

TITLE: Ambassadors & Church Planters For Christ

ISBN: 978-0-9878974-4-2

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Printed in Canada by:

Project L.A.M.B.S. International Inc.
Box 20569 Steinbach, MB Canada R5G 1R9
E-mail: projectlambs@gmail.com
Website: www.projectlambs.com

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or

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First Edition: Nov.23, 2009

Second Edition: Jan.31, 2011

Third Edition: Jan.23, 2017

Leadership Series

Book 17

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PREFACE

Welcome to the discipleship / leadership series. These little booklets were designed to give basic information concerning various topics about our Christian faith in Christ Jesus.

The purpose of this series is to stimulate thought and to foster a clearer understanding of discipleship and servant leadership. These booklets can be used as a discussion tool for personal study, family devotion, youth meetings or in cell groups. Our hope is that this information will stir the readers and encourage them to go deeper into personal research and study.

Our desire is that these booklets will be a blessing to the reader and a tool that can be shared with others as a gift of encouragement.

Please feel free to mail or e-mail us for more copies or to just write to us with any feedback concerning the content of these studies. We hope you enjoy this offering of knowledge and experience. We pray that Christ will draw you into an ever deeper personal relationship with Himself as you study.

Your servants in Christ,

Rev. Dr. James and Hkaw Win Humphries

***"Therefore, we are Ambassadors for Christ,
as though God were making an appeal through us; we
beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God".
II Corinthians 5:20***

Introduction:

There is a great need in our churches and schools to see ministry as “one whole picture”. Schools and seminaries often teach by dividing study into little compartments and therefore the students do not see how the Christian life works as a whole. It is likened to focusing on the “foot bones” of the human body but not seeing the uniqueness of all the other parts. We do not see the muscles and flesh, the major organs and how they are all connected, or how important the blood is to bring life to our bodies. We need to realize that seeing how the body can function is an amazing miracle that has been beautifully created by God.

The church of Jesus Christ is the same. It is made up of many different parts each having a specific purpose but very valuable to the whole. No individual member can survive on their own – they need to remain connected. It is necessary to have relationships that are built on harmony and unity. When we receive Christ into our hearts we become connected together, one with Him and one with His Church.

Today there is much focus on the individual parts. We divided everything up into departments such as Christian Education, Evangelism, Preaching, Teaching, Missions etc. We give each separate budgets and occasionally we call a joint meeting to hear what the other is doing. We end up having 10 different goals and going in 10 different directions. We then add on the Para-Church ministries and say they’re, “outside of the church”. They are connected but are not of the same importance and value as the church. We send them a little support each month, yet the church needs them and they need the covering of the church. We are all part of the same body!

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What we need to have today is Apostles (overseers) who look at the big picture and help in giving the individual pieces wisdom and direction. These people assist in connecting the various departments together, guided by one or two goals. When this begins to happen we will see fruit from our labours. Christ want us to work together using the “ONE ANOTHER PRINCIPLE”— being lead, taught and comforted by the Holy Spirit. We see things not as parts but as a whole, working together to take back that which the enemy has either taken or destroyed.

This booklet is intended to get leadership and individuals to come back together and see ministries as a complete unit. To recognize how the parts, as they work and minister together, will see God's strength flowing through them. We will also look at how the burden is lifted as individual departments become lighter as we work together. We are to remember that only through God's ability and strength can we do this, for Christ is the head and everything we do must work in unity and harmony with Him. If we coordinate our strengths and focus the ministry, lives will be changed and churches will be planted. Then the Kingdom of God will be established here on earth.

As a disciple we have become Christ's Ambassadors. We no longer belong to this world but represent another land and another King. We are to bear witness to a lost world that Jesus Christ is Lord of lords and King of Kings. Our joint ministry is to go out with our individual programs and work together on reconciling people to God (within the church as well as with our Para-Church family).

MISSIONS

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit,

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teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Matthew 28:19-20

The great **mission** was given by Christ during His last days on earth. He commanded the disciples to go, not in their own strength or ability, but in His strength and ability. The meaning of the word missionary is to be a “sent one”. The missionary goes out to proclaim and to bear witness for Jesus Christ. We are all commanded to be missionaries. This comes through the great **mission** of Matthew 28:19-20. This does not mean that we are all evangelists, preachers or teachers but it does indicate we are to be a witness for Jesus Christ wherever we go. This starts in our homes and continues as we walk out our door, whether to go to the market, to another city or to another country. We are to go as one who is either purposely sent (such as Paul from the church of Antioch) or as an individual being lead by the Holy Spirit to minister to someone (like Philip who went to the Ethiopian Eunuch).

It does not matter how we go, as long as we are obedient to the leading of the Holy Spirit. This is how we are to fulfill God’s will of being a light to a lost world. We are all called to be Ambassadors for Christ. We need not fear or worry because Christ said, “He will be with us wherever we go as long as we are doing it in His Name”.

The Bible lays out four specific points that are foundational to what it means to be a missionary for Christ. We are to come, we are being sent, we are to go and then we are to make disciples of all nations.

