6 CRITICAL FACTORS OF A MULTIPLYING MINISTRY

Study Guide

6 CRITICAL FACTORS
OF A
MULTIPLYING MINISTRY

## *STUDY GUIDE*

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of the 6 Critical Factors Framework is to significantly strengthen the effectiveness of our field ministries. We want to deepen the ministry understanding of our leaders so that our Navigator calling increasingly becomes a reality.

WHAT ARE THE '6 CRITICAL FACTORS?'

The '6 Critical Factors' are an integrated Framework that identifies key elements seen as extremely important in building a 'multiplying ministry.'

Multiplying Ministries will look different depending on the context, but they share a 'common genetic code.' Understanding this code (or DNA) will help us lead and labor in ways that maximize the possibility of the Gospel advancing through spiritual generations of 'lifetime laborers.' It's possible to be deeply committed to our Navigator Calling and at the same time unwittingly be part of our own undoing. The choices we make, how we do ministry, what we decide to focus on or not focus on, who we minister among, why we use certain activities and not others, what we see as the outcome of all we do – all these decisions combine to effect the outcome of our ministry.

Helping staff and laborers grasp and implement the Critical Factors Framework involves an iterative process, i.e., repeating in order to move towards something.
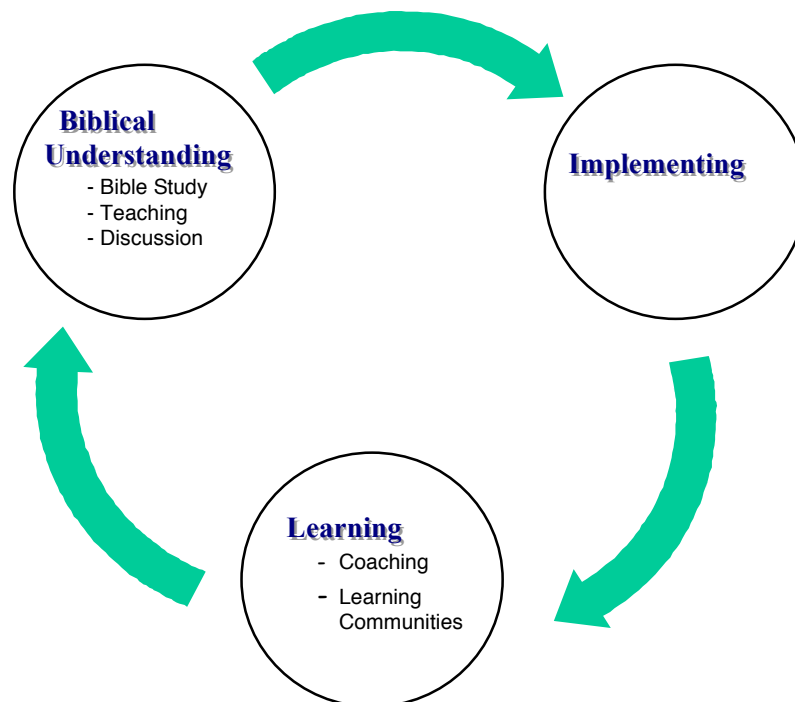
The Critical Factors Framework also serves to give us a shared language across the diversity of our ministries.

The Framework also serves as a diagnostic tool in identifying strengths, needs and next steps in building a 'multiplying ministry.'

WHAT THE CRITICAL FACTORS FRAMEWORK IS NOT

A BLUEPRINT OR MANUAL FOR DOING MINISTRY
A manual for building a house presupposes certain conditions and resources. The manual only works in certain environments and is therefore limited. What is needed is a framework for thinking about building a house that can be adapted to a range of environments. The 'Critical Factors' seeks to provide a 'framework' for ministry that can be adapted to a variety of settings.

A STUDY COURSE
The focus is not on merely gaining more knowledge. Rather it requires an ongoing and repeating process of Biblical Study, Teaching, Coaching and Implementation.

CRITICAL FACTORS OF ANY MINISTRY
It is 6 Critical Factors of a 'multiplying ministry.'

A LINEAR PROCESS
Whichever part of the Framework we begin, leaders need to have the complete Framework in mind. Without this understanding they can, by the choices they make, cause their own undoing. For example, they can have a vision for spiritual generations and yet disciple in ways that limit the likelihood of generations emerging.

WHERE DO THE 6 CRITICAL FACTORS FIT IN OUR LEADER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS?

Why do The Navigators exist? This is articulated in our 'calling,' "To advance the Gospel by filling the nations with lifetime laborers who together multiply among the lost."

To see our 'calling' increasingly fulfilled requires our staff to lead in ways that will take us where God wants us to go. We must lead with the end in mind.

WHAT DOES THIS LEADERSHIP LOOK LIKE?
For Navigator staff, it is leading with the 'Critical Factors of a Multiplying Ministry' as a framework and in harmony with our values. This is what we **do** as Navigators.

When we partner with God and lead in this way - by laying foundations, going to the lost and discipling the fruit of our ministry, building community, developing leaders, and committing ourselves to spiritual generations - we are trusting God for a number of outcomes or indicators that taken together describe a 'Navigator Multiplying Ministry.'

THE INDICATORS OF A NAVIGATOR MULTIPLYING MINISTRY ARE…
Lifetime laborers being developed who increasingly demonstrate…
Passion for knowing, loving and serving Jesus.
The Holy Spirit transforming how they think, feel, act and relate as disciples.
Life and ministry that flow from a heart of compassion.
Love, grace, dignity, and respect in all their relationships.
Intimacy with God through the practice of the spiritual disciplines of abiding in God's Word, cultivating a life of prayer, and living and ministering interdependently.
Meaningful involvement with unbelievers, living-out and speaking the Gospel with authenticity and grace, and helping others to do the same.
Life-to-life involvement with the fruit of the ministry, helping them grow as disciples in all the above.

Foundations being intentionally laid for multiplying ministry.
Critical mass being developed that results in generations of new believers, new laborers, and new leaders.
Faith, hope, and love being hallmarks of the ministry.
Men and women being partners in mission.
Leaders who embrace and implement our values and mission being intentionally developed.
Vision and growing passion for discipling the nations…in our context, in our country, and internationally… being demonstrated through prayer and apostolic initiatives.

Growing understanding and implementation of both the apostolic and local dimensions of advancing the Gospel being promoted.
Environment being present that will enable the laborers to labor among the lost.
People being moved into environments that enable them to labor among the lost.

Will every Navigator ministry be characterized by each of these indicators? No, but we do expect that each ministry is being led in ways that increasingly reflects this picture of a Navigator Multiplying Ministry.

Our 'calling' is clear. We must never drift from this. And we must never drift from our deep conviction that in each laborer Christ must formed, his character must be transformed, and all his efforts must be a response to God's grace. A laborer cannot separate his task from his life.

SUMMARY

1. For what do we exist?
   Answer: Our Calling

2. Who do we need to be and become to accomplish this calling together?
   (What must be happening in us as we accomplish this together?)
   Answer: Spiritual Formation
             Character Transformation
3. How do staff and staff teams lead us to this end?
Answer: In harmony with the 6 Critical Factors
             In harmony with our Values

4. What do we then expect to see increasingly evident in Navigator ministries?
   Answer: Indicators of a Navigator Multiplying Ministry (NMM)
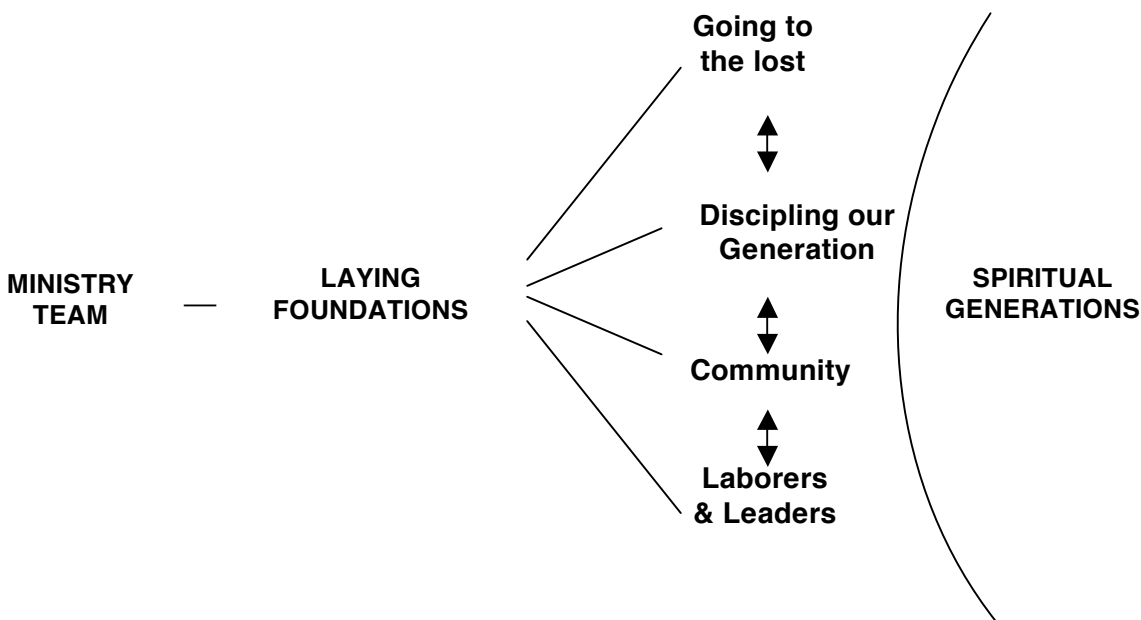   The Flow of Fruit

5. What must characterize the environment around us for this to happen?
   Answer: Communities of Grace
             Relationships of Grace

AN OVERVIEW OF THE 6 CRITICAL FACTORS OF A MULTIPLYING MINISTRY

```
                                    Going to
                                    the lost
                                       ↕
                                 Discipling our
                                   Generation
MINISTRY        LAYING                  ↕            SPIRITUAL
  TEAM    —   FOUNDATIONS                           GENERATIONS
                                   Community
                                       ↕
                                   Laborers
                                   & Leaders
```

CRITICAL FACTOR I — LAYING FOUNDATIONS:

Where we begin, and how we begin, determines where we'll be and what we'll be doing a decade later! Jesus said, "Every plant that my heavenly father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots." Matthew 15:13

- ❑ Vision rooted in the promises of God: Vision is what you see – what you are trusting God to do. It must be rooted in the Promises of God.   Hebrews 6:12

- ❑ Prayer: Vision is pursued by faith through prayer.

- ❑ Laying Foundations: This means focusing. It requires working with people who have enough in common to carry on towards spiritual generations. And it takes having a clear understanding of one's task. 1 Corinthians 3:10-11

- ❑ Access and rapport: How do I describe who I am in such a way that it enhances my rapport for the sake of the Gospel? 1 Corinthians 4:8-13

- ❑ Teaming: This acknowledges the diversity in the Body. It means relying on each other's strengths. It means making visible the love of God in our relationships. It is moving together towards a common purpose. Philippians 1:27

- ❑ Creating an Environment: How do we create an environment of 'grace,' 'compassion,' 'truth' and 'risk-taking' to the lost and broken? What context is needed for laborers to labor for a lifetime among non-believers?

CRITICAL FACTOR II – GOING TO THE LOST:

The Church is in the world for the sake of the nations. We are sent to the lost and God intends to involve every believer, according to his or her gifting, in this task. These are two defining truths about the Church. We haven't made real progress into our nation until we are reaching the lost. 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

- ❑ The Gospel: How pure is our Gospel? Omissions, additions or distortions can make it a non-Gospel. When this happens we have compromised its mobility. Galatians 1:6-8

- ❑ How does the Gospel grow?: In the first century the Gospel expanded naturally through Jewish society. It took the apostolic team to take it across cultural boundaries, into the Gentile nations. Those teams counted upon the fledgling churches to carry it into the cities. It is similar today! 2 Corinthians 10:13-16

- ❑ The Insider: This is the key person to the growth of the Gospel into a place. He or she needs specific skills and sustained equipping to be fruitful. But it is his or her incarnation of the Gospel, his or her life, which communicates most. Philippians 2:16

- ❑ Dealing with our fears: Why are we afraid of unbelievers? Where does boldness come from? Can we be bold and still have rapport with our hearers? Perhaps this is our greatest obstacle of all. Ephesians 6:19-20

- ❑ Legalism: Legalism occurs when we universalize our convictions on matters that are not clear in the Scriptures. "I can't do this and neither should you." "I must do this and so must you." Legalism makes it difficult to relate to non-believers. It also sends a distorted signal about the Gospel.

CRITICAL FACTOR III – DISCIPLING OUR GENERATION:

"It is not the survival of the fittest. It's the little one being his best for God." - Dawson Trotman. This takes on new meaning in our post-modern society where people are broken. People suffer from broken relationships, broken dreams and broken expectations. Our challenge today is to disciple people like this – to see God changing them from the inside out. Isaiah 61:1-4

- ❑ Transitioning from evangelizing to discipling: The line between the two blurs as the needs of the seeker and the new believer converge.

- ❑ True spiritual transformation: How does true change occur? What are its dynamics? Why do some people change and grow while others make no progress at all? What about the heart? Matthew 13:23

- ❑ Spiritual parenting and spiritual growth: What is the place of the spiritual parent? Where does individual personal attention fit in? When does it become an obstacle to growth? What else is needed? 1 Corinthians 4:15

CRITICAL FACTOR IV – COMMUNITY:

We believe God wants to bless us with fruit beyond anything we've ever seen before. If we are to be ready for it we need to better understand community. Disciples cannot grow, and there will be no spiritual generations, without it. Ephesians 4:16

- ❑ The One Anothers: Community is far more than congregating. It is a way of relating together as believers.

- ❑ Function, form and meaning: Over time our forms outlive their original functions. Forms then become an end in themselves. The functions are lost. Renewal involves recovering the essential functions. There must be freedom of form for that to happen. Mark 7:1-14

- ❑ The Safe Place: Healing, making broken people whole, is one of the primary functions of the Gospel. It takes place as the Holy Spirit leads us into a relationship with God and with one another. The resulting community is the safe place where our brokenness is repaired.
  James 5:16

- ❑ Men, women and ministry: It takes both men and women to incarnate the Gospel of the Kingdom. Men and women must partner in this ministry for it to be fruitful. Titus 2:1-11

- ❑ Community and Mission: There seems to be a tension between building 'community' and 'mission.' What can we learn from the 1st century about how to deal with this tension? Acts 16:14-15

CRITICAL FACTOR V – LABORERS AND LEADERS:

Our grassroots ministries are the birthplace of new laborers and leaders. These ministries are where they're born and where they learn the basic fundamentals of leading. Since no ministry can grow beyond the capacity of its leadership, we need to learn to be deliberate and skilled in identifying and developing new leaders. 2 Timothy 2:2

- ❏ <u>Understanding the essential leadership functions in a multiplying ministry</u>: It is one thing to lead in an organization or to run a program. It is something else to lead in a generational grassroots ministry.

- ❏ <u>Apostolic leaders and local leaders</u>: What's the difference? Who does what, when, where? Ephesians 4:11

- ❏ <u>What do the laborers need from leaders</u>?: How are laborers developed? What environment do they need to flourish?

- ❏ <u>The leader</u>: The importance of developing character and competency.
  Servanthood - 1 Timothy 3:1-7

CRITICAL FACTOR VI – SPIRITUAL GENERATIONS:

We have heard the illustrations of the power of geometric progressions. But are spiritual generations a biblical idea? What is a spiritual generation and how does it happen? Genesis 12:1-3

- ❏ <u>Spiritual generations – What do we mean?:</u> Generational thinking is rooted in the promises of God. The Gospel is a trust, a legacy to be passed from one generation to the next. How does multiplication happen? John 17:20-26

# *TO GET THE MOST FROM THIS RESOURCE GUIDE*

DON'T GO IT ALONE
This Guide is designed to be used by a group of leaders in an environment of safety and trust. Together they can strengthen and help each other as they share stories, understandings, burdens, frustrations and encouragements. Together they can identify and apply lessons.

PRAY
The heart is the 'gatekeeper' of the soul. It is the condition of our heart that will determine what we see and learn. Pray for a receptive heart.

COMMIT
- ❑ **To prepare** – Each study in this resource Guide contains passages of Scripture and questions to consider. Record your insights and questions in the space provided alongside each passage. Pray for the heart to persevere and live out what you learn personally and from others in the group.
- ❑ **To meet regularly** – Seek to be faithful in getting together. Commit to be 'real' in the group. Be honest and open.
- ❑ **To foster a peer learning community** – Develop the habit of using the Learning Cycle as a way of enhancing learning among the group members.
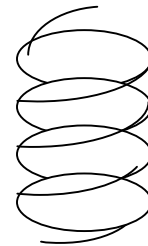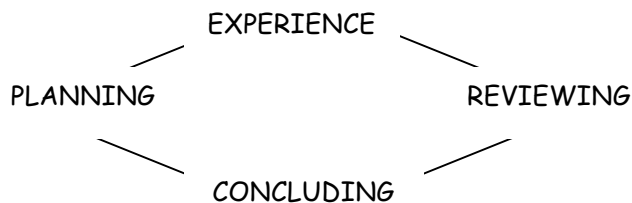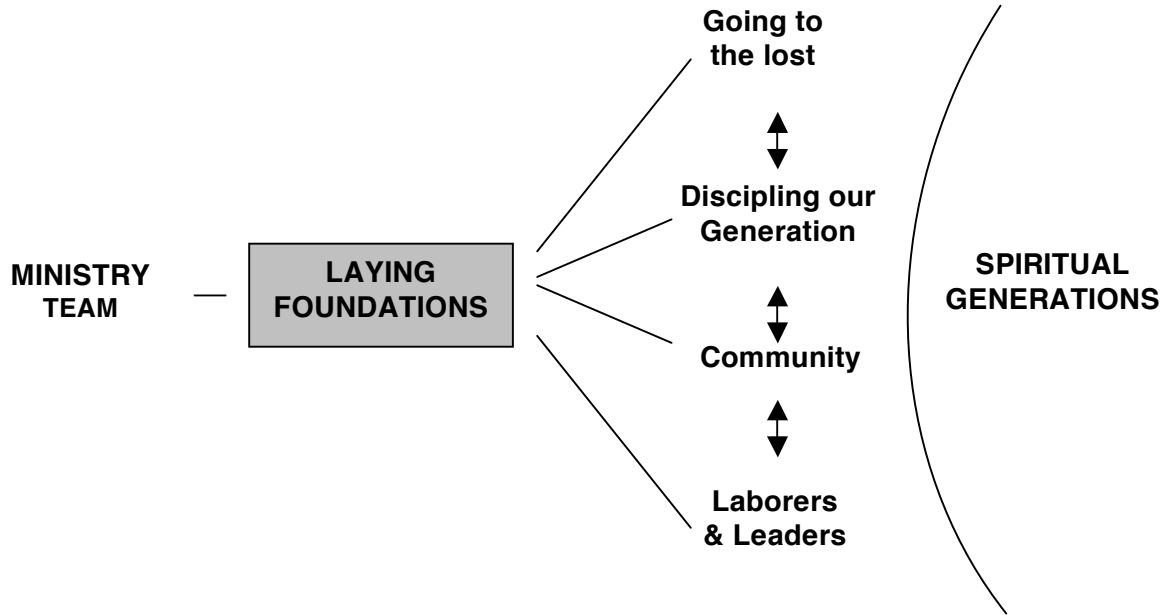

- • **Phases of the learning Cycle**
    - Experience – The circumstances, people, responsibilities and opportunities that make up the reality of life.
    - Reviewing – People need to reflect on their experiences.   Questions need to be asked about what happened. Why it happened.
    - Concluding – Having reflected, the learner draws conclusions that form lessons for future activity.
    - Planning – Lessons form the basis of ongoing activities and experience.

