

PRAISE FOR *LIVING FIRE*

Living Fire is a powerful testament of the movement of God to disciple the least-reached. With practical insights and compelling stories, Aychi provides a narrative roadmap for igniting and sustaining Disciple Making Movements in challenging contexts. Honest about the hardships and full of hope, this book will inspire and equip anyone passionate about multiplying disciples and seeing God's kingdom advance. A must-read for movement practitioners.

DR. WARRICK FARAH

Editor, *Motus Dei: The Movement of God to Disciple the Nations*

What a powerful story! If you're praying to see a movement break out in your area, you're going to love this book! Aychi's healthy dissatisfaction with the status quo and willingness to pursue a God-sized vision of seeing 10,000 churches started in 10 years was inspiring. As he began to quickly realize that traditional approaches weren't up for the task, Aychi had the faith and humility to go back to the drawing board in order to see this vision accomplished. His discoveries along the way will encourage and challenge you on your own journey of multiplying disciples and churches!

CHRIS GALANOS

Pastor, Experience Life

Author, *From Megachurch to Multiplication*

Living Fire acts as a real-life case study of practically every facet of a disciple-making movement (DMM). By giving us practical examples from real-world situations, Aychi and Dave have helped put into context virtually every life practice and strategy that DMM implementers seek to embody. Read this book with the Bible and you're ready to do your party to launch a movement. Of course, pray hard that God will do His part too.

DR. DOUG LUCAS

Founder/Editor of Brigada; President of Team Expansion;
author of *More Disciples*

Aychi's book is a valuable contribution to those seeking to advance the Kingdom of God. It provides helpful insights for those interested in multiplying disciples and churches. It is concise and imminently practical. It is aimed at people working cross-culturally, but it will still be valuable even if you are not doing so. In fact, I suggest you adopt the practice of viewing your own context from a cross-cultural perspective, using guidance from the book. It may help you see opportunities you never noticed before.

CURTIS SERGEANT

A disciple of Jesus

Don't make the mistake of seeing this author and his story as a unicorn-type missionary hero. The pages of this book clearly expose the path from traditional ministry unicorn to catalytic movement leader, and the results speak for themselves. *Living Fire* represents a modern-day confirmation of Paul's declaration in Romans 1:16. When we get our tradition-bound methodologies out of the way, we release the power of genuine Kingdom gospel and it becomes a living fire that transforms hearts and communities.

ROY MORAN

Chairman, Board of Directors; Team Leader, Global Platform—New Generations (newgenerations.org); Visionary, Shoal Creek (shoalcreek.org)

This in-depth book examines another breakthrough of God multiplying disciples and churches among multiple people groups often considered resistant to Jesus' good news. Each chapter concisely explores a key principle, providing a strong biblical basis plus astounding testimonies from Aychi and other leaders. I consider this book a powerful "how to" manual of God using everyday leaders to disciple many people groups. I praise God for both authors (whom I am privileged to know personally) for how they give their whole lives to fulfilling Jesus' command to "make disciples of all *ethnē*" (Mt. 28: 19).

S. KENT PARKS, PH.D

President and CEO of BEYOND

In 2004 we were involved in a project to bring clean water, agriculture, education, and health services to the pastoralists in a specific region of Africa. The local sheiks appreciated our help. However, we had not been introducing Jesus to the unreached, which was our vision. Our prayers were answered when we met Aychi, who was working to catalyze Disciple Making Movements in that region of Africa. The day we met him, he and the Holy Spirit had brought a former religious leader of another faith to saving faith in Jesus. The former leader was now transmitting his miraculous story over media to his own (unreached) people. If you want to find out more about DMM and why it works, I seriously suggest you read *Living Fire*.

RICK MOORE

Chairman of the Rick & Katie Moore Foundation

Quietly and unobtrusively, many thousands from another faith are coming to Christ as Lord in some of the most unlikely places. These believers are sticking through persecution, growing in Christian knowledge and character, witnessing, and leading their own worship. Aychi and his coworkers cross borders and boundaries to bring the good news to some of the toughest peoples in the world. They use ordinary religious terms, appreciate the local culture and avoid criticizing people's beliefs, immersing them instead in the exciting stories of the Bible. Aychi and his friends are willing to go to the hard places and equip ordinary people. How else will the living fire ignite God's world?

MIRIAM ADENEY

Anthropologist, missiologist, and author

Aychi has written a book filled with inspiration and conviction. The non-stop stream of stories—of incredible kingdom advance in extremely difficult circumstances—fills my heart with confidence that anything is possible! At the same time, the haunting question of why these things are not happening in my neighborhood forced a long look in the mirror. Read the book. You will be blessed and likely challenged at the same time.

HARRY BROWN

CEO, New Generations

Evangelicalism prioritized the concept of the new birth (John 3:16). Unfortunately, discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20) was often overlooked. This resulted in new believers often being churchianised into traditional Christian cultural behaviour patterns, without being nurtured to reproduce.

By contrast, robust church growth in Africa has resulted in more Christians living in that continent than in any other. A major contributing factor has been the emergence of Discipleship Making Movements. With an emphasis on obedience to what the Bible says rather than just knowledge about it—regardless of the hostility of their environments—they have become a harvest force in the harvest field.

What Aychi and Coles reveal in *Living Fire: Advancing God's Kingdom in Challenging Places* is a must read. Applying these principles could save the church in the West from continuing its drift toward oblivion.

STUART ROBINSON

Founding Pastor, Crossway Baptist Church, Melbourne, Australia

Living Fire offers an inspiring look into faith in action, sharing the incredible journey of reaching people in areas of profound need and opposition. Aychi B.R.'s stories of transformation, resilience, and hope are not only moving but also insightful for anyone eager to understand and advance the values of faith and community-building. The book captures the realities of working in difficult places and the beauty that can arise through dedication to helping others experience the message of Jesus in authentic ways. *Living Fire* calls readers to look beyond themselves and embrace a vision of faith that fuels hope, compassion, and purpose. This is a deeply encouraging and insightful read for anyone who desires to see positive change in hard-to-reach communities.

DAVID DENMARK

Executive Director, The Maclellan Foundation

I love books born from an author's life experience, infused with biblical principles and personal stories that grip me and leave me saying, "Amazing! I want to live it and give God the glory!" This is such a book. I couldn't put it down until I finished it. I have traveled with Aychi around his country and witnessed an indigenous discipleship and church-planting movement that has changed my life and ministry. I heard stories of miracles and met dozens of leaders from different religious backgrounds, who have been transformed by the gospel and now serve the Lord in this movement. I saw with my own eyes an indigenous movement resulting in hundreds of thousands of least-reached people changed by the gospel. How is this happening? Aychi masterfully reveals 19 factors that make up the DNA of indigenous multiplying discipleship and church planting movements. What a gift this book is to God's people!

MARK TEYLER
President, 360Serve

Living Fire is a dynamic account of God's work through an available group of people, faithfully fulfilling unchanging biblical disciple-making functions—with creative and culturally appropriate forms. The book will inspire readers with a testimony of what God is doing, while simultaneously challenging our personal involvement in making disciples.

DANIEL DOWNEY
Global Outreach Pastor, Venture Christian Church

Living Fire masterfully shares Biblical principles with simple illustrations and delightful stories. This book provides proven, repeatable steps for replicating disciples. I highly recommend *Living Fire*!

TOM MARSHALL
DMM Coach and Data Specialist for New Generations,
North America; author of *The Jesus Strategy*

Living Fire is a transformative journey into the heart of Disciple Making Movements among Unreached People Groups in Africa. As Aychi's colleague since 2005, I have witnessed firsthand his unwavering passion and dedication to this mission. This book chronicles the profound sacrifices and challenges faced by Aychi and his team and offers invaluable lessons and insights that are both inspiring and actionable.

Reading *Living Fire* is like walking alongside Aychi as he navigates the complexities of launching sustainable DMMs. His stories and experiences ignite a fire within, urging readers to step out in faith and embrace their role in God's work. For those already movement-minded, this book will deepen your understanding and resolve. For the skeptical, it provides a compelling case for the transformative power of Disciple Making Movements.

Whether you're new to this concept or are seeking to refine your approach, Aychi's journey will equip and encourage you to engage meaningfully in your context. *Living Fire* is a must-read for anyone passionate about expanding God's Kingdom.

YOUNOUSSA DJAO
DMM Catalyst
New Generations

LIVING FIRE

*Advancing
God's Kingdom
in Challenging Places*

AYCHI B.R.

WITH DAVE COLES

Living Fire

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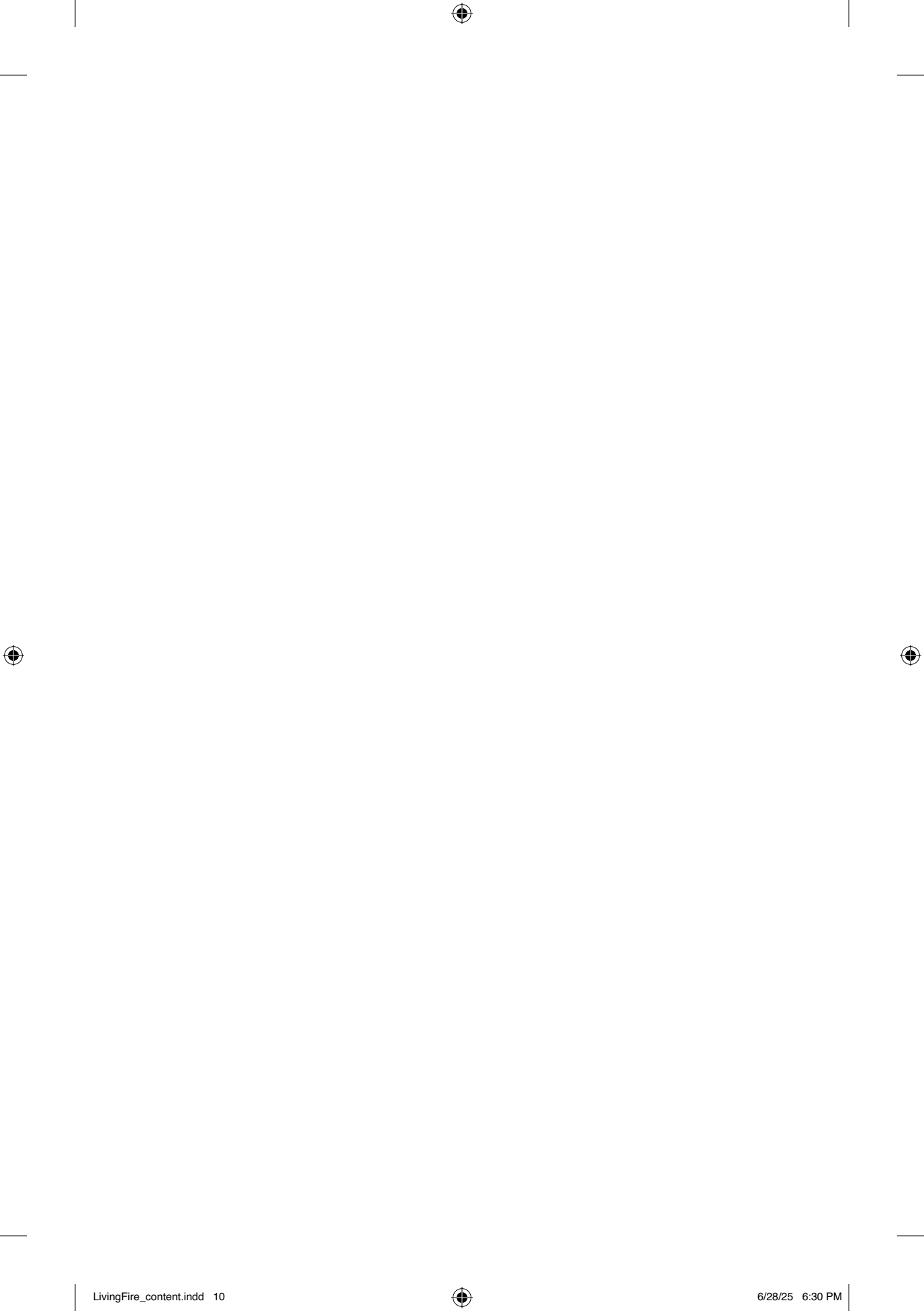
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This book is dedicated to my amazing wife, Tsega, whose love, support, and faithfulness continually inspire me, and to the incredible team of disciple-makers, strategic coordinators, and movement leaders spread across various regions. Your unwavering commitment to obeying the Lord's call, often in the face of great challenges and risks, is a testament to your faith and courage. Thank you for bringing the Good News of Jesus to places where it has yet to be heard. Your dedication and sacrifice inspire me deeply, and I pray this work will strengthen and encourage you in your mission for his Kingdom.



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FOREWORD

I FIRST MET AYCHI IN THE FINAL WEEK OF OCTOBER 2010. I HAD just spent a week in Cape Town for the 2010 Lausanne Congress.

Seeking to stretch my travel dollars, I agreed to a stopover in another African city to speak at a regional church planting movement conference before returning home. Participants in the gathering included pastors and church planters from across the country. Most of those attending desired to see multiplying disciples and churches, but few had hope that such a thing was likely.

Participants in the event listened politely as I and others shared the principles of church planting movements, sprinkled generously with anecdotes and illustrations taken from movements around the globe. While many of us spoke of principles and harvests in faraway places, one speaker was different.

Aychi stood before the assembly and spoke of what was happening among multiple Unreached People Groups in his country right now and how it was spreading to surrounding lands. He described growing house churches of new disciples among some of the most hostile communities. He recounted stories of disciple multiplication that rattled the foundations of what the hearers thought was possible.

A pall of incredulity seemed to settle over the gathering. The audience was reserved but skeptical. Their silence seemed to shout, “What new thing can you teach a church that is steeped in centuries of tradition?”

Sensing their disbelief, Aychi said, “Come, and see.”

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Just over a year later, I was back in that country researching what would become my book, *A Wind in the House of Islam*. I pulled out a phone number for Aychi and told him, “You said to come and see. I am here. I want to see.”

Aychi only hesitated for a moment before saying, “I can pick you up at your hotel on Thursday.”

And so began an amazing trek across many miles and into multiple villages of Unreached People Groups. With Aychi as my guide, I sat with former religious leaders of those communities who shared their stories of radical conversion to new life in Jesus Christ. I saw for myself the unprecedented ways in which God was doing a new thing in a very old land.

Aychi explained to me how God was using Discovery Bible Studies to bring former enemies of the cross into the family of Christ. During those days, Aychi also shared his personal story of how God had transformed his hard-soil ministry into an abundant harvest of new disciples, who were themselves reproducing new disciples among their own people.