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COME:

Jesus told the disciples to come and follow Him and has called us to be fishers of men (Matthew 4:18, Mark 1:17). Paul also tells us that as we follow Christ other will also follow us. The first challenge that we often face is to take the first step – to be willing to follow Christ wherever He may lead us.

SENT:

Christ told the disciples that He was going to send them out (Matthew 10; John 17:18-21). Being sent is greatly different than doing something on our own. As a “sent one” you are going as a messenger not for yourself but for the one who sent you. You are going with His power and authority. Jesus communicated that He would send them with the power of the Holy Spirit, going out two by two. They were to be an encouragement to one another. A team of two or three can do a great deal more than just one (Mark 6:7). We are told that a three cord rope cannot be easily broken (Ecclesiastes 4:12).

GO:

Going out moves us from being a hearer of the word to being a doer also (James 1: 22-25). It gets us involved with other people lives. Once informed, we then become a person who sees the needs of the people and will be able to pray more effectively and help more specifically. Many people sit through life as spectators, but it is those who get involved in the race that are the ones who can receive the prize (II Timothy 2:5). God knows our past, present and future and is the best one to give instruction on what we are to be doing.

It is like on the job training – going out opens the door for growing. That’s why we call it a step of faith (Psalm 32:8).

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MAKE:

The idea of going out and making, has as its root the concept of creating. It is the idea of making something brand new. We are called to make disciples. These people will be new and different from that of the world. They will be newborn babies in their faith and as such we need to teach and train them until they are mature enough to stand on their own (I Peter 2:2). We need to lead them into an understanding of baptism and show the importance of following through on this step. We must be committed to teaching them, raising them to a place of maturity, so that in due time they will produce fruit. Discipleship making takes much time and effort – answering questions and walking with them until they are able to understand what they have committed to by faith.

Kinds of missions:

Paul and Barnabas were sent out from Antioch by the church. Although they were most likely the churches' best leaders, the church had a vision for missions, evangelism and discipleship (Acts 13:2-3). They laid hands on these two men, prayed and Paul and Barnabas went out with the blessing and covering of the local church.

In a different instance, the Holy Spirit spoke into two men's hearts (Peter and Cornelius) about joining together to preach about God. During a time of prayer, the Spirit of God guided and directed them as to how to get together. Peter at first resisted but as he continued to pray, he saw the hand of God leading him to Cornelius. The result was that many were saved and baptized (Acts 10:17).

Reflections:

As you touch others for Christ you will rarely see how those people go and touch others. Often a gentle word of encouragement, a small gift of food, handshake or a hug given in love during a time of need is all that is asked of you. Jesus said that even giving a cup of cold water in His name will bring back some type of fruit to ourselves and to the person who receives it (Matthew 10:42, Mark 9:41). As we are faithful in doing little things, Christ will begin to entrust us with more. It starts first by a small step of faith – as big as a mustard seed (Matthew 17:20).

EVANGELISM

And he said to them, Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation.

Mark 16:15

So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except the Jews alone. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord.

Acts 11:19-21

An evangelist is one who goes out carrying the precious seed that Christ has given him through the Gospel. They sow it into the world with the hope of seeing a harvest. The evangelist in many ways is just like an everyday farmer. He works the field, sows the seed, and weeds the field until it is ready to harvest, then he harvests it. But in this process he may have many others that help

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him along the way. This is why so many labourers are needed (Matthew 9:37-38). It is important to remember that people do the planting and others bring in the harvest but it is God by His Holy Spirit who gives the increase (I Corinthians 3:6).

Most of us do not have the gift of evangelism but we all have a testimony that we can tell to others. For example, the women at the well went into her village after Christ had shared with her about eternal life and she shared her testimony about what Jesus had said. Then the villagers came out, heard Jesus and they too believed (John 4:7- 42).

The Bible tells us that freely you have receive now freely give (Matthew 10:8). What then are we to give? We are to proclaim the “Good News of Jesus Christ”. The “Good News” when spoken and shared is like light being shown on a mountain top (Matthew 5:16). It can be seen for miles and lights our pathway. It brings hope, love, grace and peace to the hearer. When I read the Gospel accounts of Jesus (Matthew, Mark, Luke & John) I see ten key things that can bring “Good News” to one’s heart.

Living Word:

From the very beginning it was the Living Word that spoke everything into being, all that was created was created by God Almighty. When God spoke, dramatic things took place. Right from the beginning of time God walked with man as the Living Word. A word that could be spoken to nations but also personalized to His individual children. It is important for all disciples to understand that the Gospel of the Good News reaches right back to the creation of the world and that His crowning event and the most exciting good news was God speaking into being, a

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man and a woman, who was made in His image. Our God is the one who speaks life giving words to that which He has created.

Birth:

It begins by God sending His Son conceived by a virgin woman through the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18-25). Amazingly, it was heralded to the shepherds by a host of angels. The wise men heard of Jesus' birth and they presented gifts to the babe. As well, it became known by the enemy who tried to have Him destroyed (John 4).

