure that those who come to know the Lord Jesus are cared for properly, and not left to sink or swim.

What the mission team needs to do is spend a lot of time playing together and maintaining relationships built on the love of Christ. This flies in the face of much current thought, I know, but if the team does not have:

- i. Intimacy with Jesus through shared worship
- ii. Intimacy with each other through shared life outside of the team

Then it won't have a successful mission. It will burst apart because of the lack of relational cohesion in love. The greatest mission principle Jesus every talked of was,

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another¹⁹⁴.”

This is what will convince the world that Jesus is really among us. It will be that when they meet with us they don't find a team filled with stress, and at logger heads within itself, but that we are all friends. Teams need to be friends filled with the flexible glue of love;

“.....God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.¹⁹⁵”

Our team is to be based on αγαπη¹⁹⁶ [AGAPE] love, which is the love which is of divine origin. It is the love which can only flow from one source and that is the Spirit of Jesus'. If our teams are to survive without bursting apart then each of us need the flexible skins of

¹⁹⁴ John 13:34, 35 RSV

¹⁹⁵ Romans 5:5b RSV

¹⁹⁶ Moulton, 1981: 2

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agape love which seeks to serve the other team members, not just itself – building one another up in love¹⁹⁷.

Indeed this is why the servant hearted mission team exists,

“And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.¹⁹⁸”

This building and equipping process can only happen if the mission team makes love its aim¹⁹⁹.

So by way of conclusion it needs to be said that the team which plays and prays together stays together.

Group Exercise

[1] Discuss the ways that your team seeks to build itself as friends who pray and play together. Record your reflections below.

[2] If your team is having pressures at the moment which are causing disagreements that seem to be pushing you apart then spend some time in worship together now and seek revelation knowledge on how you can practically love each other and flexibly join together in your mission more effectively. Speak forth the spontaneous thoughts and pictures. Record them below.

¹⁹⁷ 1 Corinthians 13

¹⁹⁸ Ephesians 4:11, 12 RSV

¹⁹⁹ 1 Corinthians 14:1

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[3] Spend some time thanking and praising God for each other in the team and for the solutions he has given to you. Ask him to pour more of his love into your hearts for each other and your shared mission so that you may be new wine skins.

God's Mission is infinitely Creative in Nature

It is my belief that all things are possible with God because Jesus taught us to believe that ²⁰⁰. If our mission teams become flexible in love then they will become more and more open to explore infinite ways of sharing the gospel. The great thing about mission teams which are founded on intimacy with the Spirit of Jesus', and each other living by flow, receiving revelation through the eyes and ears of their hearts; is that they are connected to the God of infinite creativity.

We so often can limit how we do mission and evangelism, and probably about almost anything in Church unless we can find a direct "Thus Saith the Lord" about it. Let us not forget that the Jesus who flows through us by his Spirit is the Creator and Sustain-er of the seemingly infinite variety of created life; and the universe around us. I love what John wrote about this,

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men."²⁰¹

It is wonderful to realise that Jesus is alive. It is wonderful to realise that he is the infinite almighty Creator. It is incredible to know that this marvellous God of ours shares all of his infinite resources of love with us so that we may share them with others. Jesus is so creative in the way he incarnates with people through us. He can make such variety and beauty. Hence our teams should not limit the expressions of Christ's great creative and artistic heart among its members.

We have seen many expressions of things through the youth teams we have worked with over the years. Dance, drama, humour, poetry, parties, art festivals, food festivals, circus, clowns, puppets,

²⁰⁰ Matthew 19:26

²⁰¹ John 1:1 – 4 RSV

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car treasure hunts, family camps, youth camps, music festivals, garden parties, hikes, its a knock out, sports days, pic nics, holidays, missions to the sick, to orphans in India, to poor children in Moldova, choirs, pantomimes, plays, marches, youth clubs, games evenings, video evenings, socials, fairs and so on and so on.

God loves just to be with us, to spend time with us and to love us. Mission needs to be organic. A mission team is not an unapproachable group of people who are too high minded and serious to be interacted with; rather the team needs to play with people and build relationships founded on genuineness which does not dump those who do not immediately respond to the gospel. People come to love people through relationships – the team which is not bound together by love for one another, and is not welcoming to those who do not know the source of that love in Jesus Christ yet, will blow apart, or expand as they love without seeking returns for their expenditures.

Group Exercise

[1] Reflect on what you have read above and record your reflections below.

[2] Spend some time in worship and ask the Spirit to open your spirits to flow and speak forth the creative ideas he brings to your minds. Record these below.

Appendix – Christian Leadership University

Christian Leadership University has been a source of a great deal of inspiration to me for the next steps that God has been leading me in for ministry to the un-churched. It is particularly their focus on living by revelation knowledge which has helped me to define far more clearly what New Testament revelation based ministry looked like, and how this now informs our present generation of the way that the Apostles of Christ conducted mission as they lived by the Spirit of Jesus' as he guided them through the eyes and ears of their hearts.

Below I will highlight three courses which I would recommend any Mission team to the Un-churched do. I also include the website address for CWG ministries so that the student may obtain many useful free books and articles from the "free books" section of this website, and particularly the so called "Contributing Strands Work Sheet".

1. How to contact Christian Leadership University

<https://cluonline.com/apply/apply.htm>

2. Three Courses to start with

- A. REN103 – Communion With God
- B. COU202 – Counselling By God
- C. COU501 – Prayers that Heal the Heart

3. CWG Ministries

To download free books and a "Contributing Strands Work Sheet" go to:
www.cwgministries.org

May God bless you as you seek the voice of God for your mission and ministry delivered to you by the Spirit of Jesus'.

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