Over the years, Aychi and his wife have become dear friends to my wife and me. I’ve seen the ways God has used them to unleash the power of the gospel among some of the world’s least-reached people groups. Their ministry has borne fruit throughout Africa and into other, far-distant corners of the globe.

As I read this book in one sitting, unable to put it down, I was reminded again of our earlier travels together. Aychi’s book is beautifully written and serves as an invaluable insight into the inner workings of multiple Disciple Making Movements that God is unfolding across this region of Africa today. For the reader, it provides a powerful portrayal of Christ’s kingdom to any and all who will accept the author’s invitation to, “Come, and see.”

David Garrison, Ph.D.

Missionary Author,
A Wind in the House of Islam

INTRODUCTION

THE LORD IS DOING GREAT THINGS IN OUR DAY TO BRING salvation to groups that, until recently, had little or no witness of Jesus' message of salvation. I have had the privilege of meeting some of the messengers carrying this good news into very challenging places. I have known Aychi for over ten years, and I interviewed many of his coworkers in person just last year. They are my heroes.

Getting traction and starting movements in places like those described in this book present numerous challenges. Yet, as you will see, these ministries very intentionally aim not only to *initiate* movements but also to lay indigenous foundations for movements that will endure. The motto "ignite, accelerate, sustain" presents Aychi's overarching ministry pattern and forms the framework of this book's three parts.

Some Christians, when they hear stories or rumors of significant movements happening among unreached groups of another faith, wonder, "Is this really happening? If so, *how* is it happening?" In this book, Aychi and his coworkers share not only the *what* of multiple movements but also the *how*. Twenty-two of the 29 chapters describe factors that play a key role in igniting, accelerating, and sustaining these movements among the unreached. To avoid unnecessarily endangering those involved in this ministry, we have chosen not to specify ministry locations. For the same reason, some names have been changed to pseudonyms, indicated by an asterisk at their first use. We hope this will not diminish your ability to savor the powerful works of God we describe.

I trust and pray that these stories of faith and fruitfulness will encourage, inform, and inspire you.

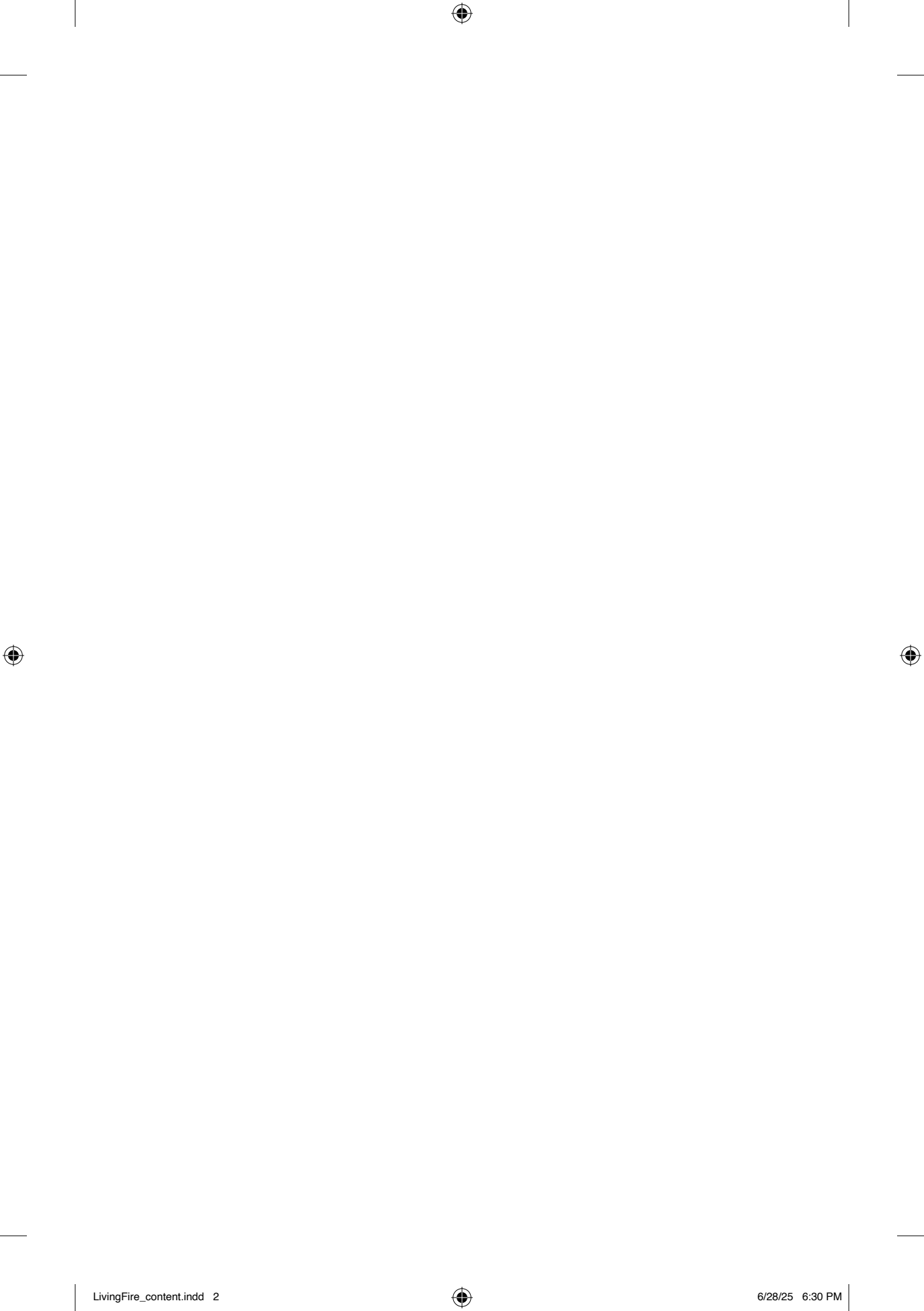
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PART I: IGNITE



CHAPTER 1

TRANSFORMED BY A NIGHT ENCOUNTER

*“He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only
for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”*

1 JOHN 2:2

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- The power of personal testimony.
- That Jesus’ ability to cleanse sins extends to everyone.
- The need to proactively take the gospel to the lost, not wait for them to seek it.

ONE EVENING IN 1996, I HEARD A KNOCK ON MY DOOR. I opened it to find a man with a dark beard standing there, holding a small pamphlet in his left hand. I didn't know him at all, so after the usual greeting, I asked, "What do you want? Can I help you with anything?"

But he just stood there, looking very upset, then he asked, "Is your Jesus able to cleanse the sins of the whole world?"

I was shocked! I didn't expect this at all. I thought, *He doesn't know me, and I don't know him. Where is this coming from?* In fact, although I didn't know him, he knew about me. He had heard of me and some prayer ministry I had. Also, one of his relatives had a relationship with me, as I had interacted with him about the gospel. I said, "Come again?"

"Is your Jesus able to cleanse the sins of the whole world?"

I didn't want to answer directly, as it felt like a trap—especially since he looked so angry. I said, "Come in. Let's discuss this."

"No. You give me an answer: yes or no."

Because he pushed me so hard, I had to answer bluntly. I said, "Yes, Jesus can cleanse the sin of the whole world."

He said, "You are a liar!" And as he said it, he entered the little house I was renting (three by three meters—less than 100 square feet) and sat down.

I didn't want to argue with him about different religious doctrines, so I said, "Let me share my story with you." I told him how Jesus came into my life. I briefly shared about the life I used to live before I met Jesus—the many dark seasons I experienced.¹ I told him about the forgiveness I had received and felt deeply when I welcomed Jesus into my heart. I shared

1. My father passed away when I was very young, then my mom passed away when I was 14. That was the darkest time in my life. I was very depressed and tried to kill myself twice. I was hopeless and helpless before I came to faith in Christ.

how I became free indeed and how my life had changed. I told him, “That’s not just my personal experience, but . . .” Without mentioning names, I told him the biblical story of Saul’s conversion on the Damascus Road and other stories. I shared them in an oral storytelling way.

Suddenly, he said, “Okay, your Jesus may be able to cleanse your sins. And maybe the sins of other people you know about. But let me tell you: he will never cleanse my sins.”

I don’t know how he came across the pamphlet he was still holding in his left hand, but it apparently mentioned the verse from 1 John 2:2, which says Jesus’ blood can cleanse the sins of the whole world. I told him, “Jesus forgave me. And Jesus forgives everyone who comes and asks for forgiveness.”

Then, he started sharing with me his struggles with a sin that had bothered him ever since he had committed it a long time ago. He was involved in religious leadership and was an educated, well-respected person. But, he said, “I can never sleep. This thing bothers me day and night. Then I found this message, and I couldn’t explain it. I became very angry. But now, what you are telling me seems convincing.”

I told him, “Abdu, I don’t know you, but God created us equal, and he provided us with an equal opportunity to be forgiven. It doesn’t matter whether a person thinks they’ve been good or bad. There is no prerequisite. The only requirement is to bow down and ask him to forgive you.”

“Right now?”

“Yes, right now, if you are ready.”

“I am ready.” He knelt down, and both of us began to pray. Tears ran down his cheeks as he prayed and welcomed Jesus into his life. His countenance changed. The man who had come to my door very angry began smiling. I still remember it vividly: like a sunrise coming into a dark room.

I started discipling Abdu day after day on many different topics. I took him to a nearby church where I used to worship. I told him, “Abdu, these are your brothers and sisters. They believe in the same faith that you have just committed to. Despite any differences in race or tribe, you

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can call them ‘my brothers and my sisters.’” That amazed him. He had never heard of such a concept. He felt he was just a refugee here, but immediately upon praying that prayer, he had hundreds of brothers and sisters. He was astonished.

He asked, “Are you sure these are my brothers?”

“Yes!”

I saw his excitement every day and his eagerness to read the word of God. He began reading it in his own language because the Bible had already been translated into it. His life changed completely, and God broke many bondages in his life as he prayed through issues with me.

Then, one day, he looked at me and asked, “What do you think about people from my religious background, especially religious leaders? Do you consider it scary to share the gospel with them?”

I said, “Yes, I think so. You came looking for me; I didn’t come looking for you.”

He said, “Even though we look scary on the outside, our inside is empty. My people need this message. But they will never come and knock on your door like I did. That was a rare opportunity. To get the good news to them, please don’t expect them to come knock on your door. Instead, go and knock on *their* door; they need this gospel.”

That was so challenging—I felt like a bomb had exploded in my mind. I began weeping because I had considered such people almost unreachable.

I had thought, *This goes beyond my categories and my boundaries. I can’t do this.* But his words became a wake-up call that stayed with me every day: Go to them; they can’t come to you.

Abdu became a leader in the fellowship of people from his country, and people began to respect him. His community has many sub-clans, and he’s not from the upper class of his sub-clan. But because of his obedience, he became a respected leader in the fellowship. His knowledge of the Scripture increased significantly, and he boldly shared his faith with others. He experienced persecution because of this, but it didn’t deter him.

After a few months, he came to me and said, “I’m going to cancel my refugee status. I want to go back home.”

I said, “Are you crazy? You’re already elderly; you could have a good life by getting asylum in some Western country. You’ve already begun that process. Why would you cancel it?”

He replied, “The only way I can share the good news I’ve experienced is by going back. That’s the only way I can express my love for God to my people.”

He went back to his country, and I followed up with him for many months. He kept growing in the Lord and became a leader in the underground church in his country’s capital city. Then, I suddenly stopped hearing from him. I believe he very likely became a martyr for Jesus, as that was the only way he could take the gospel to his people. As Tertullian said, “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.” Abdu’s blood became a seed to spread the good news in a very dangerous place.

We have seen God raise up leaders like him. Some write songs, some translate useful articles, and some lead worship. The Lord has given them diverse gifts, and they express those gifts through their service to him.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. What experience(s) have cemented your call to reach the unreached?
2. What is God saying to you through the story of Abdu?



CHAPTER 2

FOUNDATIONS OF THE MINISTRY

*“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your
spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.”*

ROMANS 12:11

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- A passion for reaching people groups who have never heard the gospel.
- How to overcome prejudice and barriers in order to love and serve our enemies.
- Opportunities among migrants and refugees from areas more closed to the gospel.

I HAVE A PASSION TO IGNITE, ACCELERATE, AND SUSTAIN Disciple Making Movements (DMM) among people groups who have never heard the gospel. Revelation 5:9 reveals God's intention for salvation: "*With your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation (ethnos).*" As God's people, we need to focus on peoples and places where the gospel has not yet reached. Oswald Smith said, "No one has the right to hear the Gospel twice while there remains someone who has not heard it once."¹ So, we ask, "How can we ignite fires that become movements among those who haven't yet heard the good news?"

BACKGROUND

When the Lord called me to mission in 1990, people in our country had very little knowledge about missions. Churches focused their evangelism exclusively on areas that already had access to the gospel. The idea of crossing cultures was not even considered. In my local church, people had never heard of such a thing. Around that time, the Evangelical churches in our country concluded we should not only be a mission-receiving country, but also have a sense of calling to reach the unreached peoples within our country and in neighboring countries. For the first time, they

1. While I am not endorsing the theological precision of this statement, it rightly conveys a concern for the huge imbalance in gospel access, even 2,000 years after Jesus spoke the Great Commission. Note: In quotations, we preserve the older style of capitalizing Gospel (the message) and Good News, God's Word (Bible), and divine pronouns (He/Him/His). In our text, we follow the preference of *The Chicago Manual of Style* and the NIV Bible: gospel, good news, God's word (Bible), he/him/his, and "they" as a useful, gender-neutral, third-person, singular pronoun.

initiated a plan to recruit, train, and send cross-cultural workers to these unreached peoples.

I didn't know it at the time, but the Lord had been calling me ever since I was in high school, based on Acts 1:8, to be a witness in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the rest of the world. At that time, with my own limitations, I applied it to myself and my context. I thought, *That means from my hometown, expanding to a radius of maybe 80 or 100 kilometers [about 50–60 miles].*

During my high school years, I loved sharing the gospel with anyone who would listen. I was very active in the church and involved in various ministries: preaching, singing in the choir, Sunday school, and Bible study. But I had a special passion for sharing the good news with others, especially those who had not yet heard it. My calling became clearer when my church prepared a mission school to train cross-cultural missionaries.

When my local church issued a call for candidates to attend a mission school, I was one of four young people selected to go. I didn't even know the exact purpose of the mission school. I thought the church expected that, after graduating, I would return and take up a role in the local church to do ministry there. I went, praying for God to lead me into his best.