Life:

The first thirty years of his life Jesus lived as a carpenter's son in Galilee. In the fullness of time He left home and was baptized by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:13-17). This began His earthly ministry of proclaiming the Kingdom of God and showing us how we as a sinful people could come once again into a very personal relationship with God. He challenge the religious ways of His day and demonstrated that He was the light of the world. Jesus showed that the Father had a plan of redemption and grace and poured out His life as "a drink offering" so that man could see the love and mercy of the Father in heaven.

The people wanted to make Him a king because of all the miracles He performed but Christ demonstrated the heart of being a servant, exemplifying how we could come into a deep relationship with God. This relationship would be one of service and commitment to Him as Lord and Saviour.

Death:

The enemy constantly sought to destroy Him. In the fullness of time it seemed that Satan had won as Christ was taken

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away, beaten and hung on a cruel cross like a criminal. At the moment Jesus shed His blood and gave up His last breath, He gave all into the hands of the Father in heaven (Matthew 27:33-37). For three days He remained in the bows of the earth where the keys of life and death were taken back from Satan (stolen in the Garden of Eden).

Resurrection:

If this ended the story, Christ would have been no different than any other man. On the third day, the tomb and grave could not hold Him (Matthew 28:1-10) – God’s resurrection power filled His body, raising Him up from the dead and breaking once and for all the chains of sin and death. The bridge was being restored between God and mankind. Relationship no longer needed to be external but would now be internal. Christ appeared to the disciples and many others to bear testimony that things had now changed.

Ascension:

Finally, not only was Christ resurrected, He then ascended on high (Acts 1:9-11) to prepare a place (John 14:3) for us and to intercede to the Father on our behalf. He also told the disciples, “that as you have seen me go I will once again come back to receive you unto myself”.

Holy Spirit:

After Christ ascended, there came another fulfillment of a promise; the most unique of them all. On the day of Pentecost, God sent His Holy Spirit. God’s very presence was now coming into the heart of every believer (Acts 2:14). He gives us the power to overcome the grip and strongholds of this sinful world. He would also become our teacher and comforter and would never leave us or forsake us.

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Church:

On the Day of Pentecost, Christ sent forth the power of the Holy Spirit and at that moment the church was birthed. Christ not only wanted us to have a personal relationship with Him but also desired for us to build relationships with other believers. The church was to be His body, the organism that He would be head of and flow through as a witness to a lost world. It would be a light to all who would desire to give their lives to Christ; a place of refuge and safety for the pilgrim who was travelling through.

Jesus would empower His body in unity and harmony, equipping them for various types of ministries and service. The life blood of the body would be the Holy Spirit, evidenced by the fruit of the Spirit displayed through the church as a body and people as individuals.

The church was to be a place of rest and peace, a place to be restored, built up, trained and equipped for service. We do not have to feel alone or abandoned, as we are now part of a worldwide family. We have been adopted into the family of God, having brothers and sisters who can help and care for us as we walk with Christ.

Second coming:

Jesus explained to the disciples on the day of His ascension that just as they saw Him go, so He would return to personally receive His own (Revelation 19:11-19). The book of Revelation goes into great details about the battle that will take place between good and evil.

Heaven:

Our final point (often not discussed) is heaven. Heaven is the place where believers will spend all eternity – a place where there will be no more pain or suffering, where all the strongholds of sin have been destroyed and where we will once again be in direct fellowship with God. We will see Him face to face, worshipping Him for all that He has done (Revelation 21 and 22).

What Christ did for us was truly “Good News” for all mankind and it reveals a heart relationship of love and grace to all who would just receive it as a gift with no strings attached. Romans 10:9-10 makes it clear how we can receive this Good News into our hearts: *“that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your hearts that God raised Him from the dead, **you will be saved**; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness; and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.”*

Reflections:

Everyday we are to be asking, ‘What am I doing today to serve my Lord Jesus Christ?’, ‘How are others seeing Him through me?’, ‘Has my life changed’ and ‘Am I burdened to see others become part of the family of God?’ Often we desire to please our own needs, not realizing that the things here on earth are temporal. Yet the things that we do for Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit are eternal. We need to be laying up treasure in heaven and do so by ministering and serving others by Christ’s love.

DISCIPLESHIP

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. ... Be diligent to present yourself approved of God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

II Timothy 2:2 & 15

Discipleship is defined by one person being a follower of another. One leads and another follows. You follow their ways and teaching, live the life that they live and they become your mentor.

Christ calls people to be His disciples. One becomes a disciple of Christ by first believing and confessing that you are a sinner and ask for His forgiveness and grace. Disciples stop serving their own will but seek to serve His will.

One of the root concepts of discipleship is the word discipline. We are taking our lives and bringing it under the discipline of Christ Jesus. For example, when you go to university you bring yourselves under the discipline of a degree program and its teachers. Then when the “discipline standards” of that school have been met you receive the blessing of graduation.