- ❑ **To live out what you learn as you learn** – As you trust God and implement what you are learning, new insights and questions will emerge that can shape your life as a 'missional leader.' Do not wait until you have finished all the studies before you begin. Live it out as you take it in.

SEEK OUT COACHES
Pray and look for a person who can be your companion as you grow in living as a 'missional leader.' It should be a person who integrates Biblical understanding and life and is personally leading others in mission. That person can help you bridge the gap between what you are learning and how you are currently living.

CRITICAL FACTOR I — LAYING FOUNDATIONS

Going to the lost

Discipling our Generation

MINISTRY TEAM — **LAYING FOUNDATIONS**

Community

SPIRITUAL GENERATIONS

Laborers & Leaders

CRITICAL FACTOR I STUDIES

Where we begin, and how we begin, determines where we'll be and what we'll be doing a decade later! As we think about our ministry one of the most critical aspects is the foundation on which we are building. Jesus said, "Every plant that my heavenly father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots." Matthew 15:13

We will look at six aspects of 'Laying Foundations.'

STUDY 1 – VISION ROOTED IN THE PROMISES OF GOD
Vision is what you see – what you are trusting God to do. It must be rooted in the Promises of God. Hebrews 6:12

STUDY 2 – PRAYER
Vision is pursued by faith through prayer.

STUDY 3 – LAYING FOUNDATIONS
This means focusing. It requires working with people who have enough in common to carry on towards spiritual generations. And it takes having a clear understanding of one's task. It also involves making sure it is Christ we are seeing formed in the lives of those we are involved with. 1 Corinthians 3:10-11

STUDY 4 – ACCESS AND RAPPORT
How do I describe who I am in such a way that it enhances my rapport for the sake of the Gospel? 1 Corinthians 4:8-13

STUDY 5 – TEAMING
Acknowledges the diversity in the Body. It means relying on each other's strengths. It means making visible the love of God in our relationships. It is moving together towards a common purpose. Philippians 1:27

STUDY 6 – CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT
How do we create an environment of 'grace', 'compassion', 'truth' and 'risk-taking' for the lost and broken? What context is needed for laborers to labor for a lifetime among non-believers?

CF I – STUDY 1: VISION, ROOTED IN THE PROMISES OF GOD

INTRODUCTION

With startling regularity God took the people He used through a school of faith to prepare them to embrace and obey the vision He had called them to. Abraham is a good example of this. He left Haran and followed God into an unknown future so that God could bless all the peoples of the earth through him.

We see a similar pattern in the stories of people like Moses, David, the Twelve and Paul. In each case the 'promise of God' to these people was in the realm of what was humanly impossible. It was only attainable through a life of faith and obedience. Each of them abandoned their normal lifestyles to walk forward with God in deep dependence and faith in His promises. Any ministry that is truly of God will take us beyond mere human effort.

A LIFE OF VISION AND FAITH ROOTED IN GOD'S PROMISES

1. Choose **one** of the following characters who lived a life of faith in response to a God-given vision:

Abraham	Isaiah
Moses	Nehemiah
David	The Twelve
Jeremiah	Paul

2. How did this person come to embrace and respond to their God-given vision?
3. What changes occurred in their lives as they responded to the vision?
4. What struggles did they encounter as they lived out this vision?
5. What kept them going in living out the promises of God?

SUMMARY
To be fully engaged in ministry we need to be responding in faith to the promises of God and a growing awareness of the vision He has for us. This needs to be foundational to all we do. Without this foundation our motivation becomes blurred and our perseverance falters when we encounter the inevitable difficulties that arise.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What is your personal experience in the area of 'vision'? Do you feel God has given you a vision for your life and ministry? How would you express it? How did it come to you? Are there specific Scriptures connected with this 'vision'?
2. What has God done as you have responded in faith to this 'vision'? What are you still looking to Him to do? Have you been disappointed or felt let down as you responded in faith? Has your 'vision' dimmed or grown stronger over time?
3. How can you determine if a 'promise' in Scripture is meant for you?
4. How are vision and faith related to the promises?
5. What practical evidences would you expect to see in a ministry built on the foundations of vision, faith and the promises of God?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. What is your God-given vision for your ministry? What are you looking for God to do? Can you state it succinctly?
2. What promises has God given you for your ministry?
3. What steps of faith can you point to in response to your vision?
4. What costs are you willing to pay to be involved in this vision?
5. How do you communicate this to those involved with you?
6. How does your 'vision' shape **what** you choose to do and not do? How does it influence **the way** you do what you do?

CF I – STUDY 2: PRAYER

INTRODUCTION

Our vision is pursued by faith through prayer. A ministry birthed and sustained through prayer is a part of our heritage. Billy Graham, speaking at the Memorial Service for Dawson Trotman on June 27, 1956, said, "Dawson was a man of prayer. I remember in London Dawson would slip into my little room when things would seem impossible and we'd get down on our knees and pray." [1]

It needs to be the same today and into the future. We are involved in a work of God and prayer is foundational. Without prayer, ministry becomes an outcome of our efforts and not much else.

1. What can we pray for those who as yet don't believe or respond in faith to Jesus Christ?

   Romans 10:1   John 3:5-8   John 16: 5-11   Romans 12:2

2. What can we learn about the links between prayer and ministry from Jesus' prayer in John 17?
3. What insights do you gain from the prayers of Paul recorded in his letters to the emerging communities of believers scattered throughout Asia?

1 Corinthians 1:4	1 Thessalonians 1:2-3
Romans 1: 8-10	2 Thessalonians 1:3-4
Ephesians 1: 15-23	2 Thessalonians 1:11-12
Ephesians 3:14-19	Philemon 1:4-7
Philippians 1:3-11	
Colossians 1:3-13	

SUMMARY

As we think about the ministry God has entrusted to us, the following truths can strengthen our hearts and give us hope even in difficult situations:

❑ God was there long before we were.
❑ God is already at work in the hearts of people.
❑ God wants to use us in their lives.

These truths give us confidence to pray and should also cause us to be sensitive to what God is doing in people's lives as we link our prayers to His work and the promises He has given us.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What have you learned from your experience to date about prayer and ministry?
2. Why do you think we more easily gravitate to planning and talking than praying? Have you learned ways to reverse this tendency?
3. What do you see as the relationship between prayer and planning?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. Where is God at work in your ministry?
2. What are you praying for that only God can bring about?
3. Who are the people you are praying for? What are you praying?
4. Who do you have deeply committed to praying for your ministry? How can you strengthen this partnership?

---

[1] Daws – Betty Skinner pp385 – Nav Press

CF I – STUDY 3: LAYING FOUNDATIONS

INTRODUCTION
A solid foundation is critical to any building. It provides the support and shape for all that follows. As we consider our calling and the building of 'multiplying ministries', understanding foundations will significantly effect the likelihood that our efforts will be generational. Choices we make early on will determine the choices we can make later. This study will focus on two aspects of 'laying foundations.'

1.   Laying the 'foundation of Christ' in the lives of people.
2.   Focusing on people who have enough in common to carry on towards spiritual generations.

CHRIST THE FOUNDATION
1.   In 1 Corinthians 3:10-11 Paul describes himself as an expert builder who laid a foundation among the Corinthians. The foundation is Jesus Christ.
     ❑   What are the implications for us? (E.g., in our evangelism where is the emphasis? On the person Jesus or on the contract? Are we sharing 'Christianity' or Christ? In our discipling is the focus on the person of Christ or the 'program'?)
2.   Use this question to make observations from the following passages.
     What does a person who is founded in Christ really look like?
     Ephesians 1:15-21   Galatians 5:5-6
     Philippians 2:5-11   Colossians 1:3-5
     1 Thessalonians 1:2-3   1 Thessalonians 5:8
     Colossians 1:15-20
3.   Christ is the foundation of 'faith, hope and love.'
     ❑   Faith   - His Person, Hebrews 12:2
     ❑   Hope   - His Resurrection, 1 Peter 1:3
                  - His Ascension, Hebrews 6:18-20
                  - His Return, I John 3:2-3
     ❑   Love   - His Death, 1 John 3:16
4.   In praying for and assessing spiritual progress in the lives of those who were part of the emerging Jesus movement, Paul focused on "Faith, Hope and Love." Why these three? Why not humility, mercy or compassion? These three are the source of many of the other virtues.

WHAT VIRTUES DO YOU SEE EMERGING FROM 'FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE'?
FAITH
1 Thessalonians 1:3   Romans 1:5
Romans 14:2   Ephesians 6:16
HOPE
2 Corinthians 3:12   1 Thessalonians 1:3
1 John 3:3   Romans 15:13
1 Peter 3:15
LOVE
John 14:21   1 Corinthians 13:1-13

5.   How do we minister so that the people we are involved with are characterized by 'faith, hope and love'?
     Ephesians 1:15-23   Ephesians 3:14-21
     Philippians 1:3-11   Colossians 1:3-14
     Philemon 1:4-7   John 5:46-47
     Luke 24:27   1 Corinthians 11:1

FOCUSING ON A FOUNDATIONAL GROUP OF PEOPLE

Laying a foundation for a 'multiplying ministry' involves a commitment to focus. It is too easy to confuse busyness in activities with building a 'multiplying ministry.'

1. What do you observe about the connection between 'focus' and 'foundations' in
        the following verses?   Romans 15:14-25
2. Read Acts 18 and 1 Corinthians 3:5-14. What did Paul do in Corinth to lay a foundation for a 'multiplying ministry' that would continue long after he had moved on?

SUMMARY

Jesus Christ is to be the foundation in a believer's life. From Him flow the qualities of faith, hope and love. Understanding this must affect the way we minister.

Laying a foundation for a ministry that will multiply requires focus on a group of people who are connected in some way and will be a foundational generation. Through them the Gospel will flow to many others and laborers and leaders will be developed for the generations to come. Our ministry approach needs to be tailored to the group of people on which we are focusing.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. How do you labor in such a way that Christ is truly foundational? What would be some warning signs that you were laying another foundation?
2. What does it look like to 'carefully build' upon a foundation? 1 Corinthians 3:10
3. How is focus connected to laying foundations? What makes it difficult to focus?
4. What can you do to help people become the foundations of generations?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. What are you currently doing to lay the foundation of Christ in those to whom you minister?
2. Is anything competing with their focus on Jesus Christ?
3. How will you build faith, hope, and love in those among which you minister?
4. Do you have a foundational group of people? What do they have in common?
5. What are some of the key issues you are facing with this particular group as you minister towards a generational movement of the Gospel? How are you responding to these issues?

CF I – STUDY 4: ACCESS AND RAPPORT

INTRODUCTION

How those we are trying to reach perceive us often determines what happens next - an open or closed door for the Gospel. One of the first challenges we face in the ministry of the Gospel is establishing rapport or a relationship that enables understanding. This is true whether it is establishing quick rapport with a stranger or long term rapport in the neighborhood, dorm, lecture hall, barracks or workplace. We know we have a measure of rapport when people want to hear what we have to say. Establishing rapport in order to have access forces us to face the issues of 'identity' and 'image.'

My **identity** is who I am. Much of my identity has been determined for me. I had no say in my nationality, race, family and personality. Other aspects of my identity I have shaped are my skills, education, character, and choice of friends.   We have also chosen to be followers of Christ, citizens of the kingdom of Heaven.

Others impose an **image** upon me. People define us by the work we do, the possessions we have and the company we keep. Why is this an important understanding for us?

We are message bearers. We carry the Gospel not just with our words, but also with our lives. Whether we like it or not the message and the messenger are often seen as inseparable. How we are perceived can determine how people respond to what we have to say. They think, "If I accept this message will I have to become like them? Can I do that? Do I want to do that?" This is an area where the problem is different for full-time staff and those who have other jobs. Within the Christian community the full-time staff person is understood and valued, but to the rest of the community they are an enigma. "You do what!" Sometimes staff react to this situation by withdrawing and staying where it is comfortable and safe.
 The issue is not what will make us most comfortable, but how we will explain what we do in ways that open rather than close doors for the Gospel.

Read the following passages and make notes on what they have to say about this issue of
'identity' and 'image.'   What guidelines should we follow as we identify ourselves?

Matthew 10:16-17	Matthew 10:24-25
Matthew 16:20	Luke 7:33-34
Acts 11:26	John 13:1-3
1 Corinthians 4:8-13	1 Corinthians 9:19-23

SUMMARY

We need to learn how to authentically describe ourselves and interpret our lives for those we are trying to reach and disciple in ways that will gain access for the Gospel and establish and maintain rapport.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. In your ministry context what is the image most people have of Christians/ followers of Jesus? Does this help or hinder the Gospel moving into their world?
2. How do you currently establish your identity as a follower of Christ among unbelievers?
3. How effective is this answer? How do you feel about it?

Many have found the following three guidelines helpful in explaining what they do and/or in identifying them as a follower of Christ:

1. Is it true?
2. Does it make sense to the hearer?
3. Does it open up room for conversation?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. How do you think the people you are trying to reach perceive you (both as individuals and as a group of people)? Is this helpful or unhelpful? Do you need to make some adjustments?
2. How do you explain your work with this ministry in ways that open doors for the Gospel? Do these words match the reality when they meet you?
3. What are you doing with those to whom you minister that would cause them to want to hear what you have to say?

CF I – STUDY 5: TEAMING

INTRODUCTION

The concept of teaming in ministry acknowledges the diversity of the 'Body of Christ.' It involves each person contributing their strengths to a common purpose while counting on others to compensate for individual weaknesses. When we work alone we can be sure our weaknesses will be reproduced in our ministry efforts.

A 'ministry team' brings concerted focused effort to a common purpose. In Critical Factor IV we will focus on the dynamics of 'Biblical Community.' In this section we will focus specifically on the dynamics of teaming in ministry

BIBLICAL BASIS OF TEAMING

1. The foundational ideas for the concept of teaming emerge from the Bible's teaching on the Body. What do you observe in the following passages?
   Romans 12:3-8   Ephesians 4:11-16   1 Peter 4:7-11

   ❑ What other Scriptures do you know that relate to teaming?
   ❑ Does every person need the Body?
   ❑ Does every person need a team?
   ❑ When does a person need a team?
2. What does it take for a team to work well?
   ❑ What have you learned from your own experiences of teaming? What has gone well? What has not gone well? Why?
3. What attitudes are essential to teaming?
   Ephesians 4:1-5   Ephesians 5:21
   Philippians 1:27-28   Philippians 2:1-24
   Colossians 3:12-17   James 1:19-20
4. What factors limit a team's effectiveness?
   Acts 15:36-40   1 Corinthians 3:5-10
   Ephesians 4:25-32   James 3:13-18
5. Trust is the vital lubricant for effective teaming. Trust takes time to develop but is quickly destroyed. What builds trust? What erodes trust?

SUMMARY

We cannot develop a healthy 'multiplying ministry' alone. A 'ministry team' is vital to accomplishing our God given task. Teaming can take many forms but certain dynamics are essential to all expressions of teaming. A commitment to teaming moves us from unhealthy individualism towards all the benefits that accrue from interdependence.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What forms of 'teaming' have you observed? What have been the strengths and limitations of each?
2. Is there ever a time when it is counterproductive to team?
3. How can the Navigator organization help the development of ministry teams? Are there ways The Navigator organization can hinder their development?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. Describe your current experience of teaming. What is going well? Why? What is not going well? Why?
2. What changes could you make to increase the effectiveness of 'teaming' in your ministry? Review Questions 2 and 3 as you think about this.
3. What do you contribute to a team? What sort of people do you need with you to compensate for your limitations?

CF I – STUDY 6: CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT

INTRODUCTION

Whenever groups of people come together around a purpose, an environment or atmosphere will emerge. The environment may be intentionally or unintentionally created. It will either help or hinder us in pursuing our purpose.

How do we create an environment of 'grace', 'compassion', 'truth' and 'risk-taking' to the lost and broken? What context is needed for laborers to labor for a lifetime among non-believers? These are vital questions for us to answer as we pursue our Calling.

BIBLICAL UNDERSTANDING OF ENVIRONMENT

1. Make observations relevant to 'environments' as you look at the following passages.

   Isaiah 61:1-9   1 Corinthians 1:26-31
   2 Corinthians 1:3-4   2 Corinthians 4:1-12
   John 1:14   Galatians 4:8-11
   Matthew 9:35-36   Hebrews 4:14-5:2
   John 13:34-35   1 Corinthians 9:19-23
   1 Corinthians 6:9-11   1 Peter 3:8-9
   Matthew 5:38-48   Matthew 6:1-18
   Acts 15:36

2. What sort of environment is needed if our calling is to increasingly become a reality?
3. What is the part of leaders in shaping environment?

SUMMARY

We minister in a world increasingly characterized by broken relationships, broken dreams and broken expectations. People today do not want to, and in many cases cannot, perform. Our Calling cannot become a reality by merely following a set of methods and techniques. "It is not the survival of the fittest. It's the little one being his/her best for God." – Dawson Trotman. People thrive in environments characterized by 'grace, truth, compassion and risk-taking to the lost.' We want people to breathe this atmosphere in our Navigator ministries.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

How is grace demonstrated in relationships? In ministry?
What would characterize a performance based ministry environment?
How can you communicate compassion to one another and to those you are trying to reach?
How should you respond to the reality of sin?
What does 'risk taking' to the lost and broken look like? What encourages this? What makes it difficult?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. How would you describe the environment of your ministry?
2. What would you like to strengthen? What would you like to remove from the current environment?
3. What risks are you taking to relate to lost and broken people?

CRITICAL FACTOR II – GOING TO THE LOST
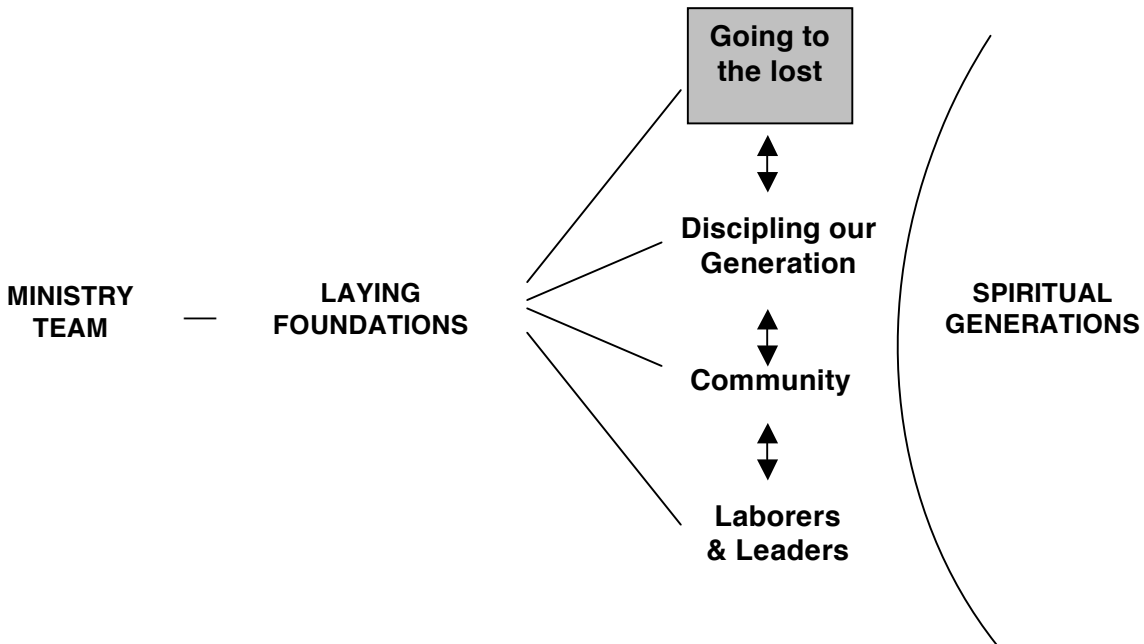
CRITICAL FACTOR II STUDIES

Our Calling is 'to advance the Gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom into the nations through spiritual generations of laborers living and discipling among the lost.' This statement of calling roots our ministry in the soil of the lost and broken people of our world and flows out of what God has been saying to us out of several passages of Scripture.