He responded by clearly telling me that this was a call to cross-cultural mission. He specifically put one people group on my heart. "You are now going to begin the work to which I've called you, specifically focusing on the Nearby*² tribe."

I struggled a lot with that. I fasted and prayed, saying, "God, please change that call. I love you and I want to serve you. I'll go anywhere, but not to those people!" During a war a few years back, some of my extended family had been killed by people from that tribe, so I had grown up not loving them. They were one of the many tribes living near my family, but we intentionally didn't have anything to do with them, even though they were close neighbors.

2. Pseudonym for a specific unreached tribe in Africa. Throughout the book, asterisks denote pseudonyms.

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I thought that after fasting and praying, the Lord would change his mind. But I heard nothing. I read many books during that time—finishing almost an entire shelf of mission-related books. I read about Sundar Singh from India, William Carey, George Müller, and every missionary biography I could find in the school library. I read with great intention because I had a burning zeal for mission. The school had a day of prayer and fasting each Monday; we had no classes on those days. From eight in the morning until six in the evening, we didn't open any books. We just prayed and cried out to the Lord. Then, during a week of prayer and fasting at the mission school, God kept telling me, "This is why I brought you to this mission school—to go to these people and be ready to share the good news with them."

I finally said, "Okay, God. I'll agree with your plan. I love you and I want to obey you. But if you are serious about this, give me the one thing I don't have and that this school cannot give me. I can gain knowledge here, and I can prepare here. But I'm struggling with a heart issue. I have no love for these people. I need a deep, desperate love—a passion for reaching them with the gospel."

Then God did it! A supernatural change took place, and he put a burden and love in my heart for the people group I had once struggled with. I began reading their history and studying their language. Through that process, God ignited a passion in me for reaching them. Finally, I concluded, "I hear you clearly, God. This is the way to go, and I believe this is the time."

In those days, that country and its people group had very few believers. Out of six or seven million people, there were only about 150 believers—approximately 0.0025% or less of the population. That group remains one of their most difficult to reach. I drew a map of that country and poured out prayers for them. As I prayed over the map, I felt so deeply connected to them that tears began to drop onto it.

I said, "God, if you're sending me to reach them, I really need to learn their language." I set aside two hours each day, from Monday through Friday, to focus on language learning. Within three months, I could read,

write, and speak a little of the language. That began my first season of mission: six years serving among that people group.

After six months (in 1994), five others from my school and I went on an internship to a neighboring country where many people spoke that language. As far as we know, this was the first cross-border gospel outreach from our country. I lived with a local family there who spoke the language and interacted with them, which greatly strengthened my language skills and cultural understanding. I focused on learning: observing, listening, praying, becoming more fluent in the language, and studying their culture. I got to know the people firsthand and developed relationships. This laid the foundation I needed to prepare for the upcoming ministry.

I realized I had been wrong in my prejudice toward them—thinking that they all had hard hearts. Instead, I saw softness and welcoming attitudes, and I felt God’s love for them deeply. I realized, “These people don’t belong outside God’s kingdom. God loves them, and they need to come into his kingdom.” I thank God for the unique privilege of being one of the very first Christians from my country to serve cross-culturally among that tribe. When I returned from the internship, I was on fire—ready to go long-term.

In 1995, after graduating with a diploma in missiology, I began teaching at the mission school and returned to engage with that people group. I had fallen in love with them and decided to serve them wherever they lived. At that time, thousands of them lived as refugees in our capital city, and I started sharing the gospel with some of them.

In those days, in our African context, we didn’t know much or often discuss the proximity of people groups. We didn’t pay attention to the Great Commission potential of unreached groups living in close proximity to reached groups, or of migrants and refugees from unreached groups coming to live among reached groups. But, I began to realize that instead of having to move physically to reach them, God was bringing the unreached closer to us.

I saw this happening in my context, and I thought, *The people I’m*

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called to reach have already come to my country. Why don't I start my mission by engaging with them here? The Lord has given us a unique opportunity at this time. We don't know when this door might close, but we have a golden opportunity right now. The people God wants us to reach already live close to us. We have no reason to say no. We don't have the excuse that they live too far away. We don't have the excuse that it's expensive to go there. We don't have the excuse of no organizational structure to do this. They are already our neighbors. Some of them have even rented houses from believers.

I began reaching out to them and started two house churches among the Nearby. I also trained and coached many others, including workers with other groups. As a result, churches began to be planted among them, both in the capital and in the eastern part of our country, and leaders began to emerge. Even now, the number of Nearby believers is not large, but many who have come to faith are the fruit of the ministry we started at that time.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. What's your response to the statement, "No one has the right to hear the gospel twice while there remains someone who has not heard it once"?
2. What are some ways you could make a difference in helping those who have never heard the gospel become able to hear it in a way they can understand?

CHAPTER 3

A NEW SEASON

*“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up;
do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the
wilderness and streams in the wasteland.”*

ISAIAH 43:19

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- The importance of equipping individuals to effectively engage in cross-cultural ministry.
- The value of presenting the gospel in a way that is understandable to people in the focus culture.
- Examples of commitment to reaching the unreached, even in the face of significant challenges and adversity.

IN 1996, AFTER SIX YEARS OF PERSONAL MINISTRY AMONG the Nearby, the Lord told me, “You have to equip the people who come to you.” So, at the mission school I had graduated from, I began equipping other leaders coming into our region. I started to intentionally lead cross-cultural internships.

The mission school I had previously attended moved to my city, and from 1997–2000, I taught a subject that today we would call contextualization. At that time, we called it “Cultural Observation,” and, as part of the class, my students began getting involved in ministry to the Nearby people. Once a week, they had to leave the classroom and engage cross-culturally with people in the community—learn the language, explore the culture, and look for people who were open.

At first, they resisted the idea. They had never before experienced real cross-cultural interaction, so it felt very strange to them to leave the classroom and spend time with people from a different culture. But, I gave them the assignment, so they went and did it. As they spent time with Nearby people, saw their lives, and got to know their history, they were deeply touched. We always made time for a reflection on their experience. “Who did you meet? How did you experience the time?” It warmed my heart to hear their stories of cross-cultural exposure.

At that time, we didn’t use the phrase “person of peace.” I told them, “Go and find an open person who will invite you in for tea. Try to understand their situation and their spiritual struggles. And if the Lord provides you with any opportunity, be ready to share the good news. When you share, don’t use words that will sound strange to them. For example, the name of God in our language may not resonate with them, the name *Yesus* in our language may not resonate with them, the name Paradise, and so on. Try to express biblical truth in words familiar to

them. When you go to their homes, willingly eat whatever they offer you, which often includes camel meat and camel milk.”

On some Fridays, after our fasting and prayer, I served a soup made from camel milk and meat. That was a big deal for the students—to engage cross-culturally at that level. I myself was immersed in engaging cross-culturally and was intentional in getting my students involved as well.

They initially resisted the idea of eating strange food—like camel meat. I asked the school’s cook, “Can you buy some camel meat and cook it for the students?” We fasted every Friday, so for the meal to break the fast, when they were nice and hungry, we served them soup with camel meat. After many months, I asked them, “Do you enjoy the food here? What’s your favorite?”

They replied, “Definitely the soup on Friday. It’s amazing.”

“Have you ever had camel meat?”

“No, we haven’t.”

“Actually, you’ve been eating it every Friday in the soup.”

As a result of that required cross-cultural interaction, some of the students continued in cross-cultural ministry to the unreached, and some Nearby people who came to the Lord also became candidates to reach their own people. Some of them wrote books and spiritual songs in their language. This was the first time in our country’s mission history that we had ever seen our own people intentionally crossing cultural boundaries to reach lost people in a nearby culture. By that time, we had developed an oral strategy, helping oral learners to memorize Scripture.

We now call this contextualization: the process of presenting the gospel in a way another group of people can understand, without robbing or damaging their culture. We presented the message in oral format and with drawings. We used that approach in teaching both our students and the disciples. The students became equipped to effectively pass on what they learned. Since the Scripture was already available in the Nearby language, we had them memorize some of the most useful texts for evangelism. This included stories of Jesus from the Gospel of Luke,

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passages from the Gospel of John, and stories from the Old Testament: Creation, Noah, Abraham, Joseph, and some of the prophets. We intentionally chose stories that would resonate with the people we wanted to reach and open the door for sharing biblical truth.

A couple of literate Nearby people who came to Christ went to seminary. One friend of mine from that group now has a Ph.D. and plays a leading role in ministry to his own people, despite receiving many threats because of his work.

Some of the disciples read Scripture very well, and this helped them persevere and continue to mature. We never used a monologue strategy with an eloquent preacher delivering sermons. Instead, the authority of God's word and the work of the Holy Spirit, through the group's discovery process proved very powerful. At the time, we hadn't yet heard about emphasizing obedience and accountability as part of the discovery process, nor did we use the now-common pattern of very simple and easily reproducible questions.¹ However, our church already had a pattern of group discussion in our Bible study, rather than relying on one person as the teacher or "answer man."

Around this time, I read a secular article that described the Nearby people's home country as "forgotten by God," referring to the people killed in the civil war and the atrocities happening there. The capital city had been destroyed, and the infrastructure was left in ruins. Most of the international community had given up on trying to help, as the situation seemed hopeless.

But I thought, *I'm sure God will never forget this place.* His challenge burned in my heart. *How long is eternity? And these people don't have a Jesus option, so where are they going?* I knew that the same Jesus who had died for my people had also died for these people. Even though their land was spiritually very dark and one of the top places where Christians had been martyred, I felt a strong conviction: *We've got to take on this challenge.* We also saw believers modeling a willingness to face persecution.

1. See Appendix B for a description of the discovery process we now commonly use.

When persecution came, they didn't back down. When some of the existing local churches saw this fruit, they became instrumental in opening their facilities for baptisms and other special occasions.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. What strengthens your skills in cross-cultural interactions?
2. What are some ways you have encouraged others, or could encourage others, to become more creative and effective in their outreach to unbelievers?



CHAPTER 4

GOD EXPANDS THE VISION

“You will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring.”

GENESIS 28:14

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- A pivotal shift in focus—from reaching a single people group to reaching all Unreached People Groups in the region.
- A new strategy for church planting, resulting in a significant multiplication of churches.
- The dramatic impact of implementing the new strategy.

IN 2002, AFTER SIX YEARS OF FOCUSING ON THE NEARBY AND equipping others in cross-cultural ministry, the Lord spoke to me. “I want you to reach more than just that people group. You need to see the bigger picture of *all the Unreached People Groups* in your region, encompassing many nations. Look at their desperation and dark places.” I realized we needed to make significant changes to pursue completing the Great Commission among all these people groups. We had zeal and commitment, but we didn’t know how to effectively engage all of them.

As we began researching the Unreached People Groups (UPGs) and the unfinished task—the harvest field and the harvest force—we discovered very little activity among many of the UPGs in our region. We even found several unreached groups within our own country.

We noted that the local churches didn’t give any attention or priority to reaching the UPGs from different religions. In fact, many considered them unreachable. These Christians had a very traditional and inward-focused attitude. “They are a very aggressive people; just let them be. We can live among them, but we don’t want to engage them or try to share the gospel with them. If we tell them the gospel and they don’t want to receive it, they will come with their weapons and destroy us, so let’s leave them alone in their beliefs. Don’t stir up any trouble. If they come to us, that’s okay; we’ve done our job.”

Christians had no sense of needing to *go to them*. But after our team conducted our research, we asked ourselves, “What will it take to reach them? What do we need to do?” The Lord gave us a burden to plant 10,000 churches within 10 years. That seemed like a huge task, but we saw it as God’s way to reach that region.

For three years, from 2003 to 2005, we planted churches using traditional methods: winning one person, then moving on to another,

conducting open-air evangelism, and distributing tracts. I wouldn't say these methods were wrong, but they didn't produce much fruit. After three years of using that approach, the results we saw seemed small compared to our goal. In three years, we planted only 220 churches among UPGs. When we tallied that total, I praised God for what he had done, but at the same time, I wasn't entirely happy. Given that everyone considered these groups very hard to reach, many leaders said, "These are amazing results!" But compared to the need, we saw it as inadequate. It came nowhere close to our goal, which God had given us a sense of urgency to achieve. God gave me what I call a "healthy dissatisfaction." I said, "God, I'm really blessed, but I know you're not satisfied. Even I am not satisfied. There must be a better way. How can we do this?"

While I was wrestling with this question, I went to study leadership and theology in Nairobi, Kenya. I became active in the university and had a passion to reach UPGs, so I talked about them at every opportunity and became a leader on campus. Some friends and I started traveling to different remote areas to proclaim the good news among the unreached peoples in Kenya. During the three years I spent there, from 2002 to 2005, we also mobilized churches to wake them up to the mandate of the Great Commission.

Every three months, whenever my school closed for a break, I returned to continue ministry in my home country. During this season, my mentor, Dave Hunt, heard about a new strategy. I call it "a brand-new strategy that's 2,000 years old." (He had been mentoring me since before I went to study in Kenya in 2002.) A few semesters into my time there, he began informally sharing some new ideas with me. Whenever I was back in my country, we would meet over coffee and discuss ministry.

I shared with Dave my frustration about the huge gap between the results we had planned for and the little fruit we had seen. He began sharing insights about reaching families versus individuals, finding the person of peace, focusing on multiplication versus addition, and the role of indigenous people versus outsiders. He also spoke about redefining church and understanding, biblically, what constitutes a church.

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Additionally, he discussed who can and should be equipped to plant a church—emphasizing ordinary disciples and applying the priesthood of all believers. What he shared sparked my appetite to know more. Then one day, he said, “If you want to find out more, there’s a training course happening soon in Tanzania. Shall we go?”

I said, “Okay, let’s do it!” I got my first real exposure to Disciple Making Movements (DMM) at that training in late 2005. David Watson led it. He had a lot of experience in India and reported huge numbers: 40,000 churches were planted within 15 years and two million people came to the Lord. As he spoke on the first day, I didn’t get excited—I got upset! He made it sound like the same kinds of things could happen in our region.

I thought to myself, *This guy doesn’t know where I come from. I work in one of the world’s most difficult places. In our country, even another religious group that accepts the Bible as God’s word commits a lot of persecution against disciples. And persecution comes from other religions as well. I think this guy is either exaggerating or just plain lying. Maybe he thinks that because he’s a white person, we’ll listen to him and accept what he says. He doesn’t know we’re serving one of the hardest people groups. We know what it’s like to plant churches in the midst of persecution.*

After lunch, I didn’t return to the session. I thought, *I’m not going to waste my time with this.* I went to my room and started praying. As I prayed, I suddenly felt a rebuke from the Holy Spirit: *You have become proud.* God began exposing my pride and stubbornness. Deep down, I knew the Holy Spirit was speaking to me.