Christ is our teacher, speaking to us through the power of the Holy Spirit. He communicates His desire and as we prove ourselves faithful, He then entrusts us with more (Matthew 25:14-31). A goal of discipleship with Jesus is to equip and train us for service. This happens in a variety of ways – through formal classroom experience, through people in your family or by friends and also through the practical everyday experiences that we live.

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We are learners who become teachers to others by the things we say and do.

What follows are four key words that are essential to the growth and maturing of every disciple of Christ.

Understanding: *Nehemiah 8:1-12*

There are three words that we use to show how people learn things. They are wisdom, knowledge and understanding. We are going to focus on understanding because it brings about change in one's life, as well as in the people's lives around them.

Many people may have some wisdom about the Bible, but they do not know who authored the Book. Others may have some knowledge about Christ, believing that He existed and was a good man, but are not changed from the inside out. But understanding allows us to teach, train and equip others in whom Christ is.

Understanding comes through practical training, going over a concept until we understand it in such a way that we can recreate it for others. As an example, one really does not understand how to make bread until they can show the teacher from start to finish that they have proved that they truly understand the process of making bread.

In the time of Nehemiah and Ezra the people of God had fallen away from following God's laws. They realized the teachers had not been instructing them clearly so they asked Ezra to teach them from the books of Moses. With the whole family present, Ezra read the books to the people. At certain times they broke up into smaller groups for teachers to give them understanding of the reading. They asked questions until it had become clear in their hearts. Through this teaching change and revival back to God began to take place amongst the people.

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We have this same kind of challenge today in our churches. Many people come week after week and hear, but little or nothing changes in their lives. They have much knowledge but say they just do not know what to do with it. What they are really meaning is that they just don't understand. Paul tells Timothy we must study to show ourselves approved (II Timothy 2:15). In other words, we need to keep digging into the Word, asking our pastors and teachers questions until we understand. If we keep getting into the Word that Word will get into us!

Practice: *Philippians 4:9*

Next we need to practice what we hear and see. Like an athlete or a musician, we need to continually practice until we get it right. This may take days, weeks or even years. Discipleship is not just an easy road that you can walk down without challenges. It is more like climbing a high mountain by cutting your way through a jungle. When Jesus challenged His followers the Scriptures tell us that many left Him. They found His words too difficult and demanding. Often we start off well and excited about Christ but in time our enthusiasm dies.

If we desire the prize at the end of the race we must practice, keep focused and run in such a way that we are able to complete the goal.

There are many areas we need to practice – our prayer life, reading the Bible, giving tithes, attending church, going out and serving etc. There is a saying that practice makes perfect. You need to practice until the thing that you are trying to do becomes like second nature and you can do it without thinking.

Serve: *Romans 12:10-12*

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James tells us in chapter one that we are not only to be hearers of the Word but doers also. Often we are just like children – we can see all kinds of things that need to be picked up and cleaned but often just walk by and do nothing until someone points it out to us. The Holy Spirit is here to empower us for service, but is also pointing out things that need to be changed and done. Many Christians seem to have the attitude to just “leave it” and someone else will take care of it. But perhaps that someone else was meant to be you!

When Christ came, He demonstrated to the disciples the importance of serving one another. We are part of a bigger body and for it to function and produce fruit, the individual members must serve each other.

Pride is often the biggest hindrance to service. Perhaps we think that we are too good or that we have done enough work in the trenches and it’s time for the younger generation to do the work. But that young generation may need to see that you are willing to humble yourself and serve wherever you can or wherever help is needed. No job is too small or too big. James said, humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up (James 4:10).

We have all kinds of excuses for not serving. I have heard thousands over the years by people from all ages. But let me share with you that when you do not practically get involved and serve, you miss out on many blessings that God wanted to give to you. Serving should not be thought of as a hindrance but as an honour that you could serve your Master in such away.

Mentor: *II Timothy 2:2*

As you get older and become more experienced in the things of Christ you should begin to pray that God would show you who

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you could mentor and equip for Christ. One of the best ways to keep growing, to be fresh and alive for Christ, is by mentoring someone else. I have a saying that we are all "teachers-learners" and "learners-teachers". This principle does not matter how young or old you are. We all have something to give but there is always more we can learn. We want to become the best tools for Christ we possibly can. When I went to school it was not long before I realized how much I didn't know. I have had a Doctorate for over 10 years and each day I realize how much more I still need to learn and understand.

There are many young men and women who desired to be a mentor but do not find the time to do it. We must first build a relationship of trust. This foundation will lead to a door that will open into peoples' hearts, to teach them to grow and learn.

Paul was a mentor to young Timothy. He could see in his life the potential to be a strong man for God. He knew it was going to take time but was an investment one day would bear much fruit. I have been a discipleship trainer to many countries of the world and have seen firsthand that when you take time to invest in people, great returns come from the things that you have planted.