Isaiah 49:6
he says: "It is too small a thing for you to be my servant
　　to restore the tribes of Jacob
　　and bring back those of Israel I have kept.
I will also make you a light for the Gentiles,
　　that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth."

Isaiah 61:1-4
The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
　　because the Lord has anointed me
　　to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
　　to proclaim freedom for the captives
　　and release from darkness for the prisoners,
[2] to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
　　and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
　　[3] and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
　　instead of ashes,
the oil of gladness
　　instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
　　instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,

a planting of the Lord
for the display of his splendor.
[4] They will rebuild the ancient ruins
and restore the places long devastated;
they will renew the ruined cities
that have been devastated for generations.

Matthew 9:36-38

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. [37] Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. [38] Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

Our calling is also in harmony with God's desire that His people live in the world for the sake of those who don't know Him among all the nations (ethnos – peoples). God's people are sent to the lost and He wants to use every believer in this task.

We will look at five important areas related to 'going to the lost'.

STUDY 1 — THE GOSPEL:

What is the Gospel we are sharing with people? How pure is it? Whenever we add to it, distort it or subtract from it we make it a non-Gospel. When this happens we compromise its mobility. Galatians 1:6-8

STUDY 2 — HOW DOES THE GOSPEL GROW:

Understanding some of the dynamics of how the Gospel advanced in the first century can provide us with helpful insights as we implement our calling.   2 Corinthians 10: 13-16

STUDY 3 — THE INSIDER:

Insiders are key to the growth of the Gospel **into** a context. Helping people with the understanding and skills to live as 'insiders' is vital if we are to see 'lifetime laborers.' Philippians 2:16

STUDY 4 — DEALING WITH OUR FEARS:

Fear is a very powerful emotion. It can lead us not to do what we should, as well as do
things we should not. How do we respond to the reality of our fears? Where does boldness come from? Can we be bold and still maintain relationships with those we seek to reach? Ephesians 6:19-20

STUDY 5 — LEGALISM:

What is legalism? How does it affect the believer and the non-believer? Legalism sends a distorted message about the Gospel. Is it possible to relate freely to non-believers and not offend some believers? How do we handle this?

CF II – STUDY 1: THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCTION

Paul and Barnabas set out on their first missionary journey in AD 46 or 47. Their journey lasted about 18 months and took them into the cities of the region of Galatia. In each city they preached the Gospel God had revealed to Paul. There was no difference between Jew and Gentile. For both justification was by faith in Christ apart from the law.

Not everyone agreed with Paul's understanding of the Gospel. Some men, probably from Jerusalem, retraced the route taken by Paul and Barnabas. Their purpose was to correct Paul's gospel by 'completing it'. The letter to the Galatians is Paul's reasoned, but also emotional, response to their mission.

1. As Paul begins his letter he is obviously very upset. What does he have to say about those following in his steps and their mission?   Galatians 1:6-9
2. What were they adding to Paul's message?
   Galatians 2:14   Galatians 3:1-3
   Galatians 4:10-11   Galatians 5:2-4
3. Those following behind Paul didn't appear to refute the deity of Christ, His death or resurrection. Why then do you think Paul was so stirred up?
4. What would have been the effects on the Gentile believers if they had continued to follow this other teaching?
   Note: Paul uses the same Greek word in v3 and v9. It is the word 'stoicheia'
   meaning the basic principles of this world. The same Greek word is used in
   Colossians 2:8,20.   Galatians 4:3-10   Galatians 5:1-6
5. What motivated these visiting teachers to do what they did?
   Galatians 4:17   Galatians 5:12-13

SUMMARY

The purity of the Gospel is under constant threat by those who seek to mix it with human rules and traditions. The Gentile world couldn't understand it as long as it came wrapped in Jewish tradition. It's the same today. Whenever we add to the Gospel, we subtract from its purity. When this happens it ceases to be a Gospel for all the nations.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What similarities do you see between the Galatians example and what you face today as you bring the Gospel to the people around you?
2. What traditional forms, practices and rules do believers tend to impose on unbelievers today?
3. What were the 1st century responses to the threat to the purity of the Gospel? Which of these could be applied today?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. What are unbelievers **seeing** as they **listen** to our Gospel? Which message is more powerful?
2. What are some ways you could be contaminating the purity of the Gospel by what you say and how you live?
3. What are the entry points for the Gospel among the people groups to whom you minister?
4. What are the great truths of the Gospel? What must you be careful to communicate? Which of these truths do you tend to underemphasize or even ignore?
5. How are you currently presenting the Gospel? Are you neglecting anything?

CF II – STUDY 2: HOW DOES THE GOSPEL GROW?

INTRODUCTION

The Gospel advancing is a crucial component of our Calling. How does this happen?

Although a lot of what Paul and his team did was a response to the social/religious context of their day, we can still draw valuable lessons for our times by understanding how the Gospel grew in the decades following Christ's ascension.

NATURAL EXPANSION

In Acts 2-11 we read how the Gospel expanded naturally among a prepared group of people. Acts 2:5 identifies the crowds gathered in Jerusalem as 'God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.' They were a prepared audience and they responded quickly to the preaching of the Gospel. Perhaps all of this growth would have remained within Jerusalem had it not been for the persecution that accompanied the stoning of Stephen (Acts 8:1).

Acts 11:19 tells us that as these Jewish believers were scattered through the surrounding regions, they shared their new faith with fellow Jews and Jews who had adopted the Greek language and customs (Greek = Hellenists). Although the Gospel was advancing geographically, apart from a few exceptions through Peter and Philip, it was still confined culturally to Jews.

THE APOSTOLIC TEAM

It took the emergence of the 'apostolic team' to break the Gospel out of the Jewish world into the nations (people groups). The word 'apostle' means 'sent ones.' It is used with a capital 'A' to speak of the original 11 disciples and Matthias. When the word is used in this way it refers to a unique role for a unique period. However, the word is also used to refer to a wider group of people. People like Paul, Barnabas, Andronicus and Junias are all referred to as 'apostles.' They were mobile. They crisscrossed the region of what is now the Middle East and Southern Europe planting the Gospel and establishing the faith of those who believed.

1. What characterized the ministry of these 'mobile teams?'   Acts 13:1-5

Note:

 - In v2 'set apart' is the Greek word **aphorizo,** - to *set off* by boundary, i.e. figuratively to *limit, exclude, appoint*, etc.: divide, separate, sever.

- In v3 'sent them off' is the Greek word apoluo - to free fully, i.e. (literal) relieve, release, dismiss (reflexive depart), or (figurative) let die, pardon, or (specifically) divorce : (let) depart, dismiss, divorce, forgive, let go, loose, put (send) away, release, set at liberty.

Acts 13:14	Acts 13:44	Acts 14:1	Acts 15:36
Acts 18:1-6	Romans 15:14-29	1 Corinthians 3:10-11	1 Corinthians 9:19-22
2 Corinthians 10:13-16	1 Thessalonians 2:1-13		

Choose 5 words/phrases to describe the 'apostolic ministry'.

LOCAL BELIEVERS & THE ADVANCE OF THE GOSPEL

The litmus test of Paul's apostolic ministry was what the local believers did with the Gospel planted in their midst. On several occasions Paul links the phrase 'not in vain' to his ministry. He uses the Greek word 'kenos.' When applied figuratively the word means 'useless, for no purpose, or without effect.'

What did Paul want to see happen 'in' and 'through' the lives of local believers to conclude that his ministry in a city or region had fulfilled its purpose?

Galatians 2: 2	Galatians 4:11	Philippians 2:14-16	1 Thessalonians 3:1-5
Romans 12:14-21 1	Corinthians 5:9-13	Colossians 4:5-6	1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

It was up to the local believers to carry the Gospel through life and speech into their existing family, social and economic networks. They were insiders to this world. (We look at the topic of Insiders in greater depth in the next study.) The members of the apostolic team were 'outsiders' who would boldly and publicly proclaim the Gospel. Often they would stir up trouble and have to leave town. Paul did not expect the local believers to imitate his approach. Local believers live alongside the people they seek to reach with the Gospel. If they adopt the style of the apostle they risk polarizing people's responses and losing their audience.

Create a chart contrasting and comparing the respective contribution of the Apostolic and Local to the advance of the Gospel.

APOSTOLIC	LOCAL EXPANSION
Outsiders	Insiders
Mobile	Permanent

- This contrast between 'apostolic' and 'local' approaches is seen in Colossians 4:2-6
- What did Paul (the apostle) ask the local believers in Colossae to pray for him?
- What does Paul exhort them to do?
    Colossians 4:2-6

SUMMARY

Paul's apostolic team worked together to take the Gospel to the nations. The fruit of their labor, the local believers in a city, bore the ongoing responsibility to carry the Gospel into a people group. These two expressions of the church, the mobile and the local, were vital to the advance of the Gospel. They needed each other to fulfill their shared calling to advance the Gospel to the nations.

Two common mistakes when we fail to understand this distinction:

We teach local laborers to minister as 'apostles' in their jobs and neighborhoods. When this happens the laborer often loses rapport and becomes discouraged. After a while they no longer believe it is possible to labor fruitfully among the lost.

A staff team that needs to minister apostolically attempts to implement their mission using only local means. When this happens the outcomes are slow and discouraging. New initiatives are not taken.

The effect of these two mistakes is the same: no generations.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

In what ways do the mobile and local need each other?

What was the apostolic team to do that the local insiders could not do?

What could the local insiders do that the apostolic team could not do?

What happens if one or the other failed to make their contribution to the advance of the Gospel?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. Do you understand the distinctions between 'apostolic' ministry and 'local' ministry? How is this being expressed in your ministry? Are there any changes you would make as an outcome of this study?
2. What does 'apostolic ministry look like in your setting?
3. How are you developing people to be lifetime local laborers?
4. What happens to people when they move away from your ministry context?
5. What obstacles, if removed, would open the way to significant progress in your evangelism?

CF II – STUDY 3: THE INSIDER

INTRODUCTION

What happened after the apostolic team left town? How would the Gospel continue to advance? It was up to the local believers to take the Gospel **into** a place. The apostolic team established a beachhead – a foundational generation. This generation had inside access to families, neighborhoods, places of work and social networks. The believers in this generation were insiders. They were the key to the ongoing movement of the Gospel. *"…the great mission of Christianity was in reality accomplished by means of informal missionaries…..chattering to friends and chance acquaintances in homes and wine shops, on walks and around market stalls. They went everywhere gossiping the gospel and they did it naturally…and with the conviction of those who are not paid to say that sort of thing."* – Michael Green

JESUS AND INSIDERSHIP

1. Jesus had a lot to say about how we should relate to unbelievers. Reflect on the following passages. Note your observations.
   Matthew 13:24-30   Matthew 5:13-16   Matthew 13:26-43   Matthew 5:43-47   Luke 14:12-14
2. Jesus lived what He taught. He gained a reputation among the religious establishment for being good friends with some very lost people. Jesus, the one who was without sin, moved freely among those who were sinners. He did not demand that people change in order to be with him socially.
   What do you observe about the attitudes and actions of the major characters in the following passages? Mark 2:13-17
          Matthew 9:9-13
3. Jesus asked some people to drop all they were doing, leave their families and 'follow Him.' But was everyone called to this way of following Jesus?   Mark 5:18-20   John 4:28-30; 39-42

THE INSIDER AND THE EPISTLES

1. The first generation of believers in the pagan city of Corinth faced many challenges. It was tempting to resolve these tensions by withdrawing. These believers wondered if spiritual transformation meant relational and physical relocation. What should the new believer do?
   What were some of the issues facing the new believers in Corinth? How did Paul address their concerns?
   1 Corinthians 7:12-24
2. What did Paul want to see happening in and through the local Insiders?
   Philippians 2:14-16   1 Thessalonians 3:1-5   Romans 12:14-21   1 Corinthians 5:9-13
   Colossians 4:5-6   1 Thessalonians 4:11-12   Galatians 4:19
3. What does the Insider need from the 'apostolic team?' 2 Corinthians 12: 14-18   Acts 15:36   Philippians 1:21-26
   ❑   Look at some of Paul's prayers for the local believers.

SUMMARY

More often than not when people become believers they are encouraged, directly or indirectly to make radical changes in their relational world. That's often the last their old friends see of them. As they withdraw they are giving away one of their best assets, their strategic field position. They exchange it for a far more difficult one. The insider becomes an outsider. If our Calling is to increasingly become a reality we must do better than this. Insiders are vital to our calling.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. Why are Insiders vital to the Great Commission?
2. Why are Insiders so important to the Gospel moving 'generationally?'
3. Why do 'Insiders' often feel undervalued and unsupported?
4. What do Insiders need to flourish and be fruitful?
5. What makes it difficult for Insiders to play their part in the advance of the Gospel?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY

1. Does your current strategy of ministry validate or erode Insidership?
2. What are you doing to impart a vision of 'life-time laboring' as an insider? What issues do you face as you do this? How are you dealing with these issues?
3. What do you need to begin, stop or change in order to disciple people in their natural relational worlds?
4. Are you familiar with the understandings and skills needed to live and minister as an insider?
5. What are you doing to coach insiders? Does anything need to change?

CF II – STUDY 4: DEALING WITH OUR FEARS

INTRODUCTION

Whenever God asks us to personally respond in faith to His promises we are confronted with the reality of our fears. We cannot be involved in leading others in implementing our Calling and escape dealing with our fears. Fear is probably our most uncomfortable and unpleasant emotion. Along with its derivatives, anxiety, stress and worry, fear conspires to make life uncomfortable. There are healthy and unhealthy fears. Fear is contagious and can paralyze and imprison not only us, but those we seek to lead and influence. Our fears can keep us from passionately pursuing our God-given calling.

1. How did fear govern the behavior of people in the following passages?
    Numbers 13:1-3   Numbers 13:26-33   Numbers 14:1-4   Galatians 2:11-14

WHAT DO WE DO WITH OUR FEARS?

We all experience fears. Fears are not necessarily abnormal or wrong. It is not the absence of fear, but our response to fear that is crucial. With God's help we can move through our fears to a place of boldness and obedience.

1. What do you observe from the passages below about overcoming fear?
    1 John 1:7   Acts 4:23-31   Philippians 1:19-26   Psalm 34:4
    Isaiah 6:1-12   Ephesians 6:19-20   Colossians 4:2-6   1 Corinthians 2:1-5
2. What do you observe in the following passages about human weakness and the Gospel?
    2 Corinthians 4:7-12   2 Corinthians 12:7-10

SUMMARY

Responding to God in faith will confront us with frightening situations. As we lead in implementing our calling, God will take us into situations where we feel out of our depth and beyond the shores of safety and control. We will find ourselves in situations that only He can change. Any ministry based on vision and faith has to be this way. If it wasn't, why would we need faith? Our fears can work for us making us more dependent and drawing us closer to God, or they can paralyze and debilitate us. We will never run out of fears. There is always the smell of fear around the school of faith.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What are some fears that leaders encounter in responding to our Calling?
2. How does this affect their leadership?
3. What would it look like to lead boldly in our Calling?
4. What fears do Insiders experience?
5. How can Insiders be bold and yet not lose their rapport with their relational world?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. What are your fears as you lead in implementing your Calling?
2. How are you responding to these fears?
3. In what ways might these fears be controlling your actions and limiting what God wants to do through you?
4. Are you able to share your fears with others?
5. Where is courage and boldness currently needed in your ministry?
6. In what ways are you helping laborers deal with the tension of 'boldness and rapport'?

CF II – STUDY 5: LEGALISM

INTRODUCTION
The New Testament devotes a lot of attention to the subject of legalism. It is a major issue in the Gospels. It occupies the center of the book of Acts and many chapters in the Epistles address the issue. Why is it such a big issue and why is an understanding of legalism crucial to implementing our Calling?

THE PROBLEM OF LEGALISM
1. In the Gospels the phrase '*tradition of the elders* ' is repeated many times. The tradition of the elders was a set of rules and instructions that elaborated on the 613 laws of Moses. In an admirable yet flawed desire, it spelled out in much detail the lines between obeying and disobeying the Scriptures.
   What effect did these rules and regulations have on people?
   Matthew 23:13-14   Matthew 6:1-34   Matthew 11:28-30   Matthew 12:1-10   Matthew 15:1-8
   The Pharisees were legalists. They added human rules to God's Word and attributed to them both equal authority. Legalism is an obstacle to faith. It is anti-grace. It offers a false ladder to salvation.

2. The book of Acts records the first major conflict in the early church. It revolved around the issue of legalism. Were Jewish customs an essential part of the Gospel? Did the Gentile have to adopt these customs in order to follow Christ? Acts 15 records a very important meeting. Leaders of the entire church, both apostles and elders, met in Jerusalem to work out the issue.
   Read Acts 15:1-35. What were the issues? How were they resolved? What were the long-term implications of this outcome? What would have happened if it had gone the other way? Acts 15:1-35   \
   The mobility of the Gospel and its ability to move among the nations was at stake in this debate.
   The Epistles give a lot of space to the issue of legalism. Read the following passages and identify the impact of legalism on the lives of believers.   Romans 14:1-23 Galatians 5:1-6   Colossians 2:6-23   Hebrews 5:11-14
   Legalism is an obstacle to 'unity' and 'spiritual maturity'.

3. Why is legalism attractive?   Colossians 2:20-23   Mark 7:7-13

FORMING YOUR OWN CONVICTIONS
1. The early believers were constantly having to make decisions about 'disputable matters'. What guidelines does Paul provide for dealing with these decisions?
   Romans 13:8-10   1 Corinthians 6:12   1 Corinthians 9:24-27   Romans 14:22-23

LIVING OUT YOUR CONVICTIONS
In Galatians 2 Paul was going to offend either the Gentiles or the visitors from Jerusalem.   We can face a similar dilemma. It is impossible to please everyone. Someone will be offended by our actions. Who gets the priority?
In the following passages whom is Paul describing and what does he teach about relating to each group?
Romans 14:1-23   1 Corinthians 10:23-33   Galatians 2:11-14   1 Corinthians 8:1-13
1 Corinthians 9:19-23   1 Corinthians 10:27   Hebrews 5:11-14

SUMMARY
Legalism is confusing human rules and tradition with the teaching of Scripture. We are
legalistic when we:
❑   Universalize a personal conviction. (I can't do this and neither should you or I must do this and so must you)
❑   Universalize not only clear teaching about what is right to do, but also the 'how'.
Legalism affects both believers and those we are trying to reach with the Gospel. For believers 'legalism' becomes an obstacle to a life of faith, an obstacle to Biblical unity and it stunts growth into spiritual maturity.
For those we seek to reach our 'legalism' communicates a distorted Gospel. This effects the mobility of the Gospel. When we bound in legalisms the non-believer senses our awkwardness in certain relational settings. They will withdraw to places where they are accepted and not judged. The Gospel remains hidden to them because of the legalistic wrapping we have added.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING
1. How would you define legalism?
2. Why is legalism attractive to some people?
3. Who is the 'weaker person' Paul talks about?
   What can you learn from Paul's interaction with Peter in Galatians 2?
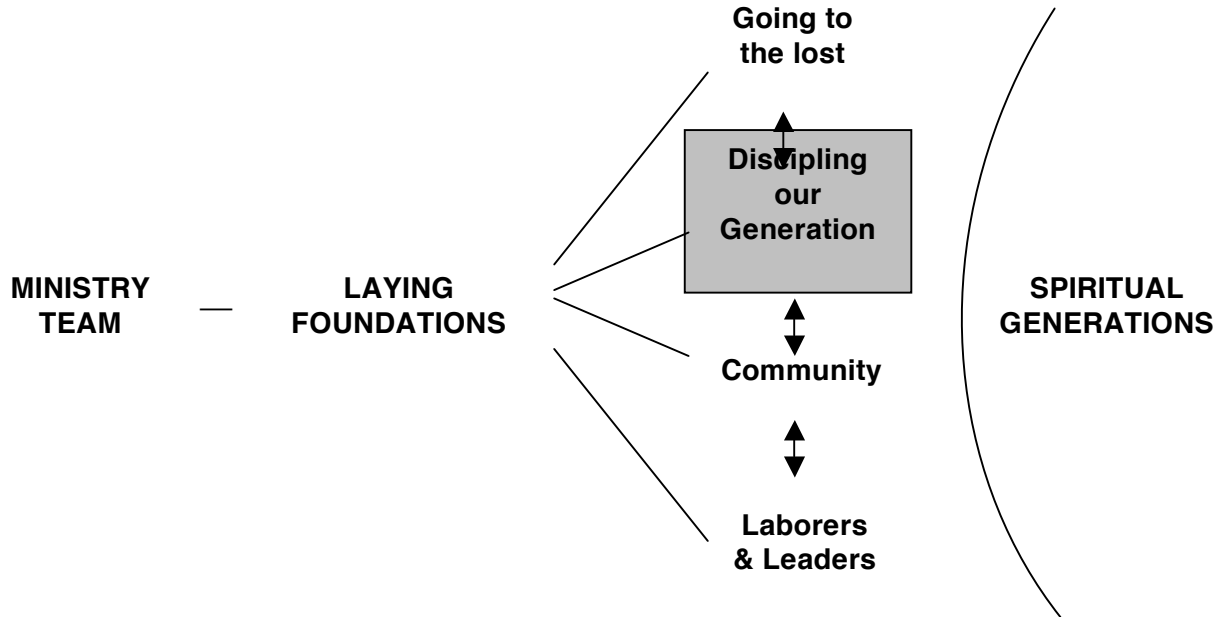4. What is the relationship between 'liberty' and 'love'?