In tears, I prayed, “God, forgive me. I love you so much. You rescued me from death. I know you sent me to bring the news of salvation to unreached peoples. I want to see you glorified among people who have never heard the gospel. I long for the unreached peoples in my country and the surrounding countries to receive your gospel in my generation. Forgive me for being stubborn.”

After receiving forgiveness, I told the Lord, “Okay, I will listen to whatever that man says. I’m ready to do whatever it takes, but on one

condition: that you show me a glimpse of the fruit he's talking about among the people I serve. I want it in my generation, while I'm still alive—not just a hope for the next generation. I want to see it now. That's my commitment."

After that prayer, I came back the next day, energized, refreshed, and ready to take notes. I got out my notebook and pen and sat in the front row to absorb everything I could. Besides the inspiring testimony he had given, Watson shared simple principles drawn from the Bible, including immediate radical obedience, finding a person of peace, the discovery process, focusing on families rather than individuals, multiplication like we see in the book of Acts, and the concept of the church consisting of people rather than a building. He also talked about how to deculturize the gospel. I had already been doing that back at the mission school, but now it hit me in a fresh way—even though, in some ways, I already knew it.

After that training, I felt eager to go back and share these things with my partners and the network I represented. So, we called a meeting. I brought David Watson to my home country and hosted the training. This was my church planters' first exposure to these concepts, and we had a strong reaction on the first day. During the first tea break, when everyone else went for tea, my church planters, who couldn't speak English, came to me with a *lot* of questions: "We need some clarification. What does he mean by this, and that?"

My church planters trusted me, but David sometimes gave controversial examples that distracted from the main message. I told David, "Some of those examples from India may not relate well to the context here."

At the end of the training, I shared my journey with my team and said, "God has called me personally to do this. I understand if some of you want to take time to think about it. That's okay. You can join us in the journey later if you want, but I'm convicted that I need to follow this strategy." Some of our partners didn't feel comfortable using this approach. We said, "That's okay; we bless you to stay with the approach you think is best." But the majority felt, "This is from the Lord. Let's come together and prioritize really doing this."

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Early in 2006, we revised our mission and vision statements. Instead of sending church planters to unreached groups without a clear strategy, we said, “We don’t want to just be a mission-sending organization. We want to see indigenous, multiplying churches planted and focus on indigenous disciples reaching other indigenous disciples.” We also discussed accountability: “If we’re serious about this, how will we measure results?” We agreed to provide accountability reports to one another every three months. We very intentionally chose to implement a movement strategy, as described in “Factors that Multiply Movements.”¹

What happened next amazed us. In the previous three years, from 2002 to 2005, we and our partners had planted only 220 churches. After this training and reshaping our strategy, we and our 15 partners planted well over 300 new churches in *just the first year*—2006. I personally went to check some of the places because I had a hard time believing the reports—especially in one place where they had previously seen very little fruit. In seven years, they had planted only two or three churches. Then, just three months after the training, they called me and said, “We have planted 15 churches!”

I thought, “No, there must be some mistake. That couldn’t happen. We need to check that report.” So, I went there to verify.² Between the

1. Nineteen chapters of this book expound on these 19 factors: Healthy Dissatisfaction, Prayer, Not Focusing on Religion, Access Ministry, Showing Jesus’ Radical Love, Holy Boldness amidst Hardship, Person of Peace, Discovery Bible Study, Obedience-based Discipleship, Reaching Families, Supernatural Manifestations, Indigenous Incarnation of the Gospel, Hot Coals, Generational Focus, Sharing Fruitful Practices, Every Believer Active, Redefined Church, Indigenous Leaders, Equipping Strategy Appropriate for the Context. A shorter summary can be found in my chapter (Chapter 27), titled “Factors that Multiply Movements,” in the book *Fruit to Harvest*, edited by Gene Daniels, Pam Arlund, and Jim Haney (Littleton, CO: William Carey Publishing, 2019). Available at missionbooks.org.

2. Any time we suspect inflated numbers, we go to visit and check. One case of a report needing correction happened among a pastoralist people group, meaning that they move around a lot. The believers actually existed, but the number of churches was smaller than had been reported. Also, we did an audit a number of years ago among one people group, because we wanted to confirm that what we reported reflected reality on the ground. It’s easy to report how many churches start, but not maintain a multi-year update to see if they continue to exist, or what’s really happening a few years later. In most cases, the missing churches either had joined a pre-existing traditional church or aggregated (two or more small house churches joined together, resulting in larger churches but a smaller number of churches). Five percent had ceased to exist. So, we adjusted our bottom-line number accordingly. We are currently conducting another internal audit to check the health of

time I received their message and a week or two later, when I visited, the 15 churches had become 16! I saw that a movement had been ignited and was accelerating.

Then, in 2007, more than 900 churches were planted. The Lord gave us daily multiplication of disciples and churches being planted. We experienced not only the multiplication of churches but also of partners. I went from the healthy dissatisfaction I previously felt to the excitement I now have. Other groups witnessed what God was doing and said, “Wow! We want to be a part of this!”

We went from two partners to four, then 10, 30, and 70. Now, we have well over 100 partners planting churches. God is doing amazing things here. I’m very grateful for this—not because some superhero or big man has come to make it happen, but because ordinary disciples in their natural networks are obeying the simple command of Jesus, “Go and share what you have experienced.” Disciples are making disciples who can make more disciples. We see individuals, families, and communities coming to the Lord and being transformed—falling in love with Jesus and his word. God is showing his greatness through dreams, miracles, and wonders as he expands his kingdom.

At first, some of the pre-movement churches felt a bit threatened. They feared we would take their people or bring a lot of persecution. But through our relationship with them, they saw God at work. People from another faith were becoming disciples who made more disciples. They were multiplying while remaining in their own context and culture, using their own language. Other churches came and witnessed the multiplication, confirming what was happening. The fear suddenly disappeared, as church leaders said, “If the Lord wants to give this kind of fruit in our generation, we don’t need to fear anymore. We are ready to risk our lives.”

We had focused all along on UPGs, so when the movement began,

the movement and the accuracy of our data. We have plans for an external audit as well. We focus not just on the numbers of disciples and churches, but much more on their spiritual health and sustainability.

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we continued going directly to unreached peoples. Our focus was, “Who are the UPGs, and how do we get there?” In our training, we looked for, “Where is the closest church to that UPG?” We went to those places to recruit church planters and train and coach those individuals.

At present, we have ministries among around 40 different UPGs. About 50% of those groups profess another faith, and about 40% of the fruit we’ve seen so far has come from that background. Roughly 25% of the groups we serve have a background in tribal religion, and another 25% are nominally Christian.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. What sources of information do you find most helpful for understanding the people the Lord has called you to reach?
2. What simple yet radical steps might the Lord want you to take to see greater fruit?

CHAPTER 5

CHALLENGES IN THE MINISTRY

*“In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly
life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.”*

2 TIMOTHY 3:12a

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Persecution as an opening for spiritual growth and outreach.
- Unexpected ministry opportunities through crises.
- How to navigate various transitions for effective ministry.

WE OFTEN FACE THE CHALLENGE OF PERSECUTION, WHICH, as we know from 2 Timothy 3:12, comes with living a godly life in Christ Jesus. In pioneer work, we expect persecution and train our people how to respond to it. God often uses persecution to weed out nominal believers. And, although it's a challenge, it can also bring opportunities and open doors.

For example, one of the communities we serve was considered, humanly speaking, very hard to reach and violently anti-Christian. In 65 years of Christians trying to penetrate that group with the gospel, little progress was made. Then, two of our church planters from an existing movement (among the same cultural group) began ministry there. In less than a year, God enabled them to reach some people. After they baptized some of the new disciples, the police arrested 10 of them, including the two church planters and two of the brand-new believers.

We didn't know what would happen next. We felt confident the church planters could handle the persecution, but we were very concerned for the new believers. The police took them to a different location and separated them for their interrogations. They put special pressure on the new believers to recant their faith in Christ, accusing the church planters of giving them money to motivate their confession of faith. But the new believers stood strong. They told their interrogators, "No. We know what we're doing. We believe in Jesus. He is our Lord, our Savior, and our King."

Finally, after more than two weeks, the new believers were released and they returned to their community. Through that persecution, they had become even stronger in their faith. The Lord used it to encourage them to take the good news to their community, where the gospel had

never been proclaimed. After following the Lord for just one month (with more than half of that time spent in jail), the two new believers boldly shared the gospel in their community, and the Lord gave them significant fruit. As a result of their witness, a movement started over the past four years in that community, which now has about 2,500 disciples in four generations of house churches.

Another story of opportunity during persecution took place in an extremely hard-to-reach community. Adam*, a young church planter, shared the good news very effectively there. Because of his courage during persecution, he gained respect from many religious leaders. Less than two years after that persecution began, he had reached six generations of disciples.

Adam's story began well, with his ministry initially experiencing rapid multiplication. However, he was later attacked and beaten by a group of religious extremists. One of them seriously cut his head with a machete, and they thought they had killed him. He remained unconscious for four days and nearly died. After regaining consciousness, he went back and continued ministering in that area, even while he still had stitches in his head.

When Adam returned to that area with his head bandaged, 60 disciples declared their readiness to be baptized. He spoke to them, encouraging them concerning the Lord's faithfulness, the cost of discipleship, and the importance of obedience. The new disciples were greatly strengthened by his example.

Adam knew who had attacked him. If he had taken the matter to court, his attackers would have gone to prison for years. The community wanted to hold a reconciliation ceremony, according to their cultural tradition, but they didn't know if Adam would forgive the men. About four months after the attack, the whole community gathered for a large ceremony. The men who had attacked him bowed down with their faces to the ground, in front of the elders and everyone, asking for forgiveness. They said, "We thought we killed you, but God has revived you, so please forgive us."

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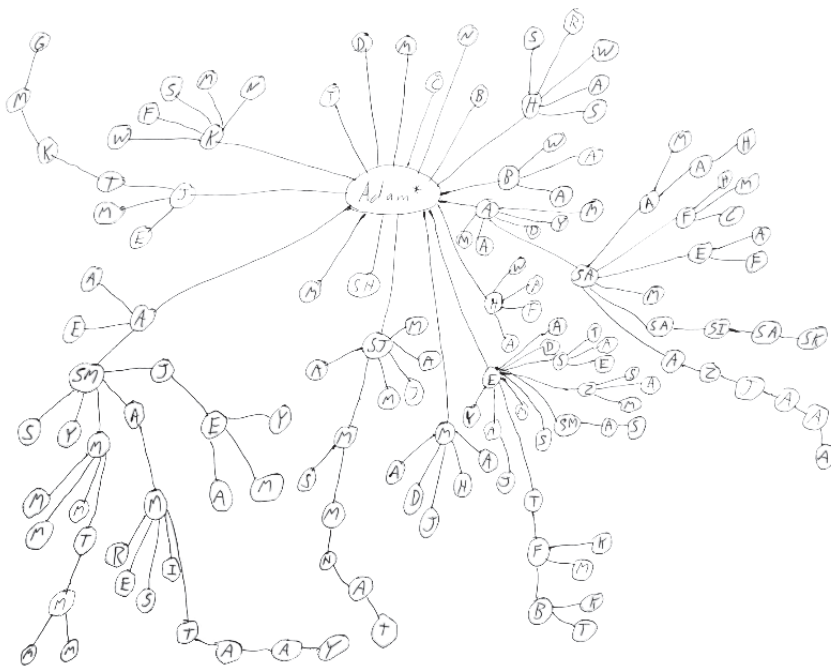
This scarred brother lifted up his attackers, hugged them, and said, “I can forgive you because I’ve been forgiven. You meant to kill me, but God didn’t allow it.”

The community leaders asked, “How much do you request as compensation?”

He replied, “I’m not asking for anything in compensation; the price has been paid by the Lord Jesus. He loves you.”

As a result, the community’s religious and political leaders said, “Since this man has declined any payment, we declare that he can now share his Christian faith openly with this community. Nobody can forbid him.”

This diagram shows the fruit of Adam’s ministry—up to eight generations of disciples—within the span of just 23 months.



Because of his bravery, people greatly respected him, even though he was still young. Effective leadership doesn’t depend on age, but on

radical obedience. That community is now almost saturated with the gospel, and they even have a burial place for believers. They continue to meet in house churches, with no special church building. Adam continues to gradually recover, though he still suffers from headaches. Through his bold perseverance in the face of persecution, God has done a great work in that community.

GENERAL HARDSHIP

When our church planter, Gabriel*, shares, “I walk 17 kilometers (over 10 miles) per day,” others feel encouraged. They realize, “I should stop complaining about walking 10 kilometers (six miles) per day.” We experience hardship as part of everyday life in our network. Persecution does not stop us; we expect it. It’s not an emergency for us; we are prepared for it. When it happens, our people know what to do. We have God’s promises, and we have backup prayer. When a disciple is imprisoned, news goes immediately to the intercessors.

One brother told me, “I just got released from prison last week. During the few days I was there, a very religious man became quite ill. He asked me to pray for him, so, I prayed, and the Lord healed him and brought him to faith. Jesus performed more miracles when he left prison, and I now disciple him and another man who got saved in the prison.” If God sends a disciple to prison to bring salvation to some very religious people there, we don’t feel sad that he’s in prison. We shout, “Hallelujah!” We celebrate that God wanted him in prison for that moment to bring salvation.

CONFLICT

We also face the challenge of tribal conflict. This kind of warfare reduces our mobility and makes it harder to travel from one place to

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another. It also breeds feelings of enmity between tribes. If we go to minister among one tribe, we can't travel on roads through the territory of their enemies.

But God sometimes uses conflict. When other religious leaders struggle to deal with these issues, our leaders can bring a message of reconciliation, forgiveness, and love, without being pulled to any extremes. As a result, they have played a critical role in some of these places, which has borne fruit. In every crisis, we look for kingdom opportunities: "What does the Lord want to do with this situation?"

In the midst of persecution, we know God is sovereign, providing complete protection when he chooses. One church planter testifies, "It has been difficult for us to travel from one people group to another to do discipleship—to train them and pray with them. From one house church to another is about 60 kilometers (37 miles), and the trip is very dangerous because the different groups consider each other enemies. I began a recent trip, coming from that area. Someone heard I was going to be traveling and shared that information with others. A group was waiting for me with a gun. I had to travel seven kilometers (over four miles) from my home to the nearest bus. As I was walking that distance, a man fired a gun right at my forehead. I saw a flash as bright as the sun, but no bullet hit my forehead. God really rescued me!"