Reflections:

Being a disciple of Christ takes much commitment and time. It is something to be desired with all your heart. You have to keep focused and true to the calling. You must be willing to step out in faith and trust that Christ knows what is best for you. You also have to lay aside the things of this world and be willing to lay aside the desire of worldly pleasures. We need to remember that only the things which you have invested in other people will

become a true treasure that will be awaiting you in heaven. All else will be cast away!

CHURCH PLANTING

So then those who were scattered because of the persecution that occurred in connection with Stephen made their way to Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except to Jews alone. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who came to Antioch and began speaking to the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord. The news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch.

Acts 11:19-22

He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

Colossians 1:18-20

When people gather together in Christ, a church is formed. People make up the church – it is not a building of steel and concrete. It is made up of flesh and bone, people like you and me.

The head of the church is Christ Jesus. We are His physical body here on earth, Christ's hands and feet. The word church is defined as "called out ones" or "belonging to the Lord". This illustrates that we are no longer citizens of this world but children of Christ's heavenly kingdom.

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The church is the fruit that is produced when missions, evangelism and discipleship come together as a team. Christ tells us that He will build His church and even the gates of hell will not be able to stand against it (Matthew 16:18). The church is also to be a lighthouse for people to find their way to Christ. It is to be a place of refuge both for the disciple and for the lost soul who needs help and encouragement. Finally, the church is to be known as the “House of Prayer” (Matthew 21:13).

The church has many important functions, but one key principle is that it exists to build and strengthen our relationship with fellow believers and bring us into a deeper and personal relationship with God. Relationship building is what makes the body of Christ strong and healthy. It touches not only the disciple who fellowships together but also impacts the local community, country and world.

The New Testament gives various kinds of descriptive words to describe the church. The church is described as a:

Building: Christ is the chief corner stone (Ephesians 2:20-21, I Corinthians 6:19). The disciple’s life is to be built upon and lined up to Christ.

Body: Christ is the head (I Corinthians 12:14-30). The disciple ought to remember that he is in a relationship with other disciples and lives out his life under the headship of Christ.

Bride: Christ is the groom (II Corinthians 11:2, Ephesians 5:22-32) This picture illustrates a marriage where the groom lays down his life for the bride and where the brides commit herself totally to the love of Christ.

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Sheep: Christ is the shepherd and we are the sheep (John 10:16 & Psalm 23:1-6). The Shepherd is willing to do anything for the welfare of the sheep. He is the protector and leader and the sheep know his voice. He anoints their head with oil and when they are missing He comes looking for them.

The church also has various functions:

The church has a purpose. As the people come together they are to minister and encourage one another. As people gather they can become trained and equipped. It is a place of fellowship, communion, prayer, worship and giving.

Paul explains to the Romans church how the body is to serve one another. He states, *“For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individual member one of another, since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness (Romans 12:4-8).* We do not have the same functions or giftings, but by faith, we are to be diligent in serving each other.

The church can be described as a farm. Each farm is different – different techniques, different kinds of equipment with different kinds of people. Yet they all have the same goal – to produce a harvest.

The Church final culmination:

The exciting part for the believer of Christ is that in the last days, it is the church that is raptured up. It is the church that gets presented to the Father as the Bride of Christ. One of the first things that will take place in heaven is the “Marriage Supper of the LAMB” Revelation 19:7-10). What a celebration and feast that will be, being with our God face to face, seeing other fellow believers who went on before us and to fellowship together with all the patriarchs and saints of God

Reflections:

The way that one is connected to the church will determine how one will minister and grow in Christ Jesus. We need to take advantage of all that is offered to us by other believers. Growing comes by getting involved and if we hope to see fruit from our lives we must become an active doer. You are an important member of the body of Christ. He wants to use you as a channel to flow through, to be a blessing and encouragement to others. Other believers are also there to be a blessing and encouragement to you. There will be hardships and challenges and not all people will support you. Growing up is not easy but with the help of the Word of God, the support of other fellow believers and the infilling of the Holy Spirit, all things are possible.

SERVANT/ LEADER

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honour; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

Romans 12:10-13

It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and give his life as a ransom for many.

Matthew 20:26-28

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal. If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honour him.

John 12: 24-26

Our last point comes from the result of a well functioning church. As people come together and are trained and equipped for service in the body, they will become labourers for the harvest field and leaders who can give direction and oversight. These leaders will relay the importance of missions, evangelism and discipleship and will bring discipline and obedience to the disciples of Christ. Their goal will be to see the local church walking in unity and harmony, with people using their gifts and talents to produce fruit. People need leadership to keep before

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them the bigger picture, of what being a follower of Jesus Christ is all about.

The goal of mission, evangelism, and discipleship is to plant churches and establish a strong servant-leadership. We are to prepare leaders who can go out and help establish new churches. We need willing servants to go out not only into their community but to other countries and other areas of the world. They need to be equipped and trained to go into the enemy's territory and take back that which he has stolen.

Jesus explains in Matthew 9:30-31 what is the root problem facing the church. He states that the harvest is ripe but two things are needed – first, for us to pray for more labourers who will become servant-leaders and second, that we will see the need and personally respond ourselves. We need to take that which we have and give it to the Lord. He will then use it to bring in the harvest.