5. Does a person have to become a 'Christian' to know and follow Jesus?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. Are there examples of legalism in your ministry? What are they and how do you respond to them?
2. What does it look like for the people in your ministry to live in the freedom Paul talks about in Galatians 5?
3. What rules and traditions (spoken or unspoken) could make it difficult for a non-believer to feel accepted in your ministry? Where did these rules and traditions come from?
4. Do we see any evidence in our ministry that legalism is affecting unity or people's growth into spiritual maturity. If so how will we respond to this?

CRITICAL FACTOR III —
DISCIPLING OUR GENERATION

```
                          Going to
                          the lost

                        ┌─────────────┐
                        │  Discipling │
                        │     our     │
                        │  Generation │
MINISTRY        LAYING  └─────────────┘         SPIRITUAL
  TEAM    ─   FOUNDATIONS                       GENERATIONS

                          Community



                          Laborers
                          & Leaders
```

CRITICAL FACTOR III STUDIES

"It is not the survival of the fittest. It's the little one being his best for God." - Dawson Trotman
   This takes on new meaning in our post-modern society where people are broken. We suffer from broken
   relationships, broken dreams and broken expectations. Our challenge today is to disciple people who cannot and
   should not perform. That's new for us. Isaiah 61:1-4
The three studies will help us answer several very important questions:
   1. What is a disciple and when does the process of discipling begin?
   2. What is it God wants to see in a person's life? How does this come about?
   3. What is the role of the 'spiritual parent' in the process of spiritual transformation?

STUDY 1 – TRANSITIONING FROM EVANGELIZING TO DISCIPLING

The line between the two blurs as the needs of the seeker and of the new believer converge.

STUDY 2 – TRUE SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

How does true change occur? What are its dynamics? Why do some people change and grow while
others make no progress at all? What about the heart?   Matthew 13:23

STUDY 3 – SPIRITUAL PARENTING AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH

What is the place of the spiritual parent? Where does individual personal attention fit in? When does it become an
obstacle to growth? What else is needed?
1 Corinthians 4:15

CRITICAL FACTOR III — STUDY 1:
TRANSITIONING FROM EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP

INTRODUCTION

'Discipleship' and 'discipling' have always been at the core of our Calling. But how does this work when our ministry takes place in the soil of the 'lost and broken' rather than just with the 'strong'? How can we disciple people for whom truth is whatever one wants it to be? We begin discipling when we begin evangelizing. When we think this way from the beginning, our evangelism will be different.

DISCIPLING THE LOST AND BROKEN

1. List your observations from the following passages.   1 Corinthians 6:9-11   Luke 4:18   Isaiah 61:1-3   Luke 5:32
    What have been your experiences of seeking to disciple people like this? How has it affected your approach to discipling?
    What challenges do we face as we disciple broken people?

    Complete the following chart that shows the transition between evangelism and discipleship. Put key words for each passage of Scripture.

BEFORE	AFTER
Matthew 22:37-39	John 13:34-35
John 16:11	Hebrew 3:13
Romans 10:17	James 5:16
1 Peter 1:23	1 Thes 2:13

2. How could thinking about 'making disciples' from the beginning affect our approach to evangelism?

UNDERSTANDING CONVERSION

1. An understanding of 'discipleship' begins with understanding 'conversion.' What changes at conversion?
    What doesn't change?   Romans 6:1-2   Romans 5:1-5   Romans 8:1-4, 9, 15-16
                                Galatians 2:19-21   Ephesians 1:13-14   Philippians 3:20-21
    Discipleship has to do with the unchanged part of me becoming increasingly conformed to the reality of what has changed.

DISCIPLES

1. Skim the Gospel of Mark. What do you observe about what it means to be a disciple of Christ? How did people grow as disciples?

SUMMARY

Our post-modern and increasingly broken world calls us to deeper levels of understanding of what is required to make disciples of all nations. We need to be clear about what happens at conversion and what doesn't happen. As we engage with non-believers in the Scriptures we need to think disciples from the beginning. This will move us away from an all too common situation where we see so called 'decisions,' but no continued growth into Christ-likeness.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What are the characteristics of a disciple?
2. What challenges do you face in 'making disciples' in a post-modern culture?
3. What happens when you draw a clear distinction between 'making a decision' and 'becoming a disciple'?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. What can you do to encourage genuine conversion?
2. Do you view evangelism and discipleship as distinct or part of the same process? Why? Why not?

3   Much of what you do in evangelism doesn't need to change as a person begins to grow in Christ. What are some applications of this for your situation?

CRITICAL FACTOR III — STUDY 2:
TRUE SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

If we are to grasp the nature of making disciples it is very important to grasp the way God works in His people. He is able to take people who have spent all their lives following their sinful thoughts and behavior, and transform them into people who please Him and bring hope and help to others. How does this happen?

Philip Yancey said, " If we are to stimulate spiritual interest and create spiritual thirst in the lives of the people in our world, we must be in the process of being spiritually transformed. It is not sufficient merely to be a nice person or group of people. There are lots of nice people, living good lives that don't have a faith in Christ. Evangelicals are responsible citizens whom people appreciate as neighbors but don't want to spend much time with… ordinary Christians point to temperance, industriousness and achievement as primary proofs of their faith".

1. What does God want to see happen in the lives of His people?
   Matthew 22:34-40   2 Corinthians 3:18   Ephesians 1:17-19   Ephesians 4:1
   1 Peter 2:9-12   Philippians 1:9-11
2. What are some other passages that express what God wants to see happen in a life?
3. What is the process of true spiritual transformation? Make observations from the following passages, noting what they have to say about how we are changed.
   Romans 5:1-5   James 1:2-4
   1 Peter 1:3-7   John 3:20-21
   Psalm 119:105   Romans 7:9-25
   Galatians 5:16-25   James 1:21-25
   1 Peter 5:5   2 Peter 1:5-6
   Hebrews 3:13   2 Corinthians 12:9-10
4. What other passages would you add that help understand the transformation process?
5. Summarize the elements of the process of Spiritual Transformation with key passages.
6. What needs to happen for transformation to occur?

SUMMARY

The transformation of believers in the midst of the unbelieving world is vital to the expansion of the Kingdom of God into the world. God is deeply committed to our transformation into Christ-likeness. As we respond to His work our worldview, values, and behavior are deeply impacted. We are changed from the inside out.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What is the difference between 'transformation' and 'reformation'? Why is this an important understanding for the 'discipler'?
2. How should your understanding of how transformation occurs affect the way you help people toward discipleship?
3. Why does transformation occur in some and not others?
4. What is the place of the Spiritual Disciplines in the process of Transformation?
5. Why is the heart so vital to transformation?
6. What does a person need in terms of understanding, practice, and support to live as a disciple who is being transformed?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. Does your discipling focus more on reformation or transformation?
2. How are the dynamics of spiritual transformation reflected in your discipling?
3. What provision have you made for the brokenness of the people in your ministry?
4. What are you asking the Holy Spirit to do in the lives of people?
5. Are there endemic sins in the people group you are reaching? What do the Scriptures teach about these sins?
6. How are the Spiritual Disciplines introduced and practiced in your ministry?

CRITICAL FACTOR III — STUDY 3:
SPIRITUAL PARENTING & SPIRITUAL GROWTH

INTRODUCTION

The concept of spiritual parenthood is not new to us. It is part of our legacy. However it is important we review this, since what we do in this area must be in harmony with what we have been learning about discipleship and transformation.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

In 1 Thessalonians 1 and 2 several phases of spiritual growth can be identified:
- ❑   THE NEWBORN CHILD   1 Thessalonians 2:7-10
- ❑   THE CHILD/YOUTH   1 Thessalonians 2:10-12
- ❑   THE MATURE   1 Thessalonians 1:6-10   1 Thessalonians 2:13-16

The primary needs of the believer change with each phase and therefore the role of the spiritual parent must also change.

Like Christ

PARENTAL ROLE   Peer

                                                        Mature Brother/ Sister

                 Father

                          Child/Youth

Nurse/ Mother

          Newborn/Child   INITIATIVE

TIME

Study the Passages in 1 Thessalonians and record your thoughts on the following questions.
1.   What are the primary needs of the believer in each of the 3 phases?
2.   What do they need from their spiritual parents at each phase?
3.   What do they need from others in the believing community?
4.   What do you observe about the heart of the spiritual parent in the following passages?
       Galatians 4:19   2 Corinthians 11:28-29

YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE IN LEARNING TO FOLLOW CHRIST
1.   What helped you most?
2.   What didn't help? Why?
3.   What problems did you need to overcome? Habits, attitudes etc. How did you make progress in these areas?

SUMMARY

An understanding of the phases of spiritual growth and parenting style from the Apostle Paul's example in Thessalonica provides us with a helpful framework for thinking and praying.

We can ask questions like:
- ❑ Where are they?
- ❑ What do they need next?
- ❑ What are they ready for?
- ❑ How do we provide it?
- ❑ If we do that, how will it affect their availability to their non-believing world?

Spiritual parenting is a function and a relationship. It is not a position that gives a person permission to lord it over others.

The passages in Thessalonians remind us that discipling can never be left to a program. Growth in discipleship happens best in life on life relationships. We must never let go of this.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What functions does the 'community' provide that neither the individual nor the spiritual parent can?
2. What unique contribution to growth does individual attention provide?
3. In what circumstances can 'spiritual parenting' hinder growth and impede the advance of the Gospel?
4. How does spiritual parenting get worked out in a very relational community of peers?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. In what ways are people in your ministry receiving individual attention?
2. How are you avoiding 'extracting' people from their relational network as you disciple them? Do you need to make any changes?
3. What questions do you ask to help you best meet the needs of those you   disciple?
4. How are you equipping people to give individual attention to others?

CRITICAL FACTOR IV — COMMUNITY

```
                              Going to
                              the lost

                           Discipling our
                            Generation

MINISTRY          LAYING                        SPIRITUAL
 TEAM    ——    FOUNDATIONS                      GENERATIONS

                          [ Community ]

                           Laborers &
                            Leaders
```
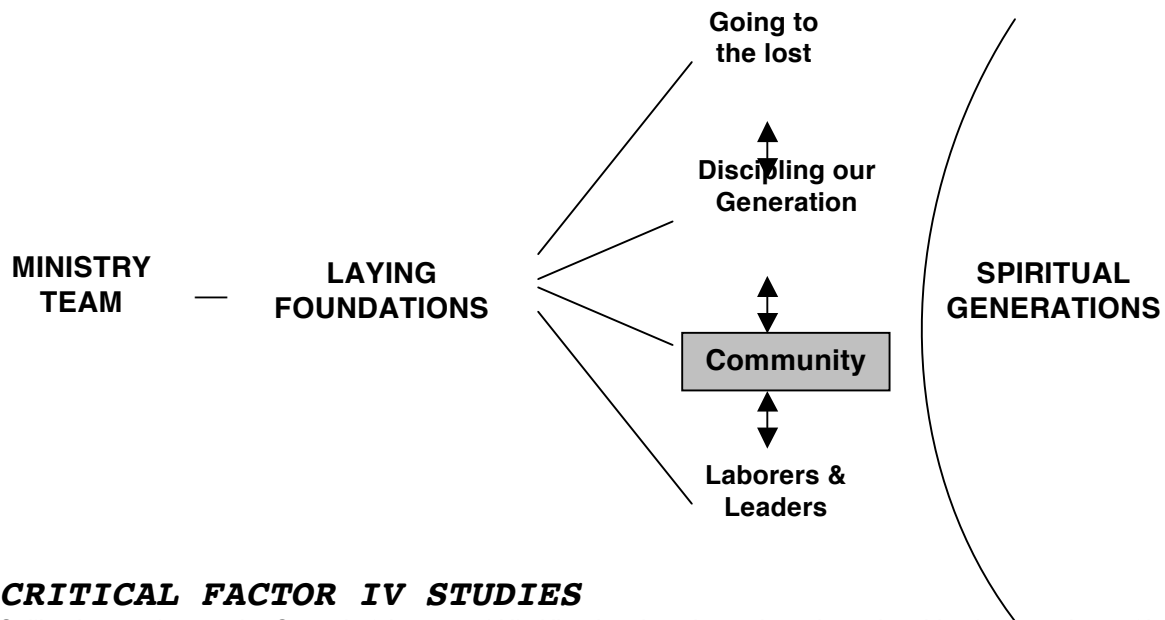
CRITICAL FACTOR IV STUDIES

Our Calling is "to advance the Gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom into the nations through spiritual generations of laborers living and discipling among the lost." As we examine the Scriptures it is very clear without true community we will not see this calling increasingly become a reality. Individual attention is vital, but limited. Congregating together in large groups can also play an important role. However, without the interdependence that characterizes Biblical Community, believers will not mature and we will limit our ability to carry out our calling.

We will look at five studies related to the theme of 'community.' The purpose of these studies is to gain a deeper understanding of 'Biblical Community' and the vital role it plays in 'advancing the Gospel' and helping believers grow into 'spiritual maturity.'

STUDY 1 – THE ONE ANOTHERS
Community is far more than congregating. It is a way of relating together as believers.

STUDY 2 – FUNCTION, FORM AND MEANING
Over time our forms outlive their original functions. Forms then become an end in themselves. The functions are lost. Renewal involves recovering the essential functions. There must be freedom of form for this to happen. Mark 7:1-14

STUDY 3 – THE SAFE PLACE
Healing, making broken people whole, is one of the primary functions of the Gospel. It takes place as the Holy Spirit leads us into a relationship with God and with one another. The resulting community is the safe place where our brokenness is repaired. James 5:16

STUDY 4 – MEN, WOMEN AND MINISTRY
It takes both men and women to incarnate the Gospel of the Kingdom. Men and women must partner in the ministry of the Gospel for it to be fruitful. Titus 2:1-11

STUDY 5 – COMMUNITY AND MISSION
There appears to be a tension between building 'community' and 'mission.' What can we learn from the advance of the Gospel in the 1st century about how to deal with this tension?
Acts 16:14-15

CRITICAL FACTOR IV — STUDY 1:
THE ONE ANOTHERS

INTRODUCTION
Biblical Community exists when believers relate interdependently, encouraging and supporting each other to know and follow Christ and doing this in ways that do not lead to isolation from unbelievers.

Interdependence is vital to revealing the Gospel to the world. Our relationships as believers are intended to provide a skeptical world with a glimpse of what God is like and what He is doing in the world. Without the relationships and trust that characterize Biblical Community people will not grow spiritually.

No one person has all that is needed to fulfill our Calling. We need each other. Everyone has been gifted and has a vital part to play in harmony with 'our calling.' We are to contribute what we have been given and depend on others to complement what is lacking.

COMMUNITY
1. The following passages emphasize the importance of community. As you read them underline the functions served by community. Remember the original context in which most of these functions were to be expressed was the household or groups of households coming together.

Romans 12:10-13	Romans 12:15-16	Romans 13:8	Romans 14:13
Romans 15:1	Romans 15:7	1 Corinthians 1:10	1 Corinthians 5:9-13
1 Corinthians 12:7-27	Galatians 5:13	Galatians 6:1	Galatians 6:10
Ephesians 4:2-3	Ephesians 4:11-13	Ephesians 4:15	Ephesians 4:32
Ephesians 5:19-21	Philippians 2:2-4	Colossians 3:12-17	1 Thessalonians 5:11
1 Thessalonians 5:15	2 Thessalonians 3:14	Hebrews 13:1-3	Hebrews 13:16-17
James 2:15-16	James 5:9	1 Peter 1:22	1 Peter 3:8
1 Peter 4:8-11	1 John 1:7	1 John 3:16-17	

SUMMARY
Biblical Community is not primarily a matter of form but the practice of certain functions. Community is vital to advancing the Gospel among the lost and guiding young believers into maturity in Christ.

Understanding and living out Community is vital because we believe God wants to bless us with fruit. If we do not understand community and instead minister independently, then even a little fruit stretches our capacity. We limit what God can do to our own availability, giftedness, weaknesses and resources.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING
1. What Functions did you identify that can only be practiced through interdependent relationships? What does this tell us?
2. What hinders interdependence?
3. Trust is vital to interdependence. What builds trust? What erodes trust?
4. Most of these passages are addressed to local insiders? What does interdependence look like among 'apostolic teams'?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT
1. What words would you use to describe the way believers relate to each other in your ministry?
2. Have you ever experienced partnership with others in advancing the Gospel?
    - ❑   Where have you seen it working?
    - ❑   Why did it work?
3. How can you strengthen the practice of community in your ministry context?
    - ❑   What keeps you from doing this?
4. What steps can you take to prevent 'community' being hidden from nonbelievers?

CRITICAL FACTOR IV — STUDY 2: FUNCTION, FORM AND MEANING

INTRODUCTION

Biblical Functions (such as the one-anothers) require 'Forms' if they are to be accomplished. 'Forms' are the patterns or methods used to carry out the functions.

A review of Church History reveals that over time forms outlive their original functions. Forms become an end in themselves and take on meanings of their own, disconnected from their original functions. When this happens freedom is lost. Forms can become restrictive and redundant.

The inability to distinguish between Biblical functions and appropriate forms will seriously hinder our ability to pursue our Calling with freedom.

THE 70 ELDERS (In the New Testament the 70 were called the Sanhedrin)
1. Consider the following references. What was happening throughout the centuries?
   Exodus 18:13-26   Numbers 11:16   Ezekiel 8:6-12   John 11:47-53   Matthew 26:59

JESUS CONFRONTS TRADITIONALISM

"*Tradition is the living faith of the dead, traditionalism is the dead faith of the living.*"
Jaroslav Pelikan
1. What do you observe about how Jesus responded to some forms, which had survived their original function?
   Mark 7:1-14

FUNCTION AND FORM

1. Consider the following passages from the life of the early church. What were the '**functions**'? (What were they trying to accomplish?)   What '**forms**' were used to accomplish the functions?
   Acts 2:42-47   Acts 3:1   Acts 4:32-35   Acts 6:1-7
   Acts 13:1-3   Acts 19:8-10   2 Corinthians 13:12   1 Timothy 2:8
   Titus 1:5
2. What observations do you have from this exercise? What forms are required today? What about the functions?