We can't escape challenges; we need to thrive through them. So, we look for any doors the Lord might be opening through these challenges. We saw the Lord do that during the COVID-19 pandemic. The crisis impacted everything, but for us, it opened doors into communities. We were able to provide help and hope, and we also saw increased openness to the gospel in those communities.

Crises sometimes result in good opportunities. One people group had greatly persecuted the disciples, including killing one church planter and destroying gathering places. Then, when floods devastated the community, our people went to help. The persecutors asked, "Why did you come? We expected our [co-religionists] to come first, but you came, even though we've persecuted you a lot. When we were in trouble, you

came to help us.” We explained our reasons, and I spent time with the religious leader. We shared Jesus’ teachings, including the Golden Rule and his command to love everyone, especially those in trouble. They were amazed! The young leader who had coordinated the killing of the church planter and the destruction of the meeting places came to us and said, “Forgive me. I was part of the committee that planned those things.”

Then the religious leaders said, “Forgive us for not allowing you to share your faith. From now on, you can share; no one should attack you.” After that, we saw openness in the community. The situation became much less security-sensitive because the religious leaders had given us access. We could go there whenever we wanted and share the good news. Our strategy coordinators and church planters found open doors to start Discovery Bible Studies in that community and disciple persons of peace. Today, the religious leader there continues to occasionally call me and chat, as one would call a friend.

TRANSITIONS

Transitions from one stage of ministry to the next play an important role. For example, church planters begin by traveling through an area and praying. Then, they start looking for a person of peace through an access ministry.¹ Once they have found a person of peace, they engage that person’s network and begin a Discovery Bible Study with the group. When those in the Discovery Bible Study come to faith, they move toward baptism. (In most places, baptism is not delayed by lengthy discipleship requirements.) After baptism, another transition occurs as the group becomes a church. Other transitions include raising up indigenous leaders and helping a church become missional and able to reproduce. All

1. Access ministry becomes a doorway to enter a community and find a person of peace. This is described in greater detail in Chapter 8.

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these transitions are very important. We don't want to become stagnant, only conducting a lot of Discovery Bible Studies.

On an individual level, people transition from having considered a different holy book to be true, to believing and obeying the Bible. We consider it foundational to ensure they come to obey the Bible as the word of God—God-breathed from Genesis to Revelation. The Bible is God's message for theology and for life. Any other claim to spiritual truth must be reevaluated by that standard. Each believer must obey the word of God.

Whatever book a person might have previously believed in becomes only a reference, pointing to the Bible. We can use it as a bridge to the Bible, but after that, we don't continue using the old book alongside the Bible. Doing so would confuse people. It would be like having two masters in one house. We guide people toward obeying what God says in the Bible and understanding the essential distinction between the Bible and any other book.

I compare citing texts from any other religious book to an airplane taking me to a certain destination. I can't stay long-term in the airplane. I use the plane to take me where I need to go, but I have to completely exit the plane to enjoy my destination. When a person enters God's kingdom, they enter a new worldview and way of life. We use the previous book only as a tool to start the journey, helping people travel from what they knew to what they didn't know. That transition is very intentional. We have special training to equip people who have gone through that transition to guide others through that same journey. We also have disciple makers who can help people who are struggling with that transition. Additionally, we train leaders of leaders who can help others continue, reproducing that process.

New disciples also transition from believing whatever they had heard about Jesus in their previous religion to following Christ as the only Savior and Lord—God incarnate, fully human and fully divine. He is the Son of God, the head of the Church, and the only rock of refuge.

A believer also experiences lifestyle transitions, moving from old

ways of life into a new way: living as a new creation in Christ, a follower of Jesus, a disciple. How does that affect a person's life? That's a huge transition. We make sure those transitions are clear. We don't want any ambiguity in the middle of the discipleship process.

We try to address these issues as early as possible in a person's faith journey, as they're coming to faith and before they are baptized. Each person needs to clearly understand the meaning of baptism. We don't water down the meaning of baptism; we make sure they understand what the Bible teaches about it in Romans 6. Sometimes the baptisms are preceded by a five-day intensive gathering for discipleship and addressing issues from their past practices and beliefs. This includes teaching on basic doctrinal matters like the authority of the Bible and the deity and lordship of Christ.

We also address lifestyle issues such as being salt and light in our communities, walking in love, and fulfilling the one-another commands. We help them understand that their identity has changed, so their lifestyle has to change as well. God calls them to love one another, pray for themselves and others, and meet regularly with their brothers and sisters. Pre-baptismal training lays a solid foundation for spiritual growth and filters out anyone not yet ready for full commitment to the Lord.

When a man comes to the Lord with two or three wives, we don't ask him to divorce them. We leave it up to him and God to handle that situation, but a disciple can't add another wife. We see transformation in many character issues as people begin to imitate Jesus in their everyday life. They start asking, "What did Jesus say about this? What does the Bible say?" For example, they learn to tell the truth instead of lying, live in holiness, and ask for forgiveness. In many of the cultures we're reaching, men don't usually ask for forgiveness. But now, it has become part of their day-to-day pattern, as we see in the Lord's Prayer. The most important question is, "Do you love Jesus? If you love Jesus, this is what he says." We often use Romans 12 to lay this foundation for a kingdom lifestyle.

The transition process in the life of a community of disciples can hold other challenges as well. For example, we face security issues related

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to the intensive training we hold for new believers from another faith background. This training, led by a former leader in that faith, helps them transition well from their old beliefs and practices to biblical beliefs and practices. Usually, those who come to a training course have already passed through two levels of filtering. The disciple maker or church planter might not be able to answer all their questions, so they bring them to a training with a leader who has specialized knowledge related to that religious background. However, the disciple maker must first ensure that the person is truly ready to join with other likely disciples and does not pose a security threat to the group.

Bringing new professing believers to join others already in the faith always involves risk. If a false believer were to join one of these gatherings, they could do incredible damage. Therefore, prayer for protection and discernment is crucial. We have had some cases of infiltration by false believers and spies. In one instance, false believers attending the training gathered enough evidence to call for the leader's arrest. They then sent a message to their friends, telling them when to come and attack the gathering. But they hadn't yet shared with the attackers the precise location of the training.

Sooner than expected, the training finished, and 10 new believers got baptized. Then, somehow, all telecommunication in the entire area stopped functioning. The spies kept trying to connect with their co-conspirators, but they couldn't. The leader said goodbye and left the location. After everyone had departed, and the leader was about 50 miles away, telecommunication returned. As a result, the attack failed. Much later, one of the disciples informed our coordinator that he had overheard the story of the planned attack and how it had been prevented. The Lord gloriously rescued our leader on that occasion.

It is impossible to prevent every potential problem. We do as much as we can to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves, and leave the rest up to God. We must trust him, or we couldn't accomplish anything in some of these challenging places. We face significant hardships and challenges, but the Lord often brings amazing deliverance. We praise him through

the trials he allows, and we praise him for the deliverance he sometimes brings. We don't hope for an easy road; our hope lies in the Lord.

Occasionally, some people—maybe two to five percent of those who begin the journey—don't make it through all the transitions of faith. The person of peace functions as the first filtration point, deciding who to include in a family-focused (*oikos*-focused) gathering. Those within that person's group already have a relationship of trust because they're relationally connected, allowing them to move ahead together in their faith journey. However, connecting one *oikos* with another can bring security problems. Unknown people constitute a security risk. Relational trust makes a huge difference in the ability to grow together in Christ.

We believe in and experience the strong power of prayer. God speaks to those with hearts ready to hear, and he touches their minds. That affectionate relationship with him—a process of spiritual change happening within—gradually transforms people, inside and out.

In one people group, we conducted a deep-dive audit and discovered that, after baptizing about 20,000 people, the number of disciples had nearly reached a point of saturation among that group. What used to be a UPG was now a reached group with different dynamics. In the past, our churches baptized, on average, 70–100 people per year. As exponential growth continued and then slowed, we saw amalgamation among the churches. Some of the house churches were tempted to grow into larger groups. Instead of remaining house churches of 20 or 50, they merged to become a congregation of 100, then 200. Recognizing this change greatly helped our strategy coordinators, pushing them to focus more on qualitative growth among the disciples in that group.

These are some of the challenges and turning points we've experienced as we've pursued an expanded vision for reaching unreached groups. The Lord has graciously given us good ways to navigate many of these challenges, resulting in increased multiplication of disciples. Jesus' way is truly good news for all those truly willing to follow him.

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QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. What has the Lord called you to accomplish for his glory?
2. In what ways are you bringing others along in your journey?
3. What are the main challenges you face in fulfilling that vision, and how have you overcome (or are you overcoming) them?

CHAPTER 6

HEALTHY DISSATISFACTION

“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.”

PHILIPPIANS 3:12

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Healthy dissatisfaction drives a deeper pursuit of God's kingdom goals.
- Healthy dissatisfaction fosters a conviction to focus on movements.
- Healthy dissatisfaction is a catalyst for prayer and collaboration.

GOD OPENED ME UP TO A NEW PARADIGM OF MINISTRY through healthy dissatisfaction. I had already been doing contextual ministry among unreached peoples and planting churches among them. But I didn't feel satisfied with the results I saw because God had given me a passion for something much greater. God "convicted us that good [was] not the best. God's Spirit led us to not be content with a small amount of fruit."¹ At that point, God used Dave Hunt to share some key principles that increased our multiplication of fruit.

God's kingdom is bigger than what the Church has achieved so far. As a young man in my hometown, preaching and doing ministry, I thought all Christians wanted to do this kind of ministry. I loved preaching to get people saved, and I thought the Great Commission would be easy to finish. But after a while, I realized the enormity of the unfinished task. I saw in Luke 15 that God takes attendance by who is *missing*. The shepherd in the parable has 99 sheep safe and sound, together with him. Ninety-nine percent of his flock is doing very well. But he's not at all satisfied with that. He leaves the 99 to go look for the one lost sheep. His concern and yearning focus on that missing one, and he rejoices greatly when he finds that sheep, with a joy that reflects God the Father's heart. We see the same attitude portrayed in the parables of the lost coin and the lost son. The prodigal son's father had another son at home, behaving very responsibly. But when the lost son returned, the father ran to him and extravagantly welcomed him back home. His heart overflowed with joy as he rejoiced over the return of the one who had been lost.

When we begin to see the world from God's perspective, to see people as he sees them, it breaks our hearts. Although great things have already

1. Originally published in "Factors that Multiply Movements," in *Fruit to Harvest*, 243. Used with permission.

happened, the need remains much greater. When I speak about Disciple Making Movements, I don't disqualify the effort or the ministries using different approaches. I praise God for them, but I don't want the good to hinder us from grasping the best.

When I look at the Great Commission, I see God wanting all nations (people groups—*ethnē*) to come into his kingdom. That has not yet happened in my country or region, so I feel a holy dissatisfaction. That dissatisfaction doesn't lead me to say, "I can't do this. I should do some other ministry that doesn't remind me of this problem." No! The dissatisfaction motivates me, so I call it *healthy dissatisfaction*. It means asking God for more—asking him to do what he has already told us he desires to do. "Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance; the ends of the earth your possession" (Ps. 2:8). I don't ask for my own benefit or my personal interests. I ask for his kingdom. Jesus told us to pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). That's my desire—not just mine, but the desire of all our leaders and other leaders I connect with.

HEALTHY DISSATISFACTION BRINGS A CONVICTION TO FOCUS ON MOVEMENTS

To truly do what God has told us to do, we need conviction that the sacrifice is worth the cost. That conviction comes with a holy dissatisfaction. We have Jesus' mandate to "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19a). God desires for *all* the unreached—those who have never heard the gospel—to hear the good news. I could feel satisfied doing small things, saying, "This is enough. I don't want to take more risks." But the Bible gives the command, and we have research showing which groups remain unreached. If we compare the need with what we're currently accomplishing, we must ask, "Are we in line with what must happen to fulfill the Lord's command?"

When we look at Acts, we see that 3,000 came to faith (Acts 2:41),

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then we see that the Lord added more new believers every day (Acts 2:47), and then the number grew to 5,000 men (Acts 4:4, not counting women and children). We see multiplication. We have to first be convicted that God can do this in our time. We must be convicted to get out of our comfort zones—moving beyond small things and trusting God as we step into the bigger ocean of unreached needs. It requires conviction that it's God's will, but also knowing that it involves some risk. We have to be willing to take a risk, like Peter stepping out of the boat into the waves because Jesus told him to come. He didn't take that step because of emotion; he took the risk because he had confidence in Jesus, the one who called him.

We see the same kind of conviction in the four friends of the paralytic who lowered him through the roof (Mark 2:3–4). They tore a big hole in someone else's roof. They took a risk because they knew their friend needed healing, and they had conviction that Jesus could heal him. The homeowner might not have been very happy about their bold step of faith. If they asked for permission first, none of the Gospel writers mentioned it. It appears those four took a risk.

The catalysts in these movements have internalized this vision for movements. This model has not been imposed on them. They eat, breathe, and speak Disciple Making Movements. They see everything through the glasses of movements. The Lord has used these key leaders and their conviction to transform their denominational circles, as well as local churches.²

Some of our current movement leaders used to be leaders in their denomination—like the brother I mentioned in Chapter 4, who went through the training and then planted 15 churches in the next three months. The training transformed his outlook and his ministry. He saw multiplication that expanded God's kingdom and penetrated that people group. He witnessed it happening not only faster, but also deeper

2. Ibid, 249.

because the believers' pattern of discipleship involved active obedience. That fruit began spreading from one place to another as leaders caught the vision.

We always partner with local churches and denominations. They see, "This approach is bearing fruit; we want to have a part in that." It's contagious, it's simple, it's intentional, and it brings kingdom fruit among those who have never before heard the gospel.

Partnership is a central part of our strategy. We have about 175 church partners right now. Our formal partnership document clearly states that we focus on Disciple Making Movements. The connection involves a shift—helping an "elephant" church to adopt a "rabbit" mentality³ among an Unreached People Group. We discuss collaboration and the dynamics of gospel work among UPGs, and church leaders often agree. One denomination, which was among the fastest-growing in our country, had not experienced any breakthrough in reaching people from UPGs of another faith. After our training, they said, "We need to do this. Our church is doing well, but not great. We don't see any multiplication among ordinary, indigenous people. We're missing a contextual approach among UPGs."

We began to partner with them in 2013. We said, "Let's have you start by focusing on two UPGs." And they are seeing results. In an area where the gospel had not previously taken root, gospel fruit is now flourishing. They see disciples making other disciples, and religious leaders coming to faith in Jesus and forming groups in various places. As a result, they began to rethink their view of church. They now embrace the movement concept and strategy for reaching the unreached. All the church planters in that denomination got equipped and began using this new approach. These churches send us updates on the progress in their church planters' ministries.