The reason that most churches cease to grow is due to the lack of labourers and servant-leaders to guide the people. Leaders need to get involved in other people's lives regardless of what it may cost them in time and possessions. The church is running hundreds of different programs, but is burning out or dying because we have not caught the vision of doing missions, evangelism and discipleship as one complete unit. We need to build teams of people that will equip labourers. This will take time (and it may mean saying "no" to some things) to work and train a select few who can go out and teach others (II Timothy 2:2). Leaders need to be good stewards of their time and possessions. They are both a gift from God and must be used wisely.

If we do not focus on preparing labourers that can be servant-leaders, the church will remain weak and ineffective. Leadership should be focusing on preparing others to replace

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them in the ministry. Leaders need to become mentors to those who they feel the Holy Spirit is guiding them to teach.

Leadership selecting, more leaders:

Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” Acts 6:3-4

Leaders going to get leaders to meet the needs of the local church:

The news about them reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch. Then when he arrived and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord; for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And considerable numbers were brought to the Lord. And he left for Tarsus to look for Saul; and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Acts 11:22-26

Reflections:

We are called in John 15 to produce fruit. The questions we need to be asking ourselves are, ‘What kind of fruit is my life producing?’, ‘What will be left behind after I am gone’, and ‘What treasure are being put up in heaven from the ministry that I am doing here on earth?’ We are all called to be labourers in God's kingdom. If you do not know where to get involved, pray that the Holy Spirit will show you and the leadership at your local church, where you can serve. If you are a leader already, who

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could you mentor for other leadership positions in the church? Are you training other faithful men and women for the work of service?

Conclusion:

I believe that Acts 2:37-47 sums it all up and gives to us the total pictures that I have been sharing with you in the above points.

LEADERSHIP: ³⁷*Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” (MISSION)* ³⁸*Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.* ³⁹*”For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.” (EVANGELISM)* ⁴⁰*And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation!”* ⁴¹*So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. (LEADERSHIP)* ⁴²*They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ (DISCIPLESHIP) teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.* ⁴³*Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.* ⁴⁴*And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;* ⁴⁵*and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. (CHURCH PLANTING)* ⁴⁶*Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with*

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gladness and sincerity of heart, ⁴⁷praising God and having favour with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

We can see how all these points are blended together to produce fruit that will last. Not only to make disciples but to build leadership that is equipped and trained to lead a church for Christ Jesus. Again we cannot do this through separate little compartments or departments; it needs to come together as a whole picture. The body of believers needs to flow in unity and harmony. True, there is a need for sub-parts or smaller committees who are using their unique gifts. But this is done for the purpose of fulfilling the overall vision and goal of the local church. Our purpose is to build “the Church” through the power and teaching of the Holy Spirit. The book of Acts is not so much a history book concerning the church, but it is a record of the “Acts” of the Holy Spirit working through the church. This is to be a channel for the Gospel message of Jesus Christ to a lost world.

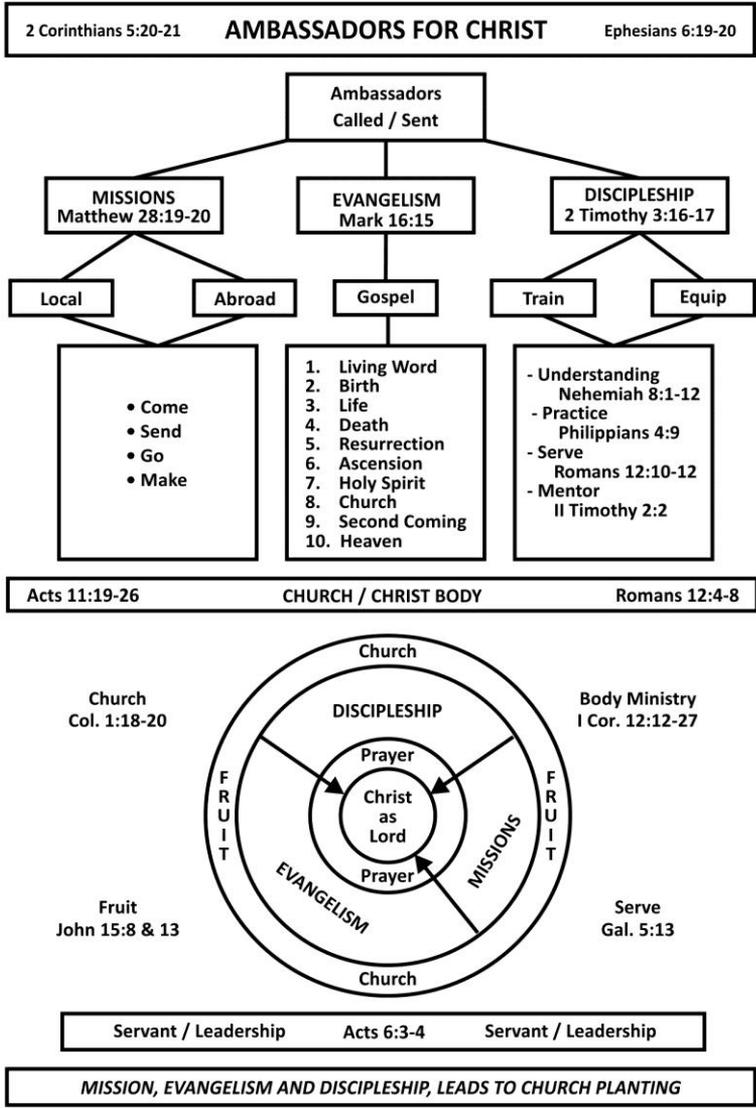
Remember that in all we do there must be fruit. We are called to be fruit bearers and if that is not taking place we must be asking the question, ‘Why not?’ God has numbered our days here on earth and we need to be doing our Father’s business.