LESSONS FROM CHURCH HISTORY

1.   Over the past 2,000 years, Church forms and practices have undergone major and significant change. How did this happen? How did this affect the advance of the Gospel? Read From Ignatius to the Puritans, A.D. 95-1620 – *Church without Walls*, Jim Petersen, NavPress.
Summary Observations [To answer these questions use the next 13 pages which are photocopied from Ch. 5 of *Church Without Walls* by Jim Petersen.]
   ❑   What were the primary influences that reshaped the Church into the forms we know today?
   ❑   What was gained in this reshaping?
   ❑   What was lost?

FROM IGNATIUS TO THE PURITANS:
AD 95-1620

The experience of God's people in the first century proves that every believer can be fruitfully involved in the enterprise of going into all the world. But even in that first time around, the accomplishment of that ideal required a sensitive balancing among those who exercised the various necessary functions. Things got tense at times, and were it not for the humility of the leaders, the differences could have generated serious conflicts. The voluntary mutual submission of authority between apostolic leaders and elders preserved the unity and enabled the ministry.

Now we will see what happened after that first generation moved off the scene. The scope of this chapter spans fifteen centuries. We will begin with Ignatius, one of the Church Fathers and a contemporary of the Apostle John. Then we will look at several other leaders scattered in time across the centuries. Each of the people I have chosen affected God's people in the area of our concern for better or worse. The chapter will end with the first boatloads of Puritans making their way from England to America.

The question we will be seeking to answer as we make our way through the centuries remains the same: How did the church do against our thesis? How did the church do in going to the world? What place did the average believer have in its ministry?

History being what it is, and my limitations being what they are, I embark on this chapter with apprehension. Will and Ariel Durant devoted their lives to the study of history. Their eleven-volume *The Story of Civilization* is a historical document in itself. But upon reflecting back on their life's work, they said, "Most history is guessing, and the rest is prejudice." Even the historian who thinks to rise above partiality for his country, race, creed, or class betrays his secret predilection in his choice of materials, and in the nuances of his adjectives. The historian always oversimplifies, and hastily selects a manageable minority of facts and faces out of a crowd of souls and events whose multitudinous complexity he can never quite embrace or comprehend."

I will be doing in this chapter what the Durants warn against, as I am interested in tracing the progression of a single facet of the church through history. Certainly I will be guilty of oversimplification as I select my "manageable minority of facts and faces" out of the crowds that make up history. I have hesitations in attempting to span so much history with such a brief treatment. I realize the things I leave unsaid can easily strip what I do say of its proper context. But I will proceed, as I see no other way to lay the foundations for the observations I will subsequently be making. We need to understand where it was that God's people first lost their ability to go to the world, and why it happened. Hopefully I will not be misleading.

I will narrow this chapter's focus in yet another way. Tradition indicates that the first disciples, together with other early Christians, moved out in all directions once things were broken up in Jerusalem. As they moved into the nations, they gave birth to a rich variety of Christian traditions. Our focus here will be on just one branch of that expansion— that which gave origin to the Western church, which eventually found its way to North America.

PERSECUTION AND HERESIES FROM WITHOUT; HERESIES AND DIVISIONS FROM WITHIN

In the previous chapter we saw how Judaism served as the cradle for God's people for the first decade or more. This worked to their advantage within the Roman Empire, since the Jews enjoyed a unique exemption from the state religion, which included the obligation of emperor worship. For a time the Roman state treated believers in Christ as just one more sect under the umbrella of Judaism, extending to them the same exemption. Michael

Green deals thoroughly with these early developments in his book, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, from which I have drawn heavily in this section.

Those first Jewish believers needed that time of relative peace as everything was new and unclear. Certainly many of them weren't clear themselves on what they were into, or where it was all taking them. They had grown up on the stories of the Patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—and of David, the shepherd-king. They knew David's throne was to be eternal and that the Messiah would one day sit upon it. Now, that Messiah had come, His manner of coming had taken everyone by surprise. He had not come as a king at all. Most had thought He was a prophet. When He died, everyone assumed it was all over. But His resurrection had proven that He was, indeed, the Messiah! And

after His resurrection, He Himself had, on more than one occasion, shown some of them from the Scriptures how it all fit together.

But what were they becoming now? Were they still a part of Judaism, or were they something else? And what about Moses and the Law? Was all that just to be ignored and forgotten? Hard questions these, the kind that generate strong feelings in every direction. Tensions ran high over these issues among those first-century believers. But the inner tensions were nothing compared to the threats from without.

God's people were persecuted and finally disavowed by the Jewish society. Once disavowed they became vulnerable to the Roman powers. Nero's brutal tortures of Christians in AD 64 was the first of a series of waves of persecution. Christians were not respected by society. They were generally regarded as odd, socially unprofitable people who were suspected of everything from incest to cannibalism. They had the reputation of being dangerous, antisocial beings, politically disloyal to the state. To join them meant to court martyrdom.

The philosophical environment in which these believers had to live added to their woes. *Gnosticism* thrived in the then-fashionable Greek way of thinking, which accepted rational analysis as the way to truth. Gnosticism carried reason to its extreme, concluding that spirit and matter had little connection with one another. The flesh was evil, the pure spirit, good. "Gnostics had two central preoccupations: belief in a dual world of good and evil and belief in the existence of a secret code of truth." It was eclectic, incorporating whatever "truth" had been discovered in any of the faiths.

Believers in Christ had to cope with a number of philosophies of similar gender, such as Neoplatonism and Manichaeanism, and were not immune to their influences. Paul Johnson said, "So far as we can judge, by the end of the first century, and virtually throughout the second, the majority of Christians believed in varieties of Christian-gnosticism, or belonged to revivalist sects grouped round charismatics." And, "Even in Antioch, where both Peter and Paul had been active, there seems to have been confusion until the end of the second century. Antioch harbored a multitude of esoteric religious cults. Gnosticism was powerful, and may have taken over Christianity after the departure of the apostles."

To mix Gnosticism with the gospel was to destroy the gospel. Since spirit was good and flesh was corrupt, according to Gnosticism, Christ could never have become flesh at all. He merely seemed to be a man, while in reality He was pure spirit. So the truth about Christ was lost. Asceticism (control of the body) replaced faith.

Salvation was understood to be gained by denying self: doing such things as abstaining from sexual union and observing regulations. Martyrdom was prized. Others, in sharp contrast, concluded that since they were now predominantly spiritual by nature, they could not be corrupted. Their flesh could indulge in pagan festivals, gladiatorial contests, and promiscuous sex without contamination of their spirits.

The Apostle John's first letter is really a rebuttal against the ideas that eventually formed Gnosticism. He wrote, "That which . . . we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim." And, "Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God."

As the church moved into the second century, it had to deal not only with enemies from without, but also with the variety of dissonant voices that had grown up within. A canon of New Testament writings had not yet been established; there was no commonly held set of beliefs. The primary sects were Ebionism, Marcionism, Montanism, and Donatism. Some of these sects were clearly heretical. The Marcionites, for example, taught that the Old Testament held no authority for Christians, that the God of the Old Testament and of the New Testament are two distinct deities. They held that the Old Testament Jewish God was evil. A world that contained suffering and cruelty must be, they thought, the work of an evil being, and not of a good God. They concluded that a second god had hidden himself, making his first appearance as Christ.

What were the defenses against all of these false teachings? One early bulwark was found in the creeds. As the creeds were developed, they served as a plumb line that measured truth against error. The earliest of these, the Apostles' Creed, is of uncertain origin, but it is believed to come from the oral teachings of the apostles and was in common use by the middle of the second century as a confession at baptism. The statement embraced the nature of God, of Jesus Christ, and the essential truths that comprise the gospel.

The Nicene Creed deals with questions concerning the nature of the Incarnation, and was initially drafted at the Council of Nicaea in AD 325. The phrase "being of one substance with the Father," a part of the creed, reveals the issue that was at stake.

With our reliance on the Scriptures today, these creeds and their successors seem unimportant to many of us. But their role in the history of God's people cannot be underestimated.

The other major attempt to deal with error and to preserve unity was to strengthen the authority and organization of the church. That is the topic of the rest of this chapter.

WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE?

This brief description of the social and cultural context of the second century helps us understand something of what the church had to deal with. As we saw, Christianity was a maligned sect with beliefs that were deemed foolish and dangerous. It was persecuted from without, and torn by factions within. What was to keep everyone from being reabsorbed back into the bloodstream of Greek culture? Under the circumstances, what would you have done?

It is easy to judge the past, as things always seem so clear in retrospect. One look at the present, however, should be sufficient to cure us of whatever arrogance we might possess. We presently struggle to make wise decisions in the midst of today's myriad of issues. So did those involved in the formation of the church in those first centuries.

THE CHURCH FATHERS AND APOLOGISTS: WHAT THEY DID

It seems to me the measures taken to preserve the gospel and to protect the unity of the church in the formative period between the death of the last of the original twelve and the year 400 can be summarized in the works of four men. They are Ignatius, Irenaeus, Cyprian, and Augustine. Others could and probably should be mentioned, but these four, I feel, are adequate to carry the story. Our interest here is not just to understand what each of these men said and did, but to assess the effects of their work upon the church's ability to go to the world.

Ignatius: Bishop of Antioch
Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, was one of the Church Fathers—the name given to the writers of Christian literature who immediately succeeded the Twelve (AD 95-150).

Prior to the Church Fathers, the Christian community had no system of centralized administration. But early in the second century the beginnings of a central structure appeared. "The first epistle of Clement stressed the importance of 'decency and order' in the Church. And part of this order was a hierarchical structure. Women were to be subject to men, the young to the old, the 'multitude' to the presbyters, or alternatively to bishops and deacons selected for this purpose."

By the time Ignatius did his writing, perhaps twenty years later, he was able to define the system in very clear terms. Ignatius was condemned to be cast to the beasts in the Roman amphitheater in about 117. While on his way to martyrdom he wrote seven letters. In one, addressed to the Smyrnaeans, he wrote, "Let all things therefore be done by you with good order in Christ. Let the laity be subject to the deacons; the deacons to the presbyters; the presbyters to the bishop; the bishop to Christ, even as He is to the Father."

Ignatius commanded that presbyters and deacons be heeded as the recognized officers in the church. He also held that nothing was to be done without the bishop, that a baptism or the celebration of a love feast was unlawful without the bishop. The Eucharist could only be administered either by the bishop himself or by someone designated by him.

At the time of Ignatius each flock was independent, but eventually the system of bishops expanded from a bishop over each local body, to a bishop over each city, to a college of bishops, to a monarchical ruling body.
The intentions of the Church Fathers seem clear. They were concerned about unity and order within the church, and were looking for a system of defense against heresy from without. They achieved their goals, but at an awful price. They created a clergy-laity caste system, which put the average believer out of business in terms of his or her ministry in the gospel. The freedom experienced in the New Testament period vanished as the authority of the bishops grew. We will see how this progresses as we turn now to Irenaeus.

Irenaeus: c. AD 130-212
Irenaeus lived in the period of the apologists (AD 150-300). These writers contended for Christianity, combated paganism, and laid the beginnings of systematic theology. Irenaeus was raised in Smyrna and served as bishop of Lyons, in southern France, during 178-202. He was martyred in the persecution of Septimus Severus.

At this point in history, the churches had adopted an informal hierarchy consisting of small country churches, city churches, capital city churches, and major city churches. There were major city churches in Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Rome.

Irenaeus, distressed by what he regarded as errors and corruptions of the gospel, wrote an extensive treatise called *Against Heresies.* In this treatise he emphasized the importance of the organic unity of the church; that this organic unity, as described in the Bible, should find visible expression in a political unity. This political unity was to be achieved and maintained by a perpetual succession of bishops from Christ. He insisted that the apostles had transmitted faithfully and accurately what had been taught them by Christ, and that they had appointed as successors bishops to whom they had committed the churches. In so doing they had undoubtedly also passed on to them the truth Christ had entrusted to them.

In his treatise Irenaeus wrote, "We do put to confusion all those who . . . assemble in unauthorized meetings . . . by indicating that tradition derived from the apostles . . . and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul . . . which comes down to our time by means of the successions of the bishops. For it is a matter of necessity that every Church should agree with this Church, on account of its preeminent authority."

Notice how Irenaeus shifted paradigms, from church as community to church as institution. A colleague of mine refers to this shift as a "hinge of history." David Bosch, speaking of this shift in the church, said, "Its white-hot convictions, poured into the hearts of the first adherents, cooled down and became crystallized codes, solidified institutions and petrified dogmas. The prophet became a priest of the establishment, charisma became office, and love became routine. The horizon was no longer the world but the boundaries of the local parish."

Once again we see how, out of a legitimate concern for the purity of the gospel and for the unity of the body, measures were taken that had negative countereffects. Even a spontaneous neighborhood Bible study could now be ruled unlawful. It could be shut down by the single question, Have you been authorized by the bishop to be doing this?

Cyprian: Bishop of Carthage and Third-Century Martyr
We saw in the previous chapter how, in the first century, every Christian was held to be a priest unto God, serving God's people and the unbeliever, but by the end of the second century the clergy had been established as a separate "order" that assumed virtually exclusive rights to the ministry. As the clerical hierarchy refined its institutions, the average believer was, accordingly deprived of the little that remained in his field of service. Cyprian stands out as another who contributed to this process.

The church continued to be plagued by persecution from without and schism from within. Cyprian, like those who went before him, believed that the solutions lay in the institutionalization of the church. In his treatise, *The Unity of the Church*, he developed the idea of unbroken, apostolic succession beginning with Peter. This concept of succession allowed Cyprian and others to challenge anyone outside the institution with the command, "Produce the origin of your churches; display the order of your bishops." Whoever could not comply was declared a heretic.

Thus, in Cyprian's mind, the system of bishops represented the whole church. He said, "Whence you ought to know that the bishop is in the Church, and the Church is in the bishop; and if anyone be not with the bishop, that he is not

in the Church . . . The Church, which is Catholic and one, is not cut or divided, but is indeed connected and bound together by the cement of priests who cohere with one another."

The next step in the progression follows inevitably. Cyprian would naturally conclude there would be no salvation outside the institution. He wrote, "You cannot have God for your father unless you have the Church for your mother." Ironically, the final effects of his efforts was the distortion of the very gospel he gave his life to preserve!

Paul Johnson summarizes the results of this period in this way: "Law implied obedience; and obedience implied authority. What was this authority? The Church. What constituted the Church? *The men who ran it* . . . . Who was in charge of the process [of explaining Scripture]? The Church. What was the Church? *The men who ran it.*" We will look now at the next logical step led by Augustine, the joining of this authoritarian church with the power of the state.

Augustine: Bishop of Hippo (AD 354-431)
In Augustine's time, the fortunes of the church in relation to the state had begun to change. An alliance with the empire began with Constantine. So the church found itself busy coming to terms with the world from which it had, to

that point, stood apart. Augustine, in his widely read *City of God*, provided a philosophical basis that not only served the occasion but has affected the Christian faith until today.

Let us take a look at Kenneth Latourette's description of Augustine's theology and at Paul Johnson's description of the effects.

> Augustine, in accordance with the Biblical view, maintained that it [history] had a beginning and a culmination . . . . Augustine regarded the passing of the Empire with confident hope, believing that the Roman realm was to be replaced by an infinitely better order, that to be established by God. Augustine held that from the time of man's first rebellion against God two cities, the earthly and heavenly, had existed . . . The earthly was formed by love of self and pride. It was not entirely bad, for Babylon and Rome, its highest representatives, and the other governments had, out of regard for self-interest, brought peace and order. The heavenly city, on the other hand, is dominated "by the love of God even to the contempt of self." Men enter it here and now and it is represented by the Church, although not all in the Church are its citizens . . . all history has been directed and governed by God and moves to a climax in a society in which God's will is perfectly to be accomplished.

It is clear that the church was the product of the Gospel. It is also clear that the visible, institutionalized church, whether Catholic or one of the bodies which dissented, was shot through and through with contradictions to the Gospel. As Augustine frankly recognized, the two cities, the earthly and the heavenly, are intermingled. He held that they are to continue to be entangled until the last judgment effects their separation.

> Christianity was not the anti-society—it was society. Led by the elect, its duty was to transform, absorb and perfect all existing bonds of human relations, all human activities and institutions, to regularize and codify and elevate every aspect of life. Here was the germ of the medieval idea of a total society.

It was at this point that Augustine's ideas began to be applied in some very negative ways.

> The idea of a total Christian society necessarily included the idea of a compulsory society. People could not choose to belong or not belong . . . . Augustine did not shrink from the logic of his position. Indeed, to the problem of coercing the Donatists he brought . . . the willingness to use violence in a spiritual cause . . . . Why not? He would ask. If the State used such methods [torture] for its own miserable purposes, was not the Church entitled to do the same and more for its own far greater ones? He not only accepted, he became the theorist of, persecution . . . . And then, this was Christ's own way. Had not he, "by great violence," "coerced" Paul into Christianity? Was not this the meaning of the text from Luke 14:23: "Compel them to come in?"

Thus, according to Augustine, the state needed the church to transform society, and the church needed the state to enforce that transformation. That was a fearsome arrangement. Nonetheless, it endured over the next thousand years as the foundational concept of the Middle Ages, a period often characterized by despondent passivity. Consumed with anxiety over their eternal destinies, and believing that the church held control over them, people resigned themselves to awaiting their fate.

Augustine's influence on the church is significant to our discussion in that his idea of Christianity as a powerful, physical, and institutional presence in the world eventually resulted in papal supremacy. The concept of a universal church, which began with Ignatius, was advocated by Irenaeus, and more clearly defined by Cyprian, was fully articulated by Augustine.

Augustine believed that the visible institution of the Catholic church throughout the world was the Body of Christ, and that outside it there was no salvation. He also thought both baptism and the Lord's Supper

were necessary for salvation, but that these did not guarantee one was among God's elect. As long as a person is in this mortal flesh, according to Augustine, that person shall be uncertain where he or she is in the number of the predestined.

Supported by Augustinian theology, the clergy exerted unbelievable power throughout the Middle Ages. Heaven and hell were in their hands. Thus, not only had the average believer forfeited ministry to the clergy, but access to personal salvation was in the hands of the clergy as well. The possibility that God's people

might function according to our thesis had been destroyed. The average believer was encircled by the institutional church.

WHAT SHOULD THEY HAVE DONE?

All of these men we have just described were both brilliant and godly. They were zealous to the point of death for the purity of the gospel and for the unity of God's people. We are indebted to them, for they did much to preserve the faith we now enjoy. Yet, as we have seen, there were seeds of death in the ideas they put into motion, and eventually these ideas destroyed the very things they were laboring to preserve. This frightens me. Sincerity and zeal do not serve as guarantees against error. It is probably true that anything that has human fingerprints on it is seriously marred and will eventually need replacing by God, the Lord of His people. Even our best ideas, in time, result in unintended consequences.

But what can we conclude? With the advantage of hindsight let us ask the question, What should they have done? Does the Bible give us anything to go on in this matter? There are lessons to be learned from both Jesus and the Apostle Paul.

Lessons from Jesus
As Jesus looked to the future, He knew what He was sending His followers into. He warned them, "You will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me . . . . Many will turn away from the faith . . . many false prophets will appear and deceive many people." But Jesus coped with these pressures in ways very different from the ones we just observed.

Calling on His Father to protect His people, He said, "Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name . . . so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me . . . . My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one . . . . As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world." Jesus never said or

did anything to indicate that structure and organization could serve to protect God's people. Shepherds and servants, yes, they would be needed, but He never talked about structure. Not that He was against structure. It is necessary, as we shall see, but for protecting His people, He had something far more trustworthy—the Holy Spirit. As He was about to return to His Father, He told His disciples, "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised . . . the Holy Spirit." He would teach them all things. He would keep them and empower them.

Lessons from Paul
In Acts 20, we find the Apostle Paul preparing to depart from Ephesus, where he had devoted three-and-a-half years to establishing the believers. In his final conversation with the leaders, he reminded them of the responsibility of shepherding God's people. He acknowledged the inevitable dangers of division and false teaching. But he did not attempt to institute a protective organization. Instead he said, "I commit you to God and

to the word of his grace." Those struggling believers were surrounded by dangers of every sort, but Paul believed there was more strength to be found in the Spirit of God and the Word of God than there was in institutional structures. The Church Fathers we just reviewed either did not possess this same insight, or they did not have the courage to take the risk of letting Christ preserve His people.