God has given many of his children this healthy dissatisfaction—a

3. We use this metaphor to illustrate the contrast between the rapid reproductive rates of relatively small DMM houses churches (like rabbits) versus the normally slower reproductive rates of larger, traditional churches (like elephants).

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sense that what we have done so far is not enough. If Jesus died for everybody, why are the unreached still unreached? Is the problem with God? With the lost? Or with us? We say, “God, I have not yet accomplished everything you desire. I am your servant, and I want to be used by you.” We pour out our hearts and make ourselves available for whatever he may want to do with us. That is healthy dissatisfaction.

If people don’t have that healthy dissatisfaction, they find it very difficult to take hold of all God has in store for them. They see only what they already know, which often leaves them pessimistic about pursuing an amazing future. Their negative assessment becomes their reality. By God’s grace, he can change that equation. That’s why we see healthy dissatisfaction as a critical factor. God has used it in my life and in the lives of many other DMM group leaders.

For any readers who feel dissatisfied with their current fruit in ministry, I emphasize the importance of always bathing that dissatisfaction in prayer. (In fact, prayer is so foundational to DMM that the entire next chapter focuses on that topic.) Prayer brings an aroma that is pleasing to God and provides helpful direction. We see that Nehemiah (Neh. 2:12–16) took time to quietly consider the situation in Jerusalem and listen for the Lord’s guidance. The Apostle Paul may have spent many years in the Arabian Desert before launching into his most effective ministry. Jesus also took time away just to talk with the Father and listen to him. He also called his disciples to come away with him and have times of reflection away from the crowds and the immediate needs of people and ministry.

We need to have times of very intentional prayer. If we don’t take time to get in tune with the Father’s heart, our dissatisfaction can easily become an *unhealthy* rather than healthy dissatisfaction. We can fall into grumbling and complaining, which doesn’t help our ministry or anyone else. A critic is not the same as an effective servant of the Lord. We have to beware of the danger of unhealthy dissatisfaction. Jesus told his disciples, “*The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest*” (Matt. 9:37–38, ESV). Immediately after that, Matthew records that he

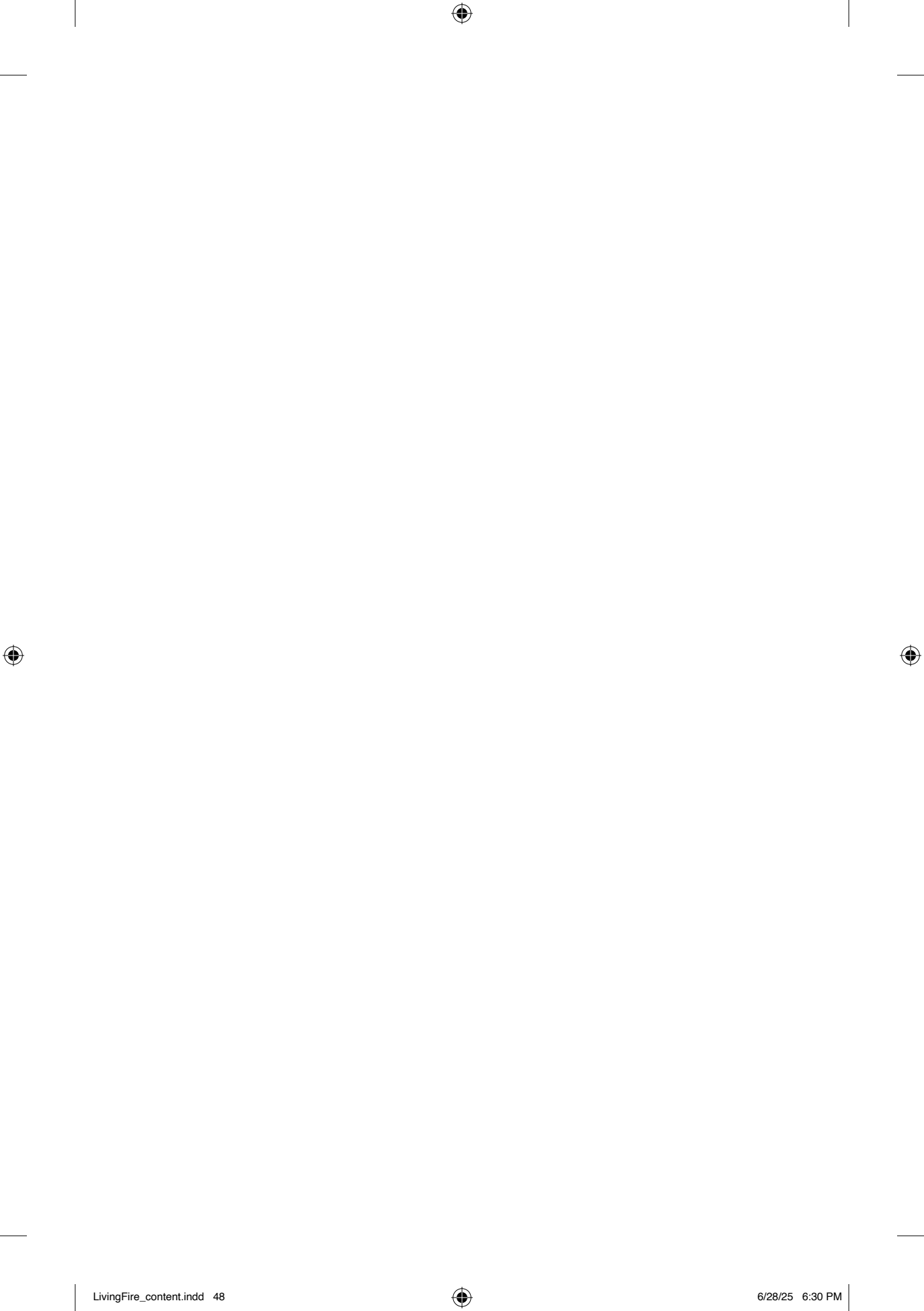
sent out those same disciples to proclaim and manifest the message of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 10:1–10). First came the prayer for workers, and then those who had prayed *became* the workers.

We can also pray that the Lord will connect us with others who feel a similar healthy dissatisfaction and long for more kingdom fruit, or those who have felt it in the past and have now become more fruitful. We can't do God's work alone; we need a team. We can also benefit greatly from finding a coach who can help us implement the patterns God is using to bring fruit in other contexts. Any readers looking for a coach can find resources listed in Appendix A.

The third thing we can do is start small. One DMM principle says, "Go slow to go fast." Holy ambition is a powerful thing, but a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. We need to follow up on whatever opportunities the Lord gives us—meeting with people and faithfully implementing what we know, even as we look and pray for greater things.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. What is your level of healthy dissatisfaction with what God has accomplished through you so far?
2. In your life, how does thankfulness fit together with healthy dissatisfaction?
3. What role does prayer play in this for you?



CHAPTER 7

EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel.”

EPHESIANS 6:18-19

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Prayer is foundational to the success of DMMs.
- Effective prayer involves strategic and well-informed intercession.
- Mobilizing extensive prayer opens doors for the gospel in previously resistant areas.

WE HAVE A VERY CLEAR STRATEGY. OUR FIRST STEP IS TO pray. Prayer is everything. One of our movement leaders says, “When we don’t pray, we’re just working. But when we pray, God works.” Prayer is the air the movement breathes. It enables us to receive guidance so that we know what to do. Prayer acknowledges that only God can change people’s lives. Our strategy doesn’t make things happen. DMM is not a silver bullet; it’s a God thing. DMM depends entirely on God.

Through prayer, we commit ourselves to God and acknowledge that only he can bring people into his kingdom. As Jesus said, “*No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them*” (John 6:44).

In the first portion of our strategy—igniting—we don’t do anything without strategic prayer, which we call informative prayer. We try to find out who a people group is, where they live, how they live, their primary religion, the spiritual strongholds, the historical strongholds, and the geographical strongholds. Out of those three types of strongholds among that people group, we gather prayer information. Then, we mobilize intercessors. We don’t move ahead until intercession has begun.

If a new area has never had a gospel witness, we try to send apostolic teams into that area to begin the process of a Disciple Making Movement. Our region still has some people groups with no known Christians. As of six years ago, one group had only one believer. We gathered information about that group and began strategic prayer. Then, we sent just one believer, as a teacher. He started a school as his access ministry and looked for a person of peace. He taught the children, provided some educational materials, and built relationships. Then, the Lord enabled him to start a Discovery Bible Study (DBS) and baptize the first groups. They now have hundreds of disciples. He’s multiplying DBS groups (as described in

Chapter 13) and house churches and working to equip upcoming leaders in the second and third generation.

We are now working toward reaching other groups. In the eastern part of this region, we have ministry among one people group consisting of about four million people. Ten years ago, after 80 years of mission work, that group had fewer than 300 believers among them. We conducted research among them, then mobilized prayer, including 24/7 intercession in one of the eastern cities. That opened a door for effective ministry, and, now, a couple thousand people from that group have come to the Lord. They meet regularly in various groups with entirely indigenous leadership. We are equipping these indigenous leaders, and some of them are recording audio Scriptures in their language so that people can listen to it on their mobile phones.

Each of the movement leaders engages in serious prayer—for the harvest field as well as the harvest force. In movements, spiritual warfare is very real. Therefore, we have to mobilize intercessors who will stand with us and behind us.¹

A prayer movement lays the foundation for a Disciple Making Movement. When we see a huge investment in prayer, we often see a discipling movement kick off quickly. We currently have more than 700 *groups* of intercessors praying for the ministry, and we hope to see that expand.

Until recently, the intercession focused mainly on UPGs within our country. As a result of that prayer, the Lord has now called us to send more broadly. We want to focus on the bigger challenge: first, this region, then Africa as a whole, and then globally. God is calling us to impact all the largest UPGs, so they can function as a gateway to other unreached groups. We're moving from being a harvest field to becoming a harvest force.

Our intercessors also do prayer walking on-site among various people groups, as well as at prayer centers. We focus especially on cities, as they

1. Ibid, 247.

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present unique challenges. We also dedicate special prayer—sometimes for five days or a week—to a people group with whom we are about to engage with the gospel.

When our people prayer walk, they pray and sometimes also talk with people. We have a prayer training that specifically equips people for this ministry. Based on what we learn about a group's background and general situation, we discern what would be useful for access. We keep asking, "What kind of open doors can we pray for, regarding this people group?" And God answers our prayers.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. How much of your total prayer life consists of "strategic prayer"?
2. Do you feel you have sufficient sources of information to feed your strategic prayer for unreached peoples? Or might you benefit from additional sources, such as those found in Appendix A?

CHAPTER 8

FOCUSING ON RELATIONSHIP, NOT RELIGION

*“For I resolved to know nothing while I was with
you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.”*

1 CORINTHIANS 2:2

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- The importance of prioritizing relationship over religion.
- Discipleship is a lifestyle that integrates faith into every aspect of daily life.
- Effective outreach can be performed through divine encounters and finding common ground.

OUR MINISTRY FOCUSES ON STARTING WITH THE HEART because this impacts everything else: the way we think, the way we talk, and the way we act. People can sense our attitudes, and they respond accordingly. We intentionally nurture a kingdom focus, rather than letting ourselves fall into a worldly battle of “us against them.” As we’ve written in the past:

We don’t focus on religion; we focus on spirituality. If we try to give people our religion, they miss the bigger message. Jesus told us to pass on a *life*, using himself as the model. Our goal is not to transfer our religion, but to share Jesus. That’s the message. That’s where the life transformation happens.¹

Our goal is not transferring our religion but sharing Jesus.

For many people, religion just consists of a system of laws and duties—outward activities a person performs. Religion often functions as an *obstacle*, hindering people from having a relationship with the Lord. When we share the good news with families, we don’t ask them to join a new religion. We invite them to start a new relationship—a relationship with Jesus. Once they connect with Jesus, that relationship becomes the determining factor for everything else in their lives: their beliefs, their identity, their human relationships, and their lifestyle. The main thing is relationships, not religious labels. We don’t advertise religion. We don’t tell people, “Come out from your religion and join our religion.” People need to meet the real Jesus and let *him* direct any changes in their lifestyle. When a person lives a God-honoring lifestyle, their lifestyle itself categorizes them as a fruit of obedience.

Discipleship involves lifestyle: mirroring Jesus in one’s daily life.

1. Ibid, 247.

Deuteronomy 6:7 provides the foundation for this lifestyle: *“Talk about [God’s commands] when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”* Everyone engages in these four everyday activities in some form. Whether we’re outdoors or indoors, we need to have God’s word guiding every part of our lives. As disciples live this way, unbelievers will see radical changes in their lives.

One religious radical used to receive foreign support for planting religious establishments all over our area—until he encountered Jesus. He came to Christ, and one of our strategy coordinators mentored him. He used to be a terrorist, but now he’s a peaceful person and an ambassador of reconciliation in his community. People pay attention to what he says because they’ve seen the radical change in his life.

We’ve seen argumentative people transformed by dreams and visions. One of our disciples, who used to be a religious leader, shared the gospel with a religious leader in his former religion. The man became very upset and beat the disciple. He chased him away, shouting, “Don’t you *ever* dare to come here again and talk with me like this!”

That night, the religious leader had a dream in which he saw Jesus in a shining white robe, and Jesus told him, “You have to go talk with that disciple, because I have something to tell you through him.”

When he woke up in the morning, he resisted doing that, feeling unsure it was really Jesus speaking to him in the dream. He had a large boil on the back of his hand, and after some wrestling in his soul, he said, “If that was the real Jesus talking to me, he can prove it to me by doing something to this boil.” When he woke up the next morning, the boil had completely shrunk, and his hand looked normal. That convinced him, so he immediately went looking for the disciple he had chased away.

When he found him, he said, “I want to hear more of what you have to share with me. Will you tell me what’s on your heart?”

The disciple shared the gospel with him, and he came to the Lord. Then, within about three months, he brought 17 members of his family to saving faith. Divine encounters play a very important role—especially for those who would otherwise resist hearing the gospel.

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Sometimes, we meet people who want to argue about religion. But we avoid doing that. The Bible tells us to move on and not argue. We don't have time for useless arguments; they only distract from what God wants to do.

SHAKING THE DUST OFF

When Jesus sent out his disciples, as described in Luke 9, among other instructions, he told them, *"If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them"* (Luke 9:5). Shaking the dust off doesn't mean giving up on the people or place for all eternity. It may simply mean that the place is not yet ripe for the gospel to take root there.