Remember the verse on the cover of this booklet. It clearly proclaims that as a disciple we are Christ’s Ambassadors. We all have a call that He has personally given to us and are part of a church that needs our help. When we do this we fulfill the church’s call to be missionaries, evangelists and discipleship makers to a lost world.

This diagram that follows can help us visualize what has been taught above. Reflect on it and ask God to speak into your heart to what it means to you.

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DIAGRAM



MISSION, EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP,
LEADS TO CHURCH PLANTING

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MEMORIZATION

"Therefore, we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God".

II Corinthians 5:20

PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus,

I now see that while You were on the cross You had us in your mind because I am very important to You. You gave Your life so that we could have eternal life. Lord I first ask that You would forgive me for not getting involve and for not seeing how important I am to You and to the church. Lord I do have fears and a lack of faith but I ask today that You will help me to be involved in the bigger picture. That I will seek Your face then commit to serving You wherever You may lead. Lord I pledge today my heart that wherever You will lead me I will follow. I also commit myself to missions, evangelism and discipleship because I desire to see Your fruit coming forth from my heart. Lord thank You for all the love, grace and patience that You continually show to me each day.

Your servant in Christ,

Appendix:

Ambassadors for Christ
Therefore,
We Are Ambassadors For Christ,
as though God
were making an appeal through us;
we beg you on behalf of Christ,
be reconciled to God.
II Corinthians 5:20

Introduction:

It is important that we do not see ministry as a bunch of little departments but one big picture, where the disciples of Christ have a common call, purpose and goal. We need to see this Gospel of Jesus Christ, to be communicated to all people throughout the whole world. The key is to see the big picture of the Bible and its Author, God Almighty who has commissioned His church to go forth and minister to others for His glory.

Step One: Being an Ambassador for Christ

II Corinthians 5:20; Ephesians 6:19-20

It is very important that we understand who we are in Christ. We must receive Him into our lives before we can go forth and give Him out to others. Paul tells us that as disciples we are called to be ambassadors of reconciliation. We need to be going forth in a strange land representing our King Jesus Christ to a people who may not understand or know the importance of what Christ has done for them. We need to help people to be reconciled back into a personal relationship with God.

Step Two: Discipleship Ministry

I MISSIONS

Matthew 28:19-20

We are called to be a witness for Christ. This can be abroad or locally but we are all to be involved. The great **commission**, commands us to be active partakers.

First: we are to **come** to Christ. He calls us to be followers of Him.

Second: Next we should seek God in prayer where we should be going. He desires to **send** us out into His harvest field.

Thirdly: we then need to be willing to **go**. Nothing will take place and we will not see any fruit from our lives if we do not take a step of faith and **go**.

Fourthly: That as God gives us a harvest of people we need to train and mentor them as disciples of Christ.

II EVANGELISM

Mark 16:15

We are to be witnesses to other both in word and deeds. We may not all be gifted as Evangelist, but Paul tells Timothy to do the work of evangelist as he serves His Lord. We are to be proclaimers of the Good News of Jesus Christ. The Good News consist of 9 major points, that when combined together sets the captive free from the bondage of sin and death and bring life to all who will receive Christ Jesus as Savoir and Lord. They are about Jesus,

- | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Living Word | 4. Death | 7. Holy Spirit |
| 2. Birth | 5. Resurrection | 8. Church |
| 3. Live | 6. Ascension | 9. Second Coming |
| | | 10. Heaven |

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III DISCIPLESHIP

II Timothy 2:2 &15

We need to realize that as a disciple of Christ we have a great opportunity to influence all kinds of people around us each day. We are all learners but we are also all teachers in some form or another. We also are called to train and equip other for Christ whether that is just our spouse, children, neighbor or others that live a street or two away from us. There are four key areas concerning this type of ministry.