I am not saying that organizations and institutions are wrong. Life would be maddeningly chaotic without them, but they are often misused. I believe that what we saw in our review represents a misuse. To begin with, these men took their cues for organizing and administrating the church from the model of the Roman Empire rather than from Christ and the Scriptures. But their more serious error lies in the fact that they counted on the structures they had created to preserve the saints and their faith. As a result, "Christianity had become in many striking ways a mirror-image of the empire itself. It was catholic, universal, ecumenical, orderly, international, multi-racial and increasingly legalistic. It was administered by a professional class of literates who in some ways functioned like bureaucrats and its bishops, like imperial governors, legates or prefects, had wide discretionary powers to interpret the law."

I cannot but wonder what would have come of God's people had they continued to count on the Holy Spirit, rather than on structures, for their survival. And what would we be today had they maintained a more balanced focus, concerning themselves with the importance of every being involved in the life of the body and its mission in society, along with its concerns for purity of doctrine and organizational unity? Certain things would be very different today had they maintained that balance. And who knows how deeply the gospel would have penetrated into society!

In this section we will span almost a millennium with just a few short paragraphs. The course for the church of the Middle Ages had been set by the year 600, so our attention will be directed more toward the forces that eventually brought about the Reformation.

In treating the Middle Ages in this way, I could contribute to the popular notion that the Middle Ages was a period in history where nothing really happened, and what did happen was bad. That is not true. Many great things happened, but this is not a book of complete history.

The glimpses we get of some early popes reveal that the papal structure, once conceived, quickly became a powerful institution. They also reveal that those popes, and the churches under their authority, made some amazing contributions to society, and to the expansion of the gospel.

Paul Johnson describes the varied activities of an early Dark Age pope. Gregory I, who assumed the papacy in 589, occupied himself with a variety of business and social matters. He repaired aqueducts, bred horses, slaughtered cattle, administered legacies, set the price levels on rents and leases, and so on. Motivated by the need to build a financial base for the ecclesiastical administration, Gregory I fixed taxes on marriages, death duties, and land.

The clergy under Gregory I already had a caste structure that was reflected in their dress. Both the structure and the attitude mirrored the imperial senate and legislature. So, in effect, the clergy was imitating imperial Rome in appearance as well as function.

The clergy's great contribution to this period was the concept and application of law. The early Dark Age church had a complete and sophisticated body of written law, which it transmitted via missionary bishops to the barbarian world. When the barbarian societies accepted baptism, the bishops almost immediately set up arrangements to link the legal customs of the church with the existing pagan law codes. Thus the church became

identified with progress and the future in the minds of the barbarians. Christianization was seen to be the point at which a people passed from being primitive and barbarous to civilized. The church gave barbarian society institutions, law, and history. It also introduced superior economic and agricultural techniques, as the monks who scattered out over Europe proved to be good farmers.

It was inevitable, given the theology, institution, and industry of the church of the Middle Ages, that it would increasingly accumulate power. That power, in turn, invited abuse. Pope Innocent III (r. 1198-1216) consolidated that power in what amounted to a theory of papal world government. The universal church, he wrote, exercised plenary powers in all aspects of government. He said, "By me kings reign and princes decree justice." With this, Innocent III challenged the office of the emperor itself. "Either the Pope was the emperor's chief bishop; or the emperor was the Pope's nominee and puppet." One or the other had to go. This launched a ferocious power struggle that eventually demanded the Reformation.

The papal weapons in this struggle were excommunication and interdict. These were terrifying weapons, as excommunication was thought to sentence a person to eternal doom, and interdict meant the priests would go on strike, refusing to perform marriages, burials, etc. As the power struggle accelerated, the bishops increasingly abused these weapons. Antagonism between king and clergy could only grow.

In this period, there were kings who clung to the ideal of a single Christian church and state. England's Henry II was one of these. He genuinely wanted to make the Christian society work. He believed that an active, vigorous, even militant church was necessary for the well-being of the commonwealth. But by his time, in the twelfth century, the posture of the papacy had become so radical that this good will was wasted. The forerunners of the Reformation soon began to make themselves heard.

THE EARLY REFORMERS

Reviewing the issues raised by the early reformers reveals the forces that drove the Reformation itself.

Peter Waldo: d.c. 1217

Among the earliest harbingers of the Reformation was Peter Waldo, a wealthy merchant of Lyons. Seeking to imitate Christ, he sold everything and went out to preach in city and countryside. He soon attracted followers who did the same. The church forbade them, and in 1184 Waldo was excommunicated by the pope. Nonetheless they continued.

Waldo preached against corruption in the church. He held that women and laymen could preach, that masses and prayers for the dead were without value, and that a layperson was as competent as a priest to hear confessions.

Waldo and his followers, the Waldenses, were branded as heretics. The Catholic Church and the civil authorities set out to eliminate them. They were persecuted until few survived.

John Wyclif: c. 1328-84
John Wyclif was a student and teacher at Oxford. He attacked the papacy with the charge that popes can and do make mistakes, and that a worldly pope was subject to discipline and should be removed from office. He maintained that "salvation does not depend upon a connection with the visible Church or upon the mediation of the priesthood, but solely upon election by God." He condemned the worship of saints and relics, and pilgrimages. He rejected the idea of indulgences and masses for the dead.

His most audacious move was to translate the Bible from the Vulgate into the English vernacular. He insisted that the Scriptures were the supreme authority, and that ordinary people could understand them. He sent out traveling preachers whom he called "poor priests that preach . . . unlearned and simple" men, or simply "itinerant preachers." They preached wherever they could get a hearing—on the roads, in villages, or church yards.

Through his writings and the labors of the itinerants, Wyclif won a large number of followers, known as Lollards.

John Hus: c. 1373-1415
Hus, stimulated by Wyclif's writings, denounced the evils in the Bohemian Catholic Church and society. He charged the clergy, from the parish priest to the pope, with corruption. He held that Christ, not Peter, was the Head of the church, and that the Bible was the sole rule for life.

Hus's primary concern was moral reform. He called for a moral clergy and free preaching of the gospel. Hus was condemned for his beliefs and burned at the stake on July 6, 1415.

Erasmus: c. 1466-1536
In 1499 Erasmus heard the dean of Saint Paul's, John Colet, lecture at Oxford, England, on the book of Romans. This so inspired Erasmus that he devoted the next forty years of his life to reexamining the Scriptures, and to writing an array of small, inexpensive books for wide distribution.

Erasmus regarded himself as a layman. He supported himself with his publications and insisted that there could be no intermediaries between Christians and the Scriptures. He wanted to see the Bible as accessible as possible—and in vernacular translations. This was a bold position, because from about AD 1080 the clergy totally forbade laymen from reading the Bible—whether vernacular or not. Attempts to examine the Bible were viewed as proof of heresy and could cost one his or her life!

Summary
Certain recurring themes are apparent in the positions of the early reformers. They protested against the corruption of the clergy, right up to the papacy. They questioned the very concept of a papacy. They called for free access to the Scriptures for lay people, and defended their rights to preach and to minister. Thus, in Latourette's words, "The ground swell issuing form the rank and file of Christians was to come to flood tide." It would purify the Roman Catholic Church of some of its worst moral abuses, and would flow into "one or another aspect of what is collectively known as Protestantism."

But would these fresh winds that were blowing across the church be strong enough to bring the ideals of our thesis back to where they could be practiced?

FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE PURITANS: 1517-1628

The Reformation was not a single movement as some might think. It was more like a convoy of movements that proceeded simultaneously. The Protestant Reformation consisted of four primary movements: Lutheran, Reformed, Anabaptist, and Anglican. The Catholic Reformation came as a response to these, and was really

a counterreformation. Both Catholic and Protestant movements had in common the desire to cleanse the church of corruption and correct its errors.

In this section we will try to understand how the Reformation influenced the church's perception of its responsibility to the unbelieving world, and its view of the average believer's ministry inside and outside the church. Each of the Protestant movements handled this question somewhat differently.

Lutheranism

Martin Luther (1483-1546) was the first outstanding leader of Protestantism. While a monk, the meaning of the phrase in Romans 1:17, "The just shall live by faith," dawned on him. From that time on (about 1516), Luther lived in awe of God's forgiveness and the free gift of salvation. Through Luther, "justification by faith" became the dominant truth.

The issuance of indulgences by the Roman Catholic Church was based on the belief that the pope could draw on the treasury of the saints to remit the temporal penalties for sin for both the living and the souls in purgatory. The indulgence was a very marketable idea. Its lucrative potential invited clerical corruption. Thus, the sale of indulgences did much to prompt the Reformation: it provoked Luther, on October 31, 1517, to post his ninety-five theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. Luther was throwing down the gauntlet, offering to debate the subject with anyone disposed to take him on. That act is commonly viewed as the beginning of the Reformation.

Luther took issue with the idea that one could amass good works by going on pilgrimages, fasting, confessing, and calling on the saints. He rejected the notion that popes, bishops, priests, and monks were superior to the laity. All Christians, he maintained, were consecrated priests and thereby competent to discern what was right in matters of faith. He held that each Christian had the right and duty to interpret the Scriptures, the sole authority.

In April 1521, Luther defended himself before the judiciary body of the church and the emperor. Given the mood of the day, and what had happened to Hus under similar circumstances, one wonders how he lived to tell about it. "A single individual was pitting his reason and his integrity against established institutions which were the bulwark of society."

Luther started a movement and subsequently organized it. He viewed the church as "the assembly of all the believers in Christ upon earth . . . though they be a thousand miles apart in body, yet they are called an assembly in spirit because each one preaches, believes, hopes, loves, and lives like the other . . . . And this unity is of itself sufficient to make a Church."

In defining the visible church Luther said, "The external marks, whereby one can perceive where this Church is on earth, are baptism, the Sacrament and the Gospel; and not Rome, or this place, or that. For where baptism and the Gospel are, no one may doubt that there are saints, even if it were only the babes in their cradles."

The Reformed Churches

Although the Reformed movement within Protestantism came about through the efforts of several people, John Calvin (1509-1564) did the most to shape it. At twenty-six years of age, in Basel, Switzerland, Calvin published his first edition of *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*. This is probably the single most influential book of the Protestant Reformation because it offered a clear, orderly, comprehensive presentation of the Christian faith. Calvin revised this work through his lifetime, publishing his fourth revision in 1559.

In addressing the subject of the church, Calvin maintained that it was not identical with any visible institution, but included all the elect. It was invisible and known only to God. As to the visible manifestation of the church, he said it existed "wherever we find the word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ." Church members included "all those who by a confession of faith, an exemplary life, and a participation of the sacraments profess the same God and Christ as ourselves."

Calvin was concerned that there be order in the church. The church should have judiciaries appointed to censure vice and to excommunicate wayward parishioners. Calvin held that originally there were apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. He believed God raised up the first three only for special occasions, while pastors and teachers were constant.

Calvin held to the view, inspired by Augustine, of a holy community where church and state functioned together. He attempted to make the city of Geneva a model of this cooperation.

The Anabaptists

The Anabaptist movement was contemporaneous with Lutheranism and Calvinism, but it was more radical than either. Its origins are uncertain. It was not led by a few strong individuals in the way the Lutheran and Reformed movements were. Consequently, considerable diversity makes it difficult to summarize what Anabaptists believed.

In general, they looked to the Scriptures and especially the New Testament as their authority. They wished to return to first-century primitive Christianity, and tended to withdraw from society, to seek perfection in communities of their own—far from the contamination of the world. They believed in churches composed of those who had experienced new birth. They rejected infant baptism, regarding as valid only the baptism administered to conscious believers. This is where they got their name. It was a nickname that stuck—Anabaptist, those who baptize a second time.

Among the strands of Anabaptists were some who believed that in them prophecy had been revived. Some denied the divinity of Christ. Many were ardently missionary, seeking to persuade not only Christians of their views, but also of carrying the gospel to all mankind.

The Anabaptists were persecuted from every side: by the Roman Catholic Church, by the Lutherans, and by the Reformed Church.

The Anglicans and Puritans

First encouraged for political and personal reasons by Henry VIII, the Anglican Reformation in England was different from the others. In order to get a divorce from Katherine of Aragon, and the right to marry Anne Boleyn, he had to gain control of the Roman Catholic Church in England. The Act of Supremacy, issued in 1534, achieved that end. It declared the king as "the only supreme head in earth of the Church of England." In doctrine, the Church of England remained basically unchanged. One difference, of course, was in its definition of the church. According to the Anglican creed, "The visible Church of Christ is the congregation of faithful men in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same."

The Puritans, a party within the Anglican Church, wanted further reform. Their objectives were to purify the church according to the Bible, to restrict church membership to those who had demonstrated their election, and to establish the autonomy of particular congregations.

In 1628 more than twenty thousand Puritans embarked for New England to work out the complete reformation, which they felt had not yet been accomplished in England and Europe.

<center>

HOW DID IT GO WITH THE PURITANS?

</center>

The migration of the Puritans began in 1628 and lasted sixteen years. The motivating force behind those life-threatening, one-way journeys was the covenant these Puritans had made with God and with one another to be a church and a society that was Christian in the way they defined it. "They saw their task of settlement as God-given: an 'errand into the wilderness,' an experiment in Christian living, the founding of a 'city upon a hill.'"
Peter Marshall and David Manuel write of the structure of Puritan life. As the Puritans settled, "First a church covenanted together, then the town formed around it." Thus for them church and government were inseparable. Life revolved around the church.

> Sunday was the *first* day of the week, not the last. There was the morning service, which lasted three to four hours, after which they adjourned for a light lunch and returned for the afternoon teaching which could run another three hours. Then came Sunday dinner, the hardiest meal of the week.

The pastor was the key figure, generally a graduate of Oxford or Cambridge. As the best educated man in the community, he was the sole source of both secular and religious knowledge. Thus, he served multiple needs; he pastured, he educated. He served as the equivalent of our anchorman on the daily news.
The Puritans, and the early American settlers of other ecclesiastical origins, such as the Pilgrims, demonstrated great spiritual vitality. Personal holiness and integrity were life-and-death issues. They were a disciplined people and imposed their norms on one another.

As for church structure, the early settlers did break away from the clerical hierarchies common to Europe, with congregationalism becoming the common replacement. But the pastor and the sermon continued to be the centerpiece of church life. It's hard to conceive how it could have been any different, as the society was predominantly rural, and illiteracy was high.

We are indebted to the Puritans for what they brought to the founding of our nation. The biblical religion of those first American settlers had significant influence on the legal, political, and economic systems of the fledgling nation. They helped lay the moral foundations upon which this nation has stood.

But the areas of our concern were not on their agenda.

WHAT HAPPENED—WHAT DIDN'T HAPPEN?

The more one reflects on the Reformation and on the achievements of those who made it happen, the more unbelievable it becomes. Again and again lone individuals, because of their convictions, defied and often confronted formidable institutions that held the power of life or death over them. Entire communities of unnamed believers accepted persecution, torture, and death in preference to denying what they believed. Certainly the signature of the Holy Spirit is written across that one-hundred-year period of our history. What would have come of the church had these people not done what they did? The issues they fought for were vital: justification by faith, the authority of the Scriptures and free access to them, the priesthood of the believer, and the call to purity and integrity.

But the question remains, Did the Reformation succeed in restoring the biblical perspective of the church as being God's people, sent into the world as witnesses? Did it restore to the believer his or her place in the ministry? Our answers are found in the work the Reformers did in redefining the church.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH, ACCORDING TO THE REFORMERS?

In this chapter we have looked at some of the Reformers' definitions of the church. When they repudiated the papal system, their previously held doctrine of the church fell apart. To that point, the pope had been the unifying factor for the church. His clerical hierarchy encompassed it. The Reformers had to set to the task of disentangling the church from the papacy. How, they had to ask themselves, should a church without a pope look? Most of them defined the church in two dimensions. That is, they described a universal, invisible church consisting of all who truly belonged to God, and they described its visible, local expression.

When we compare this two-dimensional definition with the multiform expression of God's people in the New Testament, it's hard not to conclude that something big is missing in their work. The church they describe seems

to congregate more than anything else. The "traveling expressions" of God's people are absent. And although average believers gained their freedom to find salvation and study the Scriptures on their own, they did not recover their share of ownership in the ministry.

Three of the four Protestant Reformation movements—Lutheranism, Reformed Presbyterian, and Anglican—became state churches. Lutheranism and the Reformed Presbyterian Churches were, in many ways, a continuation of the Catholic Church in their respective lands. The same could be said for Anglicanism. Each sought to be the church of the entire community. They succeeded in several countries. People entered the church by infant baptism, and all people had their children baptized.

Thus, in the areas of our concern, nothing really changed. The clergy retained ownership of the ministry, and the "unbelieving world" was enrolled in the church. The Anabaptists were at the other extreme, as their posture was frequently separatist, avoiding contact with the unbelieving society.

Why could something so central as God's purpose for His people in the world and the nature of their ministry be missed in this historic period? I think it is because reforms are always in response to specific needs. They happen in a context. The Reformers dealt with the immediate needs as they perceived them. Without question, they changed the map in favor of the gospel. But they did not, could not, address every issue.

Most of the issues left unaddressed were pre-Roman Catholic Church in origin. They date back to the Church Fathers! The Reformers did not go so far as to question the precedents established by the Church Fathers prior to the Roman Catholic Church. The Church Fathers were the originators of the dichotomy between the clergy and the laity. True, the Protestant Reformers affirmed the priesthood of all believers, but they did little to facilitate their reinstatement into ministry on the levels called for by our thesis.

SUMMARY

As we implement our Calling it is vital we focus on the functions, the things that really need to happen, rather than the preservation of forms from the past. The question we need to keep before us is, "What needs to happen to accomplish the ministry God has given us?" We need forms to do this, but we have freedom to use forms that best suit our time and context.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. "See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ."   Colossians 2:8
    - ❑ What guidelines are given in Colossians 2:9-23 that help us avoid the "captivity" mentioned by Paul in verse 8?
2. In what ways can forms hinder the Gospel's purity, or our ability to take the Gospel to the lost around us?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY

1. What do the people you are ministering to really need?
2. What forms will you use to respond to these needs?
3. How do the forms you are currently using look to the people you are focusing on?
4. Are you using forms that no longer fulfill their original function for those you currently minister to?   Why do you continue using these forms?

CRITICAL FACTOR IV – STUDY 3:
THE SAFE PLACE

INTRODUCTION

One of the primary functions of the Gospel is healing broken people and making them whole. The Messianic prophecies of Isaiah speak of this (Isaiah 61:1-3). Jesus describes His task in light of these prophecies, (Luke 4:18) and the Epistles describe how healing works out practically in community (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

Our Calling roots our ministry in the soil of the lost and broken and only the Gospel can transform them. The Gospel involves reconciliation with God and therefore with one another. The community that flows out of reconciliation is the environment where brokenness is repaired. For this to happen people must have a safe place.

1. What does it mean to walk in darkness and what does it do to a person?
   Isaiah 50:10-11   John 3:19-21   John 12:35-36   Romans 1:21-22
2. What does it mean to walk in the light? What is required for people to have fellowship with one another?
   1 John 1:5-10
   In confession the break-through to community takes place. Sin demands to have a person by himself or herself. It withdraws them from community. The more isolated a person is, the more destructive will be the power of sin over them.
3. What characterizes a ' safe place'?
   Galatians 6:2   Ephesians 4:2   Ephesians 4:15   Colossians 3:13
   Hebrews 3:13   James 5:16
4. Consider this statement from Bonhoeffer… *"He who is alone with his sin is utterly alone. It may be that Christians, not withstanding corporate worship, common prayer, and all their fellowship in service, may still be left to their loneliness…though they have fellowship with one another as believers and as devout people, they do not have fellowship as the undevout, as sinners. The pious fellowship permits no one to be a sinner…we dare not be sinners…so we remain alone with our sin… the fact is we are sinners.*
   - ❑ What hinders a group of believers from moving beyond the fellowship of the devout to the fellowship of the undevout?
   - ❑ Trust is vital to the creating of a safe place. What builds trust? What erodes trust?