About six years ago, I had a great burden for one particular group, so we prayed for that area and sent a couple of church planters there. They found that the people were very closed and antagonistic toward the gospel. So, the church planters left, shaking the dust off their feet. But, a few months ago, we led a DMM training in a neighboring area close to that group. After the training, disciples from that church took the initiative to enter and begin serving among that people group. They report that they already have some disciples from within that unreached community. After six years, the Lord opened a new door.

We don't say much about other peoples' prophets or their beliefs. We speak only about Christ, salvation, and the Bible. Through this strategy, God has given us many new disciples. To introduce the gospel, we first mention things related to general revelation. We talk about prophets like Abraham and share many stories that their beliefs have in common with the Bible. We can safely share a lot about those things. After we share those stories, they usually have questions, which creates a good discussion. We don't insult them or their beliefs. We make a wonderful start by building on the things we share in common with them.

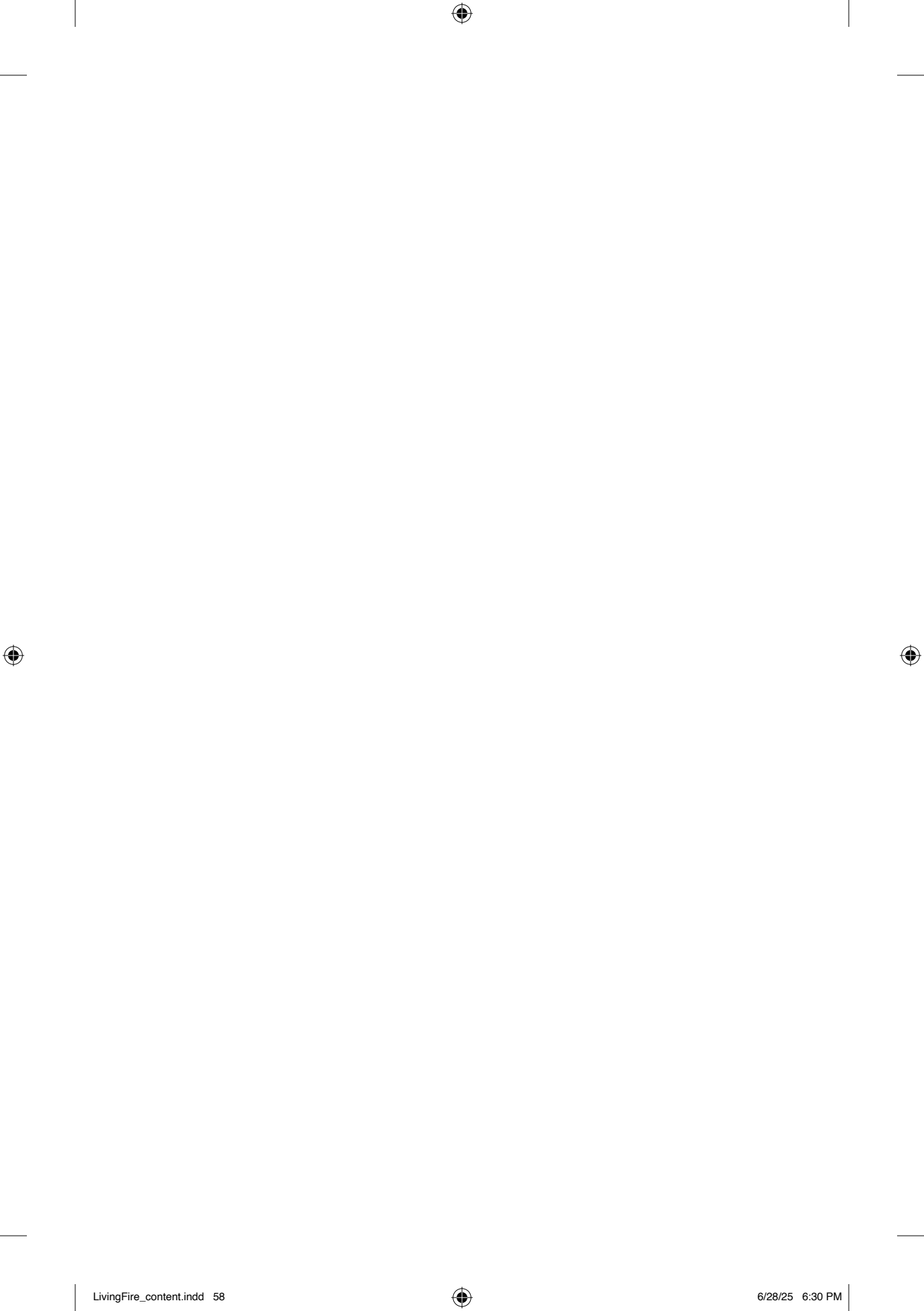
After that, they often ask, "What is salvation?" In their faith, they

believe a person can *maybe* attain salvation through good works and keeping all the prayer rituals. But they have only a hope, with no assurance. So, they ask us, “What shall we do?” Then, we share with them the good news of salvation—for now and eternity—by grace through faith in Jesus.

They often think Christians want to change their culture. But we focus on helping people enter an intimate relationship with the Lord and become his disciples. Many cultural elements can be redeemed and continue. The essential change takes place in a person’s heart and allegiance. As people grow through biblical obedience, they change whatever the Lord desires in their lifestyle. This brings forth multiplying fruit for his glory.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. How do you avoid an attitude of “our group against your group”?
2. What is it about Jesus that would attract and touch the hearts of the people you want to reach?



CHAPTER 9

ACCESS MINISTRY

“All peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

GENESIS 12:3b

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Engagement that addresses real needs and builds genuine relationships.
- The importance of innovating methods to fit each local context.
- A holistic approach that integrates practical assistance with spiritual outreach.

AFTER THE INTERCESSORS PRAY EARNESTLY OVER AN area, church planters or disciple makers go there with an appropriate identity for that context. We don't want them to be identified solely as a church planter or a religious person. They need to find a bridge to enter the community. We call this bridge *access ministry*.

We say: "Access ministry is answering the prayer of the lost." Access ministry shares the love of Christ not only with our mouths but also through our deeds, bringing a holistic Gospel message. We see our Lord Jesus serving the needs of the community as well as sharing the message of the Kingdom. He asked us to do the same. We discover unique access for each place, focusing on whatever the Lord brings into our hearts.¹

Access ministry becomes a doorway to enter a community and find a person of peace. We ask ourselves, "What is needed here? What will help me connect well with the community?" Access should involve genuinely caring for people. This helps them catch a glimpse of God's kingdom. If someone were to enter these areas with the label of a religious professional or church planter, they would find it very difficult to connect with the community. People would put up all kinds of obstacles. So, our church planters and disciple makers enter communities with an identity that will facilitate, rather than hinder, effective relational connections.

We explore the context: *What do people do here? What can I do in the community?* The messengers find a job that provides a relationship with the community—one that helps them live there to genuinely serve the

1. Ibid, 245.

community. This creates a connection. Lost people have needs they've been praying about or wishing God would answer. God brings us to them as an answer to their heart's desire, and to bless the community in a culturally appropriate way.

SCHOOL AND ELECTRICITY

For example, a church planter we'll call Suleiman* entered a very violent area on the border between two countries. A previous church planter had to leave because he couldn't handle the violence and upheaval. But Suleiman went, asking himself, "What can I offer these people?" He noted that in this remote area they didn't have a school. He had a teaching background from his time in the military, so he thought, *If I can collect a few children, I can teach them.* He gathered three children and started teaching them English and the language of the Nearby people.

The students loved it. They went home and shared what they were learning with their families. The families were amazed at these kids learning English, and others in the community started to talk about it. They said, "A man is offering free education for our children!" Suleiman used the connections he had with the children to connect with the families. After the children shared with their parents, the parents became curious to know more about this person and how he was impacting their families.

He visited the families and started Discovery groups with them. Soon, he was teaching five students, then ten, twenty, thirty. When his house could no longer hold the students, he set up a tent. He has become a highly respected person in that area and now has more than 300 students. He teaches them, and they go home and share what they're learning with others. He uses examples from the Bible, even though the students' families come from a different religious background. The children also go home with songs to share with their families. He used his teaching skills to gain access to and engage with the families. All the families felt

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grateful for his coming because he provided a way for their children to get a better education than they otherwise would have. Now, the community says, “You have been sent here by the Creator.”

The process was not entirely easy, though. Suleiman was met with some resistance along the way. Initially, the chief of the community became very upset about what he was doing and immediately opposed him. But after Suleiman had been there a couple of years, a new electric power line came and connected to that area. Early on, the local church he led, which consisted of people from outside that area, paid to have the electricity connected to their church building. On the same day the electricity came to the church building, Suleiman connected the power to the chief’s house.

When the chief came home from work in the evening, he had electricity in his house, with lights installed and shining. He was thrilled and asked, “Who did that?” His family told him it was Suleiman. That evening, the chief went to Suleiman and apologized. He said, “I was saying bad things about you, but you’ve still been good to me. Forgive me. You have been sent here by God to do good things for our community. Thank you for coming. I want our friendship and the connection between our families to be stronger. To renew our relationship, here is my son [about seven years old], who will go to your school. Please consider him your child. Give him a good education and teach him whatever is best for him.”

This is still a fairly new ministry in an area of high resistance to the gospel, but we see the gospel powerfully advancing. At this point, they have small house-to-house gatherings. Discovery Bible Studies have started in a couple of houses, and indigenous house churches are emerging from that. God is using children and simple education to engage families and open doors for the gospel.

DONKEY AND WATER

Another disciple wanted to minister in an area where it was very challenging to get water, requiring people to travel a couple of miles with

donkeys to fetch it. One of the church planters asked himself, *What can I offer to the Lord to connect with these people?* Then, he had an idea. He thought, *I have a donkey. I can provide a donkey for the ministry.* He announced to the community that anyone could use his donkey to get water, on the condition that they feed the donkey after using it.

The people felt very happy because they received free transportation. They would fetch the water and feed the donkey upon their return. The church planter didn't need to knock on anyone's doors; he stayed at home, and people came *to him*. Grateful for this answer to their need, they thanked him for the use of the donkey, and in response, he shared with them how love is practical, meeting our daily needs, and how the love of Jesus meets the needs of our hearts. The conversation flowed smoothly as he began to share about the gift of God. The knowledge of God (Emmanuel—God with us) is entering that area through access ministry.

HEALING AND DELIVERANCE

We also pray for the healing of diseases and we cast out demons. Many people are eager to have someone pray for them, and when they witness works of power, they become much more open to receiving the gospel. It's up to God whether he chooses to heal a person; our responsibility is to pray—courageously and boldly. We first communicate to *whom* we are praying, and second, *what* we are praying for. That way, when God delivers, they know who did it. When a person experiences healing, it often opens access to the community.

We don't only pray for the people; we also pray for their animals, because animals are very important to pastoralists. When a church planter enters a village, he or she might say, "I'm here to pray for you—for whatever needs you might have." We consider prayer our greatest resource. We help meet their needs, but not by giving charity.

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INNOVATION

We've found it important to always innovate—to not get stagnant and feel satisfied with what we've already done. If I see someone still celebrating what happened five years ago, that person has not made enough progress recently. They've become stagnant. We need to be refreshed every day in what God is telling us, what God is showing us, and how we can obey him and remain sensitive to the Holy Spirit's work.

A leader must never feel satisfied with only the current activity: the excitement of baptisms, people coming to Christ, and numerical growth. We praise God for all those things, but we must channel them into lasting fruit. We need to establish leadership to lay the groundwork for the growth of the movement.

God's word and the gospel must not be watered down. Nothing should be left out. The gospel remains the gospel—yesterday, today, and forever. However, the packaging can't always remain the same. We need innovation. The package Peter used to take the gospel to the Jews was one type of package. Stephen began his message by appealing to common ground with his audience: *"Brothers and fathers . . . The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham"* (Acts 7:2). Paul used a different approach, speaking to the Athenians about the *"unknown God"* (Acts 17:23). While innovation must never alter God's word, we need it in our presentation so different groups of people can better grasp the message.

Bible translations need innovation. Jesus said, *"I am the bread of life"* (John 6:35a). However, in our country, we don't eat bread every day. So, our translation uses the word for the grain-based food that we *do* eat daily. This way, Jesus' message makes sense to us—that he is essential for our basic, daily, spiritual sustenance.

Innovation can help guide people from the known to the unknown. When we interact with people of a different faith, we begin with commonly agreed-upon biblical stories. At first, they think, "Oh yes, I know this story." Then, as we tell the biblical version, they hear something new and interesting. If they are not from a reading culture, we might present

the same content in an audio format. If they have a phone, we can use Bluetooth to share the stories that lead up to and include the gospel, as well as more stories for discipleship.

Access ministries involve another form of innovation. If we bring a ball with us to a new village, we have an international language and can build relationships with the ball. Young people gather, and by the next week I know their names and we can form a team. We drink tea together, I get to know their families, and spiritual conversations naturally follow. We need innovation, but we have to ensure that it never replaces the word of God.

When training leaders among oral learners, innovation asks, “How can we effectively deliver this message?” We might perform a five-minute skit. For example, to illustrate pruning as described in John 15, one person tells God he wants to be fruitful, and another comes with pruning shears and starts clipping. They act out the pain and the interaction of pruning, so the message is clearly understood. We also incorporate group discussions and, as much as possible, include stories and pictures.

When a group has a crisis or emergency—when people have urgent needs and we provide something physical, such as food or water, as an access ministry—we make sure to avoid fostering dependency. We don’t operate like a food distribution organization, nor do we use handouts as a coercive tool to preach the gospel. We work holistically, as a movement organization. Any assistance we provide is genuine. The people have a need, and we feel their pain, so we want to help as much as we can. At the same time, we work through a local partner to bring a holistic blessing. We don’t engage in activities that fail to meet these criteria because we don’t want any ministry to be a one-off event. We always give credit to the local church or disciple maker and consistently communicate *the reason* behind our actions: the love of God. The core message is Jesus’ love.

For that reason, we don’t engage in long-term, compassion ministry. We have an exit strategy: we step in once or twice, then hand over the relationship. We understand that we can’t solve all their physical problems; our goal is to show solidarity with them in a concrete and

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helpful way. With this approach, we find that people feel genuinely grateful for what we have done. We try to act in a timely manner and have leaders there for ongoing discipleship.

When working among people of another faith, innovation always builds on relationships. Who do you know? We've found that people engage most easily with those who are like them. Religious leaders are often best reached by others with a background as a religious leader. Whenever possible, we use relational access, connecting with people through stories, shared concerns, and messengers they can easily relate to.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. What are some of the best ways to initiate a relationship with the people you want to reach?
2. What new and creative ways of connecting might the Lord provide if you were to ask him?