One is the need for **understanding**. Neh. 8:1-12

Second is to **practice**. Phil. 4:9

Thirdly a heart to **serve** others. Rom. 12:10-12

Fourthly we need to **mentor** others. II Tim 2:2

Step Three: Church / Christ Body

CHURCH PLANTING

Acts 11:19-22

Col. 1:18-20

The word church means, “called out ones or belonging to the Lord”. The church is the Body of Christ. We are His hand and feet here on earth. We commit ourselves to serve Him not in our strength but through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is the coming together of the disciple is what makes a local church. The building that we assemble in, is to be known as the House of Prayer, a place where the body can minister to itself and to others. It is to be a place for fellowship and communion. The church is a place for equipping and training each other and for using our spiritual gifts (Rom. 12:4-8). The church gathering is the place where we prepare ourselves to be sent out into a lost world that we too once lived in and were a part of. We go as His shining Light.

Church is a Body of People called out by Christ.

Church is a place of safety and refuge.

Church is a place to learn and grow in Christ.

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Church is the incubator that birth forth Disciples who will go forth and plant new churches.

Church is the channel that God uses for the Holy Spirit to fill, flow through and empower.

New churches are the first fruit that comes out from missions, evangelism and discipleship when being done in a local community for Christ.

Step Four: SERVANT/ LEADERSHIP

Romans 12:10-13

John 12:24-26

One of the main purpose of the church is to train and equip people for service. The church is always in need of people to become leaders for Jesus Christ. Two things that come from servant/ leadership equipping and training are:

- produces laborer for bring in the harvest.
- produces leaders who can give instruction and mentor others.

Leaders are people who pray, study and make sure that they are full of the Holy Spirit before they train and serve others. Leaders need to strive for quality not quantity. Their goal is to raise up more disciples so that they can go out and establish New Churches.

Conclusion

Being an ambassador of Christ should be one who is completely sold out for Christ in all that he / she says and does. The fruit that others should see is that we are connected to the bigger picture of mission, evangelism and discipleship. Our goal is

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to see churches and servant leadership established all over our community, country and the world. Amen

Project L.A.M.B.S. International

Making disciples is the call and mandate of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus urged the disciples to follow Him. He laid down before us the teaching and the walk that we need to follow with Jesus as our supreme example. It is imperative for every believer and the church to know that disciples are not born but they are made. For the church to be strong in the last days, we must be about the business of equipping the saints (disciples) for the work of service.

Dr. James Humphries has been ministering for over 40 years, and has experience in a variety of ministries including church planting, children's ministry, street ministry, youth ministry, camp ministry, pastoral work and directing and teaching in schools all over the world. In addition, he has taken part in traveling and ministering in the USA, Mexico, Ukraine, Myanmar, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Thailand and across most of Canada. He completed his B.R.E. and his M.A. from Briercrest, and his Doctorate of Ministry from Providence Theological Seminary in the spring of 1999.

In January 1996, Dr. James Humphries resigned as pastor of a local church with a vision to reach further abroad with the Word of God and to use it to train labourers for Christ (Matthew 9:36-38). He shared this with Dr. David Smith and Dr. Chuck Nichols of Providence Theological Seminary and they greatly encouraged Dr. James Humphries and his wife Irene to develop what God was laying on their hearts.

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In March 1997, they traveled to Jamaica where they met several pastors who were very concerned about the need for training and disciplining their young people as leaders in their churches. Dr. James Humphries and Irene did not know this would be the starting point to an international ministry of discipleship training around the world known as Project L.A.M.B.S. International.

To date, Project L.A.M.B.S. has ministered in Canada, Myanmar, Ukraine, Africa, Jamaica, Mexico, Israel, Thailand, Japan, Dominican Republic, Naga Land and China. We offer over 30 different courses. Our graduates number over 1000, and are serving worldwide. Out of this group of graduates, we have equipped and trained directors, teachers and pastors who in turn are carrying out II Timothy 2:1-2 to an even larger group of people.

In 2002 it was discovered that Irene had cancer again. God gave Irene another three years and because of that she was still able to travel and teach in many different countries. Shortly after what was to be her last trip, Irene was hospitalized in February, 2005. A few weeks later she went home to be with her Lord and Saviour on March 9.

My second wife Hkaw Win was raised and trained mostly in the land of Myanmar. She has earned B.th, University Degree and a master of Divinity Degree in Myanmar. In April 2007 she finished a second Master's Degree at Providence Theological

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Seminary in Christian Education. After July 1st, 2007 she headed back to Myanmar to head up the Christian Education Department for the Myitkyina Kachin Baptist Association and oversaw various ministries to 62 churches. After her four-year term was completed, she has been traveling and working as an interpreter and doing translations concerning various kinds of discipleship books and materials.

Over the last ten years we have lived in the countries of Myanmar and Thailand preparing a variety of resources in the Burmese (Myanmar) and Kachin Languages. To date we have published over 20 different kinds of books. Our goal is to equip and establish people as Disciples of Christ. Please pray for God's leading and wisdom. Our walk with Christ has taken us down many challenging pathways but we have seen the faithfulness of our Lord and Savior in every area. His grace has been sufficient.

Founder and Director,

Dr. James and Hkaw Win Humphries

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