SUMMARY

A 'safe place' is plays an essential part in the transformation of 'lost and broken people' into the likeness of Christ. All too often congregating, performance, and superficiality characterize our fellowship. Everyone needs a set of relationships, where with vulnerability, and authenticity they can step into the light and experience forgiveness and the enabling and encouragement of others.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. Have you ever experienced a 'safe place'? If so what made it safe? How did this happen?
2. Is there a difference between ' transparency' and 'vulnerability'? If so how would you describe the difference?
3. Is it possible for spiritual transformation to take place without a 'safe place'?
4. In what ways might the absence of 'safe places' affect the advance of the Gospel?
5. What role do leaders have in building an environment of safety?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY

1. What words/phrases would best describe the quality of fellowship in your ministry?
2. What are you doing to build an environment that encourages openness, vulnerability, forgiveness and healing?
3. If you have a young woman in your ministry battling with 'eating disorders' or a young man struggling with 'pornography' would they feel free and safe to bring this into the light? Why or why not?

CRITICAL FACTOR IV — STUDY 4:
MEN AND WOMEN IN MINISTRY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to examine why it is essential men and women partner in implementing our Navigator calling. We will examine 3 interlocking themes:
1. The New Testament examples of men and women vigorously participating in a wide range of ministry.
2. Gender and participation in the Great Commission.
3. Gifting and contribution to the Body of Christ.

It is important that we look at all 3 themes. Too often we focus on just one theme. When this happens confusion reigns and we pay a big price.

MEN AND WOMEN: PARTNERING IN MINISTRY

1. In what ways did men and women work together for the advance of the Gospel according to these New Testament examples?
   Luke 8:1-3 Acts 9:36-43 Acts 16:13-15 Acts 16:38-40 Acts 18:24-26 Acts 21:7-9 Romans 16:1-16 Philippians 4:2-3 Colossians 4:15 1 Timothy 5:9-10 Titus 2:1-11 2 John 1:1-6
2. What are some possible implications for your ministry from these passages?

GENDER AND MINISTRY

Many factors define a person's contribution to God's purposes (e.g. calling, character and gifting). The relationship between gender and contribution is a contentious issue for some people. Some of the most difficult passages in the Scriptures relate to this issue. It is not the intent of this study to resolve the issue, but rather to look at several of these passages that are relevant to 'men and women partnering in mission'.
1. Study the following passages in their context. 1 Corinthians 11:3 and 7-12 1 Timothy 2:12-13
   - What do you notice about the relationship between gender and contribution?
   - How do your observations relate to the previous section on New Testament examples?
   - Are there any limits on a woman's contribution?
   - Are there any limits on a man's contribution?

GIFTING AND MINISTRY

1. What does the factor of 'gifting' add to an understanding of men and women partnering in ministry?
   Acts 2:17-21 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 Ephesians 4:7-16

SUMMARY

The Scriptures, through example and teaching, strongly affirm the partnership of men and women in God's purposes. Healthy relationships between men and women provide a wonderful opportunity to show the transforming power of the Gospel to a lost and broken world.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." – Genesis 2:18 Does this statement only apply to marriage? Or does it also apply to partnering within the Body of Christ?
2. What are the limitations of a men's only ministry?
3. What are the limitations of a women's only ministry?
4. Have your ever experienced or observed healthy partnership of men and women in ministry? Describe this situation. Why was this partnership so healthy? What made it work?
5. What are the hindrances to men and women partnering in ministry? Do the Scriptures have anything to say about overcoming these hindrances?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY

1. Are men and women contributing to your ministry with the same level of motivation? Why or why not?
2. Do woman in your ministry have as many opportunities for involvement, development and influence as the men? Why or why not?
3. What hindrances do you see in your ministry to women and men partnering? What are you doing to address these hindrances?
4. What is the most strategic thing you could do right now to strengthen the partnership between men and women in your ministry?

CRITICAL FACTOR IV — STUDY 5: COMMUNITY AND MISSION

INTRODUCTION

As we have seen 'community' is vital to our calling in the world. However a reading of church history reveals how easily 'community' and 'mission' become disconnected. Community too easily becomes a place where believers meet for certain activities. The identity of the community shifts from a people 'sent' into the world, to a place where people 'congregate'. We are caught between conflicts of priorities. One is the care and equipping of the believing community. The other is the need of the surrounding unbelieving world. What takes priority - the ministry to the believers or the mission to the lost? Both of course are vital, but we have great difficulty keeping them together.
In this study we will examine 3 themes that can help us resolve the tension.
1. How did local communities of believers live out mission from the examples and teaching of the Epistles?
2. How does an understanding of the 'church' affect the ability of a community of believers to be a missional community?
3. How should we respond to the busyness and fragmentation of life?

THE EXAMPLE AND TEACHING OF THE EPISTLES

1. How do the Epistles portray local communities of believers penetrating society with the Gospel?
   Romans 12:14-21   1 Corinthians 5:9-13   1 Corinthians 14:22-25   Galatians 6:9-10
   Philippians 2:14-16   Colossians 4:5-6   1 Thessalonians 4:11-12   Titus 2:2-10
   1 Peter 2:9-25   1 Peter 3:1-16
2. What do you think contributes to a community losing visibility to the non-believing world?

UNDERSTANDING CHURCH

1. A Word study on *ekklessia* (church)
   - ❏ **Ekklessia** *from 'ek'* out of and *'klessia'* a calling (*kaleo*, to call)
   - ❏ **Secular usage**
     - A legally convened assembly called to discuss and decide on public issues. A political gathering.
     - An assembly convened to discuss an issue. (Acts 19:32,39,40)
   - ❏ **New Testament**
     - Translated church.
     - The whole company of the redeemed. Matthew 16:18
     - The Church that is His Body. Ephesians 1:22; 5:23
     - A company of believers. Acts 20:28, 1 Corinthians 1:2
     - The churches in a region.
2. Where does the Church fit into God's purposes?
   Ephesians 1:18-23   Ephesians 3:10-11   Ephesians 5:25-30   Colossians 1:18   Colossians 1:24-27
3. When we think 'church' a variety of images come to mind. We may think of distinct buildings, liturgies, creeds, denominations, God's people in the world and so on. Some of these images come from Scripture and others from tradition. Some are helpful and others confining. On page 5 of his book The Missional Church – A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America, Darrell Guder says, *"Neither the structures nor the theology of our established Western traditional churches is missional. They are shaped by the legacy of Christendom. …they have been formed by centuries in which Western civilization considered itself formally and officially Christian."*
   Whether you agree or disagree with this statement by Guder, it is important we understand the variety of expressions of 'church' in the New Testament.
   Matthew 16:18   Acts 9:31   Acts 11:26   Acts 12:1
   1 Corinthians 16:19   Ephesians 3:21   Romans 16:1-5   Romans 16:16
   Romans 16:23
4. What <u>can</u> we learn from a study of the word *ekklessia*?
5. What <u>can't</u> we learn from the study of the word *ekklessia*?

> As we provide community for new believers there is great freedom Biblically to innovate and experiment. This freedom gives us more room than we may be taking in addressing the need to care for and equip believers while at the same time living missionally.

BUSYNESS AND FRAGMENTATION

"Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking."
Romans 12:2 *The Message*

The Problem of Progress – based on an article by Don Bartel

The life of the average American is pressed, frenetic, fragmented, isolated, and compartmentalized. He/she lives an isolated, independent, and privatized life. He/she is overly busy and has experienced a profound loss of meaning. He/she is squeezed on all sides and doesn't know why or how to get out. We are besieged by anxiety, stress, and fatigue. How did we get into this situation and what direction do we go to get out of it?

The idea of progress holds that humanity has advanced in the past, is now advancing, and will continue to advance through the foreseeable future. Most of this advancement has come through the tools of economics, education, and technology. These tools have tapped into our drives to have more, to know more, and to do more. Collectively, we now have more houses, cars, clothes, TV's, CD players, and computers than ever before. We have more information to assimilate and can build things faster, better, and stronger than ever before.

But, for all of these gains, we have paid a great price. We have succumbed to the tendency to inexorably add detail to our lives: one more option, one more problem, one more commitment, one more expectation, one more purchase, one more debt, one more change, one more job, one more decision. And we have done so until it now hurts. We feel like we are on the fast track to fatigue, exhaustion, and collapse. We have learned from painful experience that the spontaneous flow of progress is toward increasing stress, complexity, and overload consuming more and more of our time, money, energy, and margin[1].

The greatest pains of progress, however, lie in the area of relationships. Instead of loving more, some are finding it difficult to love at all. Their relationship with God seems spiritually dry, distant, and lifeless. Socially, they feel isolated, alienated, alone or in conflict. Personally, they feel anxious, fearful, and stressed.

We all know all too well the realities of the busyness and fragmentation characteristic of American life. But, are we aware of how negatively this cultural reality impacts the flow of the Gospel? How **available** are we to love and form meaningful relationships with the people we live amongst? Is the "light of Christ" **visible** to the unbelieving world in the compartmentalized, insular, busy life we lead?

[1MARGIN- the space between ourselves and our limits; something held in reserve for contingencies or unanticipated situations; the gap between rest and exhaustion, between reacting and choosing, between survival and living purposefully]

---

1. What can be done to regain the margin[2], integration[3] and visibility that are essential to the Gospel advancing through a community of believers? It would be foolish to attempt to live in the 21st century as if we were still in the 1st. However, in responding to this question we can learn a great deal by studying the Scriptures and learning from the example of the early Christians.
    [1 **INTEGRATION-** synthesis, unity, the combination or coordination of separate elements of life so as to provide a harmonious interrelated whole.]

THE EARLY CHURCH

"We need to discover how Christians managed to remain an open network, able to keep building bonds with outsiders rather than becoming a closed community of believers." The Rise of Christianity - Rodney Stark

In the Greco-Roman world, the household was the basic unit of society. The Greek word for this was 'oikos'. 'Oikos' was an **integrated** system that linked family, education, commerce, leisure, and religion. These existing relationships became an important vehicle that carried the gospel into the culture of the first century. New life in Christ was lived out in the reality of all the relationships the person **already** had when they became Christians, - the household (oikos).

Contrast that with our fragmented lives today where all too often Christianity becomes another segment of an already fragmented life.

Note in the following passages the place of household (*oikos*) in the advancing of the Gospel.

| Acts 11:13-14 | Acts 16:14-15 | Acts 16:31-34 | Acts 18:7-8 |
| Acts 20:20 | 1 Corinthians 16:15 | Philippians 4:22 | |

In the New Testament, church (Ekklesia) was closely linked to family, economic and social life (oikos). The early Church transformed existing forms and relationships. As a result the Gospel flowed from household to household.

2. In what ways might the close linkage of 'household' (*oikos*) and 'church' (*ekklesia*) have affected
   - ❑ The individual believer?
   - ❑ The unbelieving world?

SUMMARY

Much of the theology and structures of established Western Churches are shaped by the legacy of Christendom. As we seek to implement our calling we need to have a Biblical understanding of Church in order to live with the freedom needed to both meet the needs of believers and remain a missional community. Our sense of conflict with these two vital purposes for the church is compounded by the way we have allowed our lives to become driven and fragmented.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. One of the primary challenges we face in living out these insights lies in the fact that our contemporary social structure segments our relationships into independent, insular compartments. There is little or no spillover between the parts. We have a family life. We're expected to keep that to ourselves. Our business environments require another behavior. Social relationships often have no connection to either family or business. Churches often split up families at the front door, so they can go to their appropriate classes.
2. For many people believers their contemporary equivalent compared to the *oikos* of the New Testament can be illustrated as an independent set of institutions.
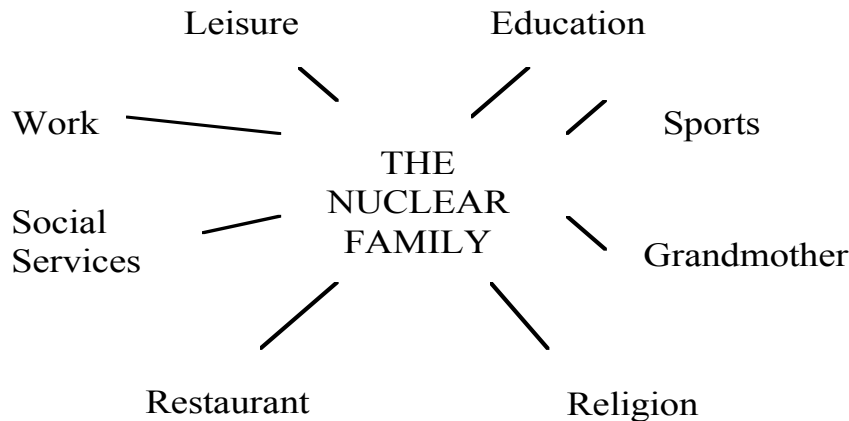

3. Use your imagination and draw a picture that illustrates how your life and relationships are currently arranged. Add names. Who would you include in your "oikos" (social network, extended family, circle of friends, etc.)

What does this tell you about the way you are currently living? Is your life too fragmented? Too insular? Are your relationships too diffuse? Are you spread too thin? Trying to do too much?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY

1. What forms of community are you using in your ministry? Which of these are visible to the non-believer?
2. Look at the way 'community' is being lived out in your ministry? In what ways does it help or hinder 'Going to the Lost', 'Discipling our Generation' and the emergence of Generations?
3. What are you doing to create an environment that enables the lifetime laborer to flourish?

CRITICAL FACTOR V:
LABORERS AND LEADERS

Going to
the lost

↕

Discipling our
Generation

**MINISTRY
TEAM** — **LAYING
FOUNDATIONS**

↕

Community

**SPIRITUAL
GENERATIONS**

↕
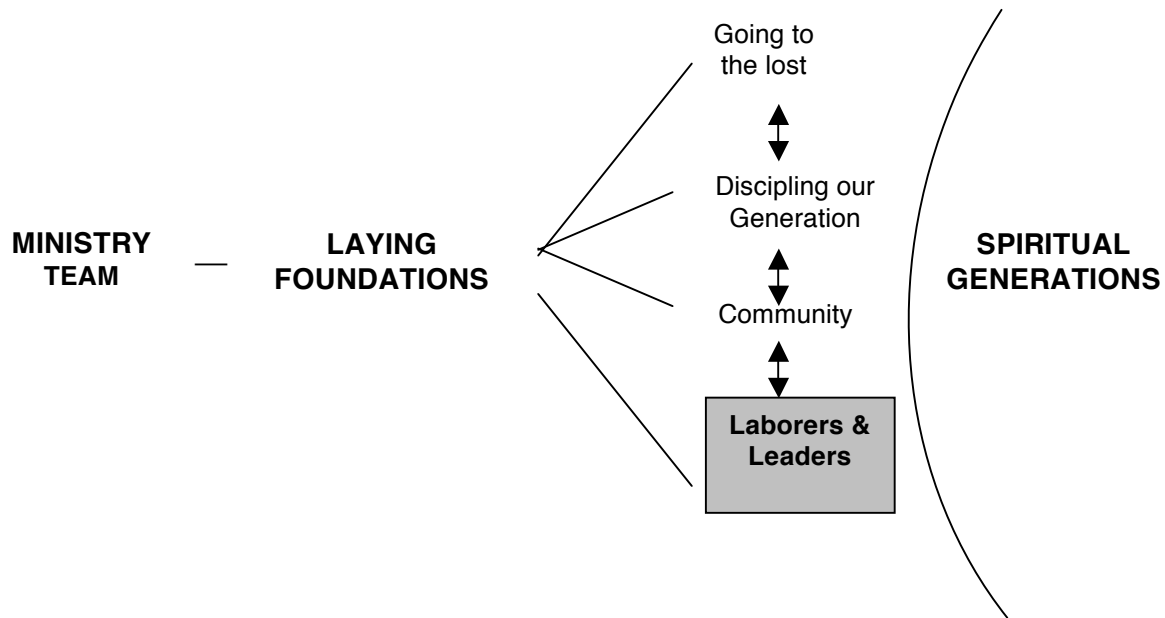
**Laborers &
Leaders**

CRITICAL FACTOR V STUDIES

Leadership is vital to building and sustaining a 'multiplying ministry'. Without focus and intentionality, leading will not happen. Our 'grassroots' ministries need to be the birthplace of new laborers and leaders, where these laborers and leaders emerge and best learn to lead.

History has shown that a ministry struggles to grow beyond the capacity of its leadership. We need to be deliberate and competent in identifying and developing new leaders. 2 Timothy 2:2

We will look at four studies in Critical Factor V.

STUDY 1 – UNDERSTANDING THE ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP FUNCTIONS OF A MULTIPLYING MINISTRY
What sort of leading is needed in each of the Critical Factors of a Multiplying Ministry?

STUDY 2 – APOSTOLIC AND LOCAL LEADERS
What is the difference? Who does what and where? Why is it important to understand the difference?

STUDY 3 – WHAT DO LABORERS NEED FROM LEADERS?
How are laborers developed and what sort of environment is needed for them to flourish?

STUDY 4 – THE LEADER
What sort of leaders do people want to follow? Where does the mandate for leaders come from? The character of the leader is essential. "It (leader's character) empowers the leaders' capacities while keeping them in check".[4]

---

[4] Bill Thrall, Bruce McNicol and Ken McElrath – The Ascent of a Leader – Jossey-Bass

CRITICAL FACTOR V — STUDY 1: UNDERSTANDING THE ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP FUNCTIONS OF A MULTIPLYING MINISTRY

INTRODUCTION

If we limit our understanding of leadership to the omni-competent leader having to do everything, we will be severely limited in the implementation of our Calling. We need to identify the leadership functions that need to occur in each of the Critical Factors and then discern how to best bring leadership to the functions.

WHAT LEADERSHIP IS NEEDED?

As you answer these questions keep in mind examples from the Book of Acts. What leadership was provided for the different situations that arose?

1. What sorted of leadership is needed to **"Lay Foundations"**?
   ❑ What do leaders need to know and be able to do?
   ❑ What development do they need?
   ❑ Where do these leaders come from?
2. What sort of leadership is needed in **"Going to the Lost"**?
   ❑ Where do these leaders come from? Who finds them?
   ❑ What do they need to know…and know how to do?
3. What are the leadership needs in '**Discipling our Generation**'?
   ❑ How does healing and growth take place?
   ❑ What leadership skills are needed if this is going to happen?
4. What kinds of leaders are needed in **'Building Community'**?
   ❑ What kind of leading needs to happen in 'grassroots' expressions of community?
   ❑ What equipping do they need?
   ❑ Where do these leaders come from?
   ❑ What do they need to keep growing?

SUMMARY

A plurality of leaders and leadership skills are needed for a 'multiplying ministry' to be formed, grow strong and have ongoing health for generations.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. Taking these four factors as a whole, what stands out to you concerning leadership?
2. What kinds of leaders are critical to 'multiplying ministries'?
3. What sort of relationships do these leaders need?
4. At what point do new leaders emerge? Where do they come from?
5. What kind of outside resourcing is needed? What is helpful? What is not helpful?
6. Where does 'gifting' fit into the picture?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY?

1. Who is leading in your ministry? What are they doing? In what ways are they building/sustaining a 'multiplying ministry'?
2. What functions are not happening in your ministry that are vital to a 'multiplying ministry'? What functions are present, but need strengthening?
3. How are you currently identifying and developing emerging leaders? What are you developing them for?
4. Are new leaders emerging in your ministry? Why or why not?
5. What help could you use in this area of leading? Where can you get the help you need?

CRITICAL FACTOR V – STUDY 2:
APOSTOLIC AND LOCAL LEADERS

INTRODUCTION

In the New Testament account of the advance of the Gospel two general types of leadership are evident. Paul, Peter and many others were **'apostolic leaders'**. Wherever these leaders went with the Gospel they left behind **'local leaders'.** Although there is common ground shared by both types of leaders, there are also important differences in the scope and nature of their leadership. Understanding these differences is vital if we are to see the leadership needed not only to take the Gospel 'to' the nations, but also 'into' the nations.

APOSTOLIC LEADERSHIP

The word 'apostle' means a sent one. It refers to the role of one who has been commissioned and sent as a special messenger. In the New Testament it refers to the 12 specifically commissioned by Christ. In this sense it refers to a unique group of people at a unique time in history. Paul also claimed to be an apostle. The term also refers to a wider group of people involved in various ways in the advance of the Gospel.

As you study these New Testament examples identify what characterized 'apostle leadership'.

Acts 14:1-7	Acts 15:36	Acts 16:11-15	Acts 18:1-11
Acts 20:1-4	Romans 15:19-29	1 Corinthians 3:7-11	1 Corinthians 9:1-2
2 Corinthians 1:24	2 Corinthians 10:12-18	Galatians 2:1-10	Philippians 1:19-26
Philippians 2:19-20	1 Thessalonians 1:4-10	1 Thessalonians 1:4-10	1 Thessalonians 2:1-12
1 Timothy 2:2			

2. What can we learn about how leading occurred at the 'local level' from these passages? Where did local leadership come from?

Acts 13:1-3	Acts 14:21-23	Acts 20:25-35	Romans 16:1-14
1 Timothy 3:1-16	Titus 1:5-9	1 Peter 5:1-4	

3. Examine each of the greeting passages from Paul's letters to communities of local believers. You will notice that none of them mention any offices or titles. Do you see any significance in this? Why or why not? Why do you think that Paul addressed his letters to the church or to the saints and not to the leaders of the churches?

Romans 1:7	1 Corinthians 1:2	2 Corinthians 1:1	Galatians 1:2
Ephesians 1:1	Philippians 1:1	Colossians 1:2	1 Thessalonians 1:1
2 Thessalonians 1:1			

4. In what ways did the 'apostolic and local' leaders relate to each other?

Acts 15:2-6	Acts 16:1-5	Acts 20:22-35	1 Corinthians 3:5-11
2 Corinthians 8:16-24	Colossians 4:7-17		

SUMMARY

In the New Testament it required both 'apostolic and local' leadership to take the Gospel 'to and into' the nations. They were both independent and interdependent. They needed each other to see the Gospel advance. Their commitment to this end enabled them to work together. If the early church recognized the importance of local leading in a variety of expressions to their mission, what about us?

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What does it mean to lead 'apostolically' in the context of our Calling? Is apostolic leading a gift? A mindset? A function? Where does the team fit in?
2. Ephesians 4:11-16 identifies gifted people whose God-given purpose is to 'prepare God's people for works of service.' Do you view these people as providing services? As exercising gifts? As holding offices? Or what? Why do you think so?
3. Summarize the primary similarities and differences between 'apostolic and local leadership'.
4. Can a person lead both apostolically and locally?
5. Do some of your traditional views of leadership hinder the partnership between 'local and apostolic leadership?'
6. In a local grassroots ministry could it be that the people with the needed gift at a given moment provide leadership? Why or why not?
7. The 'life-time laborer' is vital to the implementation of our Calling. What are the local leadership functions needed for the laborer to increasingly be formed into the image of Christ and to be fruitful among the lost? Where will this leadership come from? What is working well already? What does not seem to be working?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY

1. What does it look like to lead apostolically in your ministry context? What would you expect to see to conclude this was happening? In light of this what are your current realities? What do you have to build on? What needs to change? To be strengthened?
2. What sort of leaders are you developing in your ministry? Are there 'apostolic leaders' emerging? Why or why not? Who are they? What do they need next?
3. Are you keeping in mind the differences between 'apostolic and local' leadership functions as you develop people? What could you do to strengthen the way you develop people in light of this distinction?
4. What are the leadership functions that need to occur at the grassroots level of your ministry? To what extent are these being met by non-staff laborers in your ministry?
5. As you review the names of those who have passed through your ministry and are not on full-time staff, are you encouraged with how they are contributing to the advance of the Gospel at the local level? Why or why not?

CRITICAL FACTOR V – STUDY 3:
WHAT DO LABORERS NEED FROM LEADERS?

INTRODUCTION

What happens to the lifetime laborer is a crucial question for our leaders. The ongoing fulfillment of our calling, to see the Gospel advancing, is dependent on generations of men and women laboring through all the seasons of their life among lost and broken people. For this to happen laborers need appropriate support from those they look to as spiritual leaders.

Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus in this regard. He said, *"He…gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers*, **to prepare God's people for works of service."**

God gives gifts to the church in the form of people who are especially prepared to do certain work. An essential part of their job is to enable or equip others in the body, in turn, to do that same kind of work. As they minister they are also to serve as mentors. Then Paul continues, the body will be built up. There will be unity. People will have the "*knowledge of the Son of God and become mature."*

1. What can you learn about the commitment of 'apostolic leaders' to the fruit of their ministry from the following passages?

Acts 14:21-25	Acts 15:32	Acts 15:36	Romans 16:1-27
2 Corinthians 1:24	2 Corinthians 11:7-11	2 Corinthians 12:14-18	Galatians 4:4-8
Ephesians 3:14-19	Philippians 1:3-11	Colossians 1:3-9	1 Thessalonians 1:2-3
1 Thessalonians 2:17-20	1 Peter 5:12	2 John 1:1-4	

2. On three occasions Paul links the phrase 'not in vain' to his ministry. He uses the word 'kenos' which literally means 'empty.' It is used in Philippians 2:7 to refer to Christ's incarnation. When used figuratively it means 'devoid of sense, foolish, for no purpose or without effect'.

   What does Paul want to see in his 'apostolic ministry' to be able to conclude that all his efforts 'were not in vain'?

   Galatians 2:1-5   Philippians 2:12-18   1 Thessalonians 3:1-5

SUMMARY

A comment from a couple in thier forties who are laboring among the lost:

> "What has helped us the most and continues to help us the most is that we have had a handful of staff who have become intimately involved in our lives. We are dear friends. We love each other. We encourage each other. The major problem with this kind of relationship is that it is long-distance. So even with support we can still feel alone. This is probably an impossible hurdle to overcome at this time. We understand that you can't fix this. Just keep talking to us – keep telling us we that we're on the right path… It's so important to network. If our work is truly about lifetime laborers, then we must invest ourselves not only in the lost, but in each other. What God teaches you, you teach me. When you want to give up, I grab you by the shoulders and help you move forward. Without this type of encouragement, the loneliness will surely set in."

There are thousands of people like this couple. What do they need from 'apostolic leaders?
- ❑ Long-term affection and commitment.
- ❑ Affirmation and legitimacy.
- ❑ A local community that strengthens spiritually and gives space to live among the lost.
- ❑ Networking with other lifetime laborers beyond the local.
- ❑ Perspective and encouragement.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. What pressures does a person face from the world that can cause them to cease to labor among the lost?
2. What pressures does a person face from the believing world that can cause them to cease to labor among the lost?
3. What causes a clergy/laity (staff/non-staff) distinction? Why is this detrimental to the advance of the Gospel?
4. What sort of environment enables laborers to flourish among the lost? How proactive should the organization be in identifying and establishing environments? Why?
5. What are some of the factors that make it difficult to maintain an ongoing and meaningful link with the fruit of our ministry?
6. How do you live with the tension of developing laborers for their immediate context, but also for the realities of the rest of their lives?

7. When does responsibility for the fruit of our ministry cease? Why?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY?

1. If you are ministering, what are you currently doing to give your people a vision for **lifetime** laboring among the lost? How do you do this and yet recruit people for the needs you have now?
2. Review the people who have moved out of your ministry context in the last 5 years (transfer to another city; graduated; etc.). How would you describe your current level of commitment to them? What is going well? What needs strengthening?
3. What are some creative ways you could provide what the laborer needs to labor for a lifetime among the lost?
4. What is success in your ministry? Not what should it be, but what is it in reality? How does this correlate with our Calling?

CRITICAL FACTOR V – STUDY 4:
THE LEADER

INTRODUCTION
Leadership is vital to the advancing of the Gospel through lifetime laborers. Without appropriate leadership we will not see generations. In the New Testament those who led never saw 'leadership' as an end in itself, but essential to sustaining the growth of the gospel to the nations. The emphasis was on the functions that needed to occur.

THE FUNCTIONS OF LEADERSHIP
1. In the following passages what do you observe from teaching and example about the function of shepherding? What part does shepherding play in the advance of the Gospel?
   Psalm 78:70-72   Proverbs 27:23-27   Jeremiah 3:14-15   Ezekiel 34:1-24
   John 10:11-15   John 21:15-17   Acts 20:28   1 Peter 5:2-4
2. Where do servanthood and stewardship fit into leadership that advances the Gospel? What observations do you have from the following passages?
   Matthew 25:14-20   Luke 16:10-13   Luke 22:20-27   John 13:1-7
   Acts 20:24   1 Corinthians 4:1-5   Philippians 2:19-30   1 Timothy 4:11-16
   2 Timothy 1:6-14   2 Timothy 2:1-2
3. Character is essential to those who lead and influence others. Scripture and history show us that even the most competent of leaders will eventually lose the mandate to lead if they are not men and women of transparency, vulnerability and character.
   What do you observe from the following passages about character and competency in leadership?
   Deuteronomy 17:14-20   Psalm 78:70-72   Romans 12:3-8   1 Timothy 3:1-10
   Titus 1:5-9   1 Peter 5:2-4

SUMMARY
Leadership is vital to the advance of the Gospel to the nations through generations of lifetime laborers who together multiply among the lost. There are many shepherding and stewarding functions that need leadership if a multiplying ministry is to begin and or be developed further. A wide range of people can contribute leadership to these functions. However, whatever role they play, leaders must be servants who are growing in integrity as well as competence. Without growth in character and depth of relating, people will not give leaders a mandate to lead.
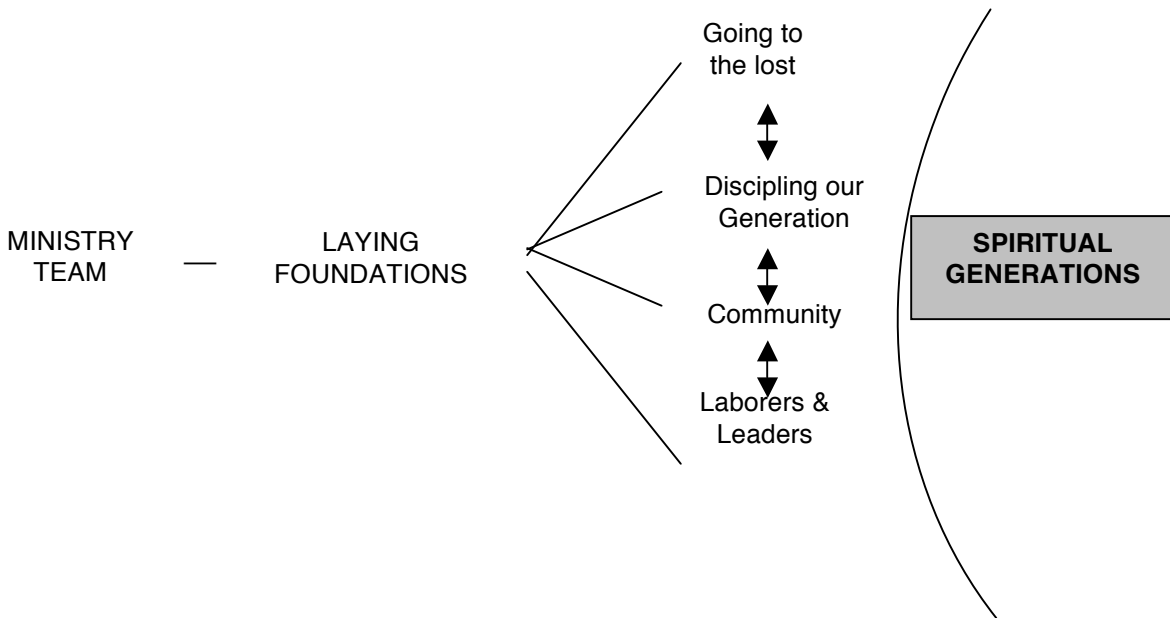
DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING
1. In what ways is leadership crucial to the advance of the Gospel to the nations?
2. From your own experience and understanding of Scripture how are leaders developed?
3. Is it possible to intentionally develop character in leaders?
4. What are the inner qualities and external behaviors that will sustain a leader? What do you think is crucial to keeping leaders going and growing?
5. What causes people to lose their mandate to lead?
6. Why is a 'safe place' essential to the development of leaders?
7. What part does 'gifting' play in determining a leadership contribution? What part does our Calling play in shaping contribution? Have you ever experienced or observed tension between these two reference points?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY
1. What are the competencies you need in your current ministry context to lead in our Navigator calling? Which of these do you feel strong in? Which need development? How will you get this?
2. Do you have a group or person you can trust to help you with personal issues of character?
3. What are you recruiting leaders to? A calling? An organization? Both?
4. What are the current leadership needs in your ministry? How is the absence of this leadership affecting the 'calling?'
5. How are you living with the tension of leading what 'is' (peoples expectations and immediate needs) and leading through necessary changes to more effectively advance the Gospel and develop lifetime laborers?

CRITICAL FACTOR VI: GENERATIONS

```
                                    Going to
                                    the lost
                                       ↕
                                  Discipling our
                                    Generation
MINISTRY      ─    LAYING              ↕              SPIRITUAL
  TEAM             FOUNDATIONS      Community         GENERATIONS
                                       ↕
                                   Laborers &
                                    Leaders
```

OVERVIEW OF CRITICAL FACTOR 6 STUDIES

We have heard the illustrations of the power of geometric progressions. But are spiritual generations a biblical idea? What is a spiritual generation and how does it happen?

STUDY 1 – SPIRITUAL GENERATIONS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Generational thinking is rooted in the promises of God. The Gospel is a trust, a legacy to be passed from one generation to the next. How does multiplication occur?

CF VI – STUDY 1:
SPIRITUAL GENERATIONS – WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

INTRODUCTION

As we read our Bibles we see a loving God searching for and reaching out to people who have rebelled and lost their way. He reaches out to all peoples of all nations of all generations with the wonderful Gospel. The Gospel is a trust that is to be passed from one generation to the next.

But how are we to think about '*generations?*' Often illustrations based upon geometric progression have shaped our understanding and expectations. Many are fueled with a vision of sharing their faith with another person so that at the end of the year there would be two believers. Those two would then reach out in the next year to two others, so then there would be four. After a year each of the four would reach one more and so on. In 34 years the total would be more than the population of the world. This has led to many becoming disillusioned and discouraged. However the pursuit of *'spiritual generations'* is a scriptural theme. How should we think about generations as we look at the Scriptures?

SEVERAL SCRIPTURAL THEMES ILLUSTRATE THE IDEA OF SPIRITUAL GENERATIONS:
> Abraham and his descendants
> Physical and spiritual generations
> Seed and organic growth
> Christ's investment in the few
> Sustaining leadership

AS YOU CONSIDER THESE THEMES, KEEP ASKING:
> How do these Scriptures instruct us in how to think about spiritual generations?
> What does this teach us on how to think about the fulfilling of our 'calling'?

SCRIPTURAL THEMES ON GENERATIONS

ABRAHAM AND HIS DESCENDANTS

God chose a man and gave him an amazing promise. This old man and his barren wife would become a great nation and through them all the peoples of the earth for generations to come would be blessed.
> Genesis 12:1-3   Genesis 17:1-2   Genesis 22:17-18   Genesis 26:2-6

PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL GENERATIONS

> God's purpose is to reveal Himself to the peoples of the world through the combination of spiritual and physical generations. He desires that godly parents transmit their faith to their children and their children's children. Families by their very nature are generational, and as family members embrace the Gospel we see the convergence of spiritual and physical generations.

> The opposite is also true. Sin and patterns of disobedience break the transmission of the Gospel between generations. Ungodly parents pass on patterns of ungodliness to their children. However, every person who believes and obeys has a new beginning spiritually. They can be the foundation of many spiritual generations both within and outside their family.
> > Genesis 1:28   Deuteronomy 6:1-9   Ruth 4:13-17   Psalm 78:1-8
> > Psalm 145:3-7   Isaiah 54:1-3   Isaiah 61:1-4   Malachi 2:15

THE SEED AND ORGANIC GROWTH

> Jesus lived in an agrarian society so it is not surprising that He illustrates much of His teaching about spiritual generations with stories of seeds, sowing, soil and sowers. The seed illustrates the power of regeneration. Note the similar dynamics of physical and spiritual generations.
> > Genesis 1:11-12 Matthew 13:31-32   Mark 4:20   Mark 4:26-29   John 12:23-26

CHRIST'S INVESTMENT IN THE FEW

> Jesus faced an extremely challenging task. He came 'to seek and to save the lost' (Luke 19:10).' This involved living a life that revealed the Father to everyone He met; die as God's sacrifice for every sin that has ever been and ever will be committed; defeat death and then return to the Father. It was vital that He did this all in a way that every generation from His to ours and beyond would have the news of it. It all would have been in vain if the message had died within one generation.

> During His last night with His disciples, Jesus prayed His great prayer for the ongoing ministry He was about to leave on earth. His emphasis was on what He will continue to accomplish through His disciples. He was planting seed for the future.

> Note what He prayed about reproducing generations of believers.
> > Matthew 28:18-20   John 17:5-26   John 20:21

SUSTAINING LEADERSHIP

Imparting the Gospel to laborers and leaders who will disciple their generation with a vision for the next is vital if our ministry is to be generational.

Note the deliberateness of passing on and guarding the Gospel.   Acts 20:18-36   2 Timothy 2:1-2

SUMMARY

The Scriptures support the idea that God's working with people flows through physical and spiritual generational lines. Mathematical concepts, while illustrating the power of multiplication, cannot be the basis of our understanding and expectations. When this happens we fall into at least two errors:

Individualism - We have to reject any notion that generations need to be mine! When we need to win and disciple people to validate our own fruitfulness and success, we will be barren because we are seeking our own glory. No individual can accomplish generations on his own. We need each other. Growth will occur as 'each part does its work (Ephesians 4:16).'

Timeframe - We can live with false expectations for as long it takes for one generation to birth another and then another.

These errors, if perpetuated, lead to discouragement and disillusionment concerning 'spiritual generations and multiplication.'

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO ENCOURAGE GENERATIONS?

- Pray and depend on the promises of God. Imitate those who "through faith and patience inherit what God has promised." Hebrews 6:12
- Focus and purposefully invest deeply in a few individuals, expecting God to in time multiply that investment.
- For those with children, intentionally disciple them and pass on the spiritual legacy you have been given.
- Teach and talk about 'spiritual generations.'
- Help people understand that salvation is personal, but never only for them. It is for their family and friends. They join God in His mission for the nations.

DEEPENING YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. How should you think about 'generations'?
2. In light of the Scriptures how would you define a 'generation'?
3. How should a scriptural understanding of 'generations' influence the way you go about ministry?
4. How does 'spiritual multiplication' take place? To what extent is it a community process rather than an individual process?

APPLYING TO YOUR MINISTRY CONTEXT

1. What is the current understanding of 'generations' in your ministry? How does this correlate with a Biblical understanding?
2. What are you doing to help the Gospel flow into the extended families of people in our ministry? Are you helping or hindering this in the way you do ministry?
3. What are the obstacles to the flow of the Gospel among existing social networks of the people you are focusing on? Who are the people in your ministry that can lead to other people?
4. How are you communicating a vision for generations to the next generation of laborers and leaders? Are you content with this? If not, what changes will you make?
5. How does generational thinking affect your activities, forms and content as you 'Go to the Lost', 'Disciple your Generation', 'Build Community' and develop 'Laborers and Leaders?'