CHAPTER 10

SHOWING JESUS' RADICAL LOVE

“This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him . . . Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

1 JOHN 4:9, 11

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- A disciple's primary motivation: the radical love of Jesus.
- The importance of understanding and mirroring God's compassionate heart toward the lost.
- Modern examples of Jesus' love: responding to persecution with grace and forgiveness.

A DISCIPLE'S CENTRAL MOTIVATION IS THE LOVE OF JESUS.

This love motivates obedience, not law, obligation, or a change in religion. Because we love Jesus, we're willing to pay the price of radical discipleship. Adam, our brother who was attacked and cut with a machete, said, "This is because I said, 'Jesus is my Lord, my King, and my Savior. He's the Son of God.' They can cut me again, but I won't stop." Ruth, a widow who went from being crazy to crazy-for-Jesus (whose story we will share in the next chapter), said, "How can I be ashamed of Jesus in my community? He's the one who changed me and gave me new life."

Jesus' love forms the center of this movement and the foundation of all our actions. Radical love for him sits at the heart of every factor that fosters a Disciple Making Movement. We love because he first loved us. Unless we can see people as Jesus sees them—with eyes of love—it will be difficult to do what's needed to bring them to him.

A FATHER'S HEART

A few years ago, my wife, my five children, and I were visiting the U.S., staying at the home of some friends. Around 6:00 A.M., while I was on a Zoom call, I got a phone call from our host, Kristie, who was staying elsewhere so my family could use her entire house. At first, I ignored it. But she kept calling, so I decided to answer briefly and let her know I was in a meeting. Before I could say, "Can I call you back?" she asked, "Aychi, are all your children in the house?"

I said, "Yes, they're in bed."

"Can you please check?"

I went to check and discovered that one of my four-year-old twins was missing. He had gotten up, opened the front door, and started walking down the street. By that time, he had already walked half a mile!

A neighbor knew that my host had an African family visiting. When she saw a small African child walking down the street unaccompanied, she called my host, who then called me.

When we caught up with my son, about 10 police cars and 15 police officers had gathered. I was in tears and told them, "That's my son."

They asked for his name and some identification, but because the twins are identical, I wasn't sure which of the boys it was. I had to go back to the house to confirm which one was missing. After about half an hour of the police taking notes and gathering information, they let my son out of the police car. He had a toy and juice and excitedly said, "Daddy, look at the toy and the juice the police gave me." He was so happy. I was crying in desperation, but he was completely content. He didn't even realize he was lost—he was really enjoying himself.

Later, God challenged me with that picture: "That's lostness. Only the Father knows what lostness truly is." Many lost people are enjoying their temporary comforts, while the Father's heart is broken. Unless we share the Father's heart, we won't feel the pain of the lost. Jonah didn't feel any pain over the lostness of the Ninevites, but God said, "Should I not care for those 120,000 people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?" God knew exactly how many lost people lived in that city; he even cared about their animals! Having God's heart is the foundation of a movement. Without that, everything becomes mere religious duty.

DEEP LOVE IN HARD PLACES

In our lifestyle and our access ministries, we manifest Jesus' love to all people. When persecution or hardship comes, we receive these as special opportunities to show Jesus' love, often in ways that surprise others. This can open doors to share the gospel verbally, after we've already demonstrated it through our response to mistreatment.

For example, when Stephen*, one of our church planters, was sharing the good news, 140 people were healed, and many came to faith in Christ.

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A group of gangsters beat him and falsely accused him of converting people. He ended up in prison for a few weeks, but after his release, he returned to the same community to continue ministry.

While in prison, Stephen spent a lot of time praying. He didn't know a theft had been committed in the city, and the police accused the gangsters who had beaten him (though they were not responsible). They were imprisoned as well, and Stephen was able to interact with them. At that point, he had their full attention—they had nowhere else to go and nothing else to do.

He earned their respect and amazement because he wasn't vengeful, grumbling, or complaining about how they had treated him. Instead, he shared the love of Jesus. The gangsters were furious with the police, knowing they hadn't committed the crime for which they were imprisoned. But they realized, "This man has every reason to be angry with us because we beat him and got him imprisoned based on our false accusation. Yet, he's showing us love." They began to wonder if God was judging them for their mistreatment of him. After some time, they asked Stephen for forgiveness and said, "We want to know about Jesus." All of them came to faith and told him, "When we get released, we will keep following Jesus and share the good news with others."

In another location, an area where 99% of the people followed a different faith, 12 church buildings were burned down. I visited there soon afterward and held a Bible that still smelled of smoke. The perpetrator of the fire became very upset when the believers didn't get angry about the damage. Instead, they kept rejoicing and singing while the church buildings burned.

Later, while the attacker was preparing to do more damage, he was falsely accused of a different crime and put in prison. Though innocent of that crime, he knew he had committed many other crimes against innocent people. He thought, "I escaped after burning all those churches, but now I'm in jail for something else. I could end up stuck here for 10 or 15 years for a crime I didn't commit." He decided, "If the Christian God is the true God, I'll watch to see if this false accusation is resolved. If I'm

declared innocent and released, I'll worship the Christian God." God did that miracle, and after his release, he visited disciples who had previously worshipped at one of the completely demolished church buildings. He said, "Forgive me. I know what happened here, and I want to know about your God." They led him to salvation in Christ.

AN ASTONISHING RECONCILIATION

We have a special five-day training for disciples who come to Christ from another faith. These new believers usually arrive as a small group who already know and trust each other, and they often have specific questions and concerns about the differences between their background and the truth of the Bible. They arrive at night and receive on-site training for five days. On the sixth day, either at night or very early in the morning, they get baptized.

The house where the training takes place is owned by a widow who hosts the sessions, prepares food for everyone, and brings water to wash people's hands before they eat. One time, as she was pouring water for the third or fourth person, she suddenly dropped the bowl and pitcher and ran to the back of the house, crying. She was a solid believer, so everyone was puzzled by what could have happened to cause her to react so abruptly. We went to speak with her, and she shared this story.

Her husband had been an evangelist and had faced severe persecution. One day, he was badly beaten, suffering multiple broken bones. Not long after that, he fell ill and died. In the meantime, the man who had ordered the beating had become a believer. The widow recognized him as she poured water to wash his hands. We explained to her that he had repented of his sins, had become a new person, and was now following Jesus. He had also recognized her and asked us, "How can I apologize to her? I'm willing to fall at her feet or do whatever it takes to beg her forgiveness."

We brought the two of them together, and they cried together. She said, "This is like the Apostle Paul, who God radically transformed." She

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then continued serving the new disciples during that week of training. She had never imagined such a thing could happen.

Once, during a meeting, a leader said to me, “Aychi, can I share something with you? Do you remember what happened two years ago in this place? A church building was burned down. I did that.” I was shocked! That showed the kind of transformation God was making in people’s lives.

THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMED CHARACTER

In one hostile area, a mob attacked a gathering of nine disciples who had come from a different religious background, intending to kill them. Sammy*, the leader, didn’t try to defend himself. He went to the police, but they said, “This is *your* problem. You brought this on yourself by changing your beliefs. We’re not going to help you.” The police didn’t intervene at all.

A childhood friend of Sammy’s, who had entered the military and whom Sammy hadn’t seen in many years, was visiting at the time. He expected Sammy to retaliate against the mob because he, too, was ex-military. But when his friend saw that Sammy remained calm and prayed, he thought, “Something must have changed about this guy.” He said, “These people tried to kill you, but you didn’t do anything. What’s wrong with you?”

He answered, “I don’t do violence anymore.”

“Tell me more about this.”

That day, Sammy told him about Jesus and the way of God’s kingdom. His friend said, “I want to follow Jesus, too,” and Sammy led him to the Lord.

The next day, an even bigger mob came and threw stones like rain. Sammy called me and said, “Aychi, we’re about to die. Our whole house has been damaged, and the mob has come again. What can we do?” I realized the gravity of the situation, and that the persecution would likely

continue. I said, "Get whatever transportation you can, and bring all nine to our safe house."

He replied, "But Aychi, there aren't nine of us. There are now 10. A friend of mine who came to visit has just come to the Lord, and he says, 'I want to go with you.'"

I asked, "Are you sure he's genuine? Because you're coming to a secure location. We can't let just any brand-new believer who makes a profession of faith come here."

He said, "I'm sure. It's genuine."

I approved him to come as well. When they arrived at the safe house, this man had been a believer for only two and a half days. All 10 disciples stayed for a month. During that time, the newest believer fell passionately in love with the Bible, despite being illiterate. After a month, he returned to his home area, brought his wife and family to faith, and started a church there.

When he had been a disciple for less than a year, he prayed one day, "Lord, I love your word, but I don't know how to read it." The Lord spoke to him in a vision and said, "You will read my word tomorrow." The next day, he asked his wife to bring him a Bible.

She asked, "To read it for you?"

He said, "No. Just bring it to me. The Lord told me I would be able to read it." She brought him the Bible, and he opened it and started reading. God blessed his passion for the word in a miraculous way.

Sammy returned to that general area but moved to a different village. Persecution doesn't last forever. When persecutors see a believer's determination, they begin to respect it. Then, some of them come to faith, get baptized, and are discipled.

CHRIST'S LOVE VINDICATED

In one people group, a well-known leader came to faith in Jesus, and the community attacked him. He prayed for them and told them, "You are

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not just hitting me; you are hitting Christ.” They rejected his words and tied him up, putting him on the ground. Ten people struck him with sticks while another 10 stood by with sticks. He said, “You can hit me with sticks, but you’re just human beings. I’m very sorry you won’t accept Jesus Christ.” Within a few days, all 20 of the people who had attacked him died.

The community held a meeting to discuss, “Why did they all die?” The conclusion seemed obvious to everyone: they died because of what they had done to this disciple. He told the people, “If you don’t believe in Christ, you will all die.” Many people came to faith, and now there’s a church building on the very spot where they had beaten him. Everyone in his family has become a believer. He now serves the Lord as a church planter and is an influential person in that community.

Jesus demonstrated radical love for us—a reflection of the Father’s love toward us while we were still lost in sin. He invites us to let that radical love flow through us as a testimony. As we do, God’s Spirit works to draw people to the Father. Radical love is costly, but it’s worth the price.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. In what ways does your life reflect God’s radical love?
2. What would you like to ask God, or tell him, after reading this chapter?

CHAPTER 11

HOLY BOLDNESS AMIDST HARDSHIP

“Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold.”

2 CORINTHIANS 3:12

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Perseverance through persecution.
- Transformation through adversity.
- Divine empowerment and boldness.

ONE OF OUR CHURCH PLANTERS SHARED THIS TESTIMONY:

When I came to the Lord, I became part of an underground church in my city. We were persecuted, and I was imprisoned for four years for my faith. I'm now a refugee in a nearby country, here with my family. There are many other refugees here, so we serve among them.

They face many problems, including youth addiction and women resorting to prostitution due to financial hardship. Because of the war, camps in some areas have been demolished. The refugees have gone from one hardship to the next, walking 100 kilometers [62 miles] by foot to get here. When the rains come, the area floods; it's especially difficult for those living in tents, which don't last long. They also lack sufficient food.

In the midst of these challenges, the gospel is spreading. Our disciples are making more disciples. In the past six months, more than 300 refugees from my country have come to faith in the camps. We share with everyone we meet, but these 300 are specifically from my country. Our disciples face the difficulties with determination. We know that prayer works.

I also want to share how the gospel has been advancing within my country. The past 13 years have been extremely difficult—a very dark time. All the churches have been closed, and all their property has been seized by the government. Government officials use every means possible to stamp out the gospel, but God is still at work.

During the first five years of this persecution, we used to complain about our problems and curse the government. But that didn't help matters. Now, we've shifted our approach. We bless the government and do our job, because we don't know how God may work. Yes, the

president is cruel, but sometimes God uses cruel kings. He can use anything! The situation looks dark, but God is doing amazing work.

A LEADER BRINGS HIS FOLLOWERS

A religious leader from a well-to-do and well-known family among one people group came to faith. After coming to Christ, he openly proclaimed the gospel and his testimony to his followers. As a result, many people have come to Christ, though he has also faced significant persecution from his family and community. This remarkable gospel advancement has come at a great cost—a recurring theme in our ministry.

The Lord has done many great things through persecution and suffering. The promises of his word give encouragement to those enduring various trials because of their faith. We also share real-life stories from our network, praying with them and sharing God's word, which brings them great comfort. We testify that the Lord, *"comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God"* (2 Cor. 1:4).

GOSPEL ADVANCE IN A DANGEROUS COUNTRY

Nathan*, another of our leaders, testifies:

God is doing amazing work in my country. The community and the government there do not love believers. They continually beat us and come against us. They chased us out of the country. Our families even took our children away from us because we are believers. But we don't stop doing kingdom work, despite the challenges. God's word says, *"Go . . . and preach the gospel to all people"* (Mark 16:15, GNB).

Since 2021, they have persecuted me very badly. I was in jail once. They took away my wife and children, but I didn't become sad or

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downhearted because of their attacks. God raised up people I didn't even know to rescue me from jail and bring back my wife and children. Even as I speak to you, many disciples are in jail, and some have been driven out of the country because of their faith, but God is at work in all these situations.

Aychi came to our country eight or nine years ago. He and another leader led a training course in our house. Once everyone had arrived, we locked the house, and no one was allowed to enter or leave until the training was finished three or four days later. We have seen a lot of fruit from that training. Many people have come to Jesus, and God is working powerfully despite the challenges imposed on us.

God says, "*Do not fear.*" He releases power for us to stand firm amidst the difficulties we're passing through. All the churches in my country function underground. We have many underground churches, and we praise God for that—it's evidence of his great work. You can't imagine how dangerous it is for believers there, but we never stop going back and doing the ministry. When we first fled the country, we went to the prayer house where they pray 24/7. When I told the sister there that I was returning to my land, she cried in fear for my life. I told her, "I know you'll pray for me, and God will protect me, so I'm going back to serve there."

FROM CRAZY TO CRAZY ABOUT JESUS

Ruth*, a very wealthy widow over 60 years old, lived in a village in the area which was served by one of our leaders. A former partner of her deceased husband finagled the assets, leaving her suddenly penniless, without any possessions. As a result, she literally went crazy and lived naked on the street for many years. Our church planter prayed for her, and the power of Jesus healed her and set her free.

The church planter helped her effectively share her testimony and spread the good news. Her family and others harshly persecuted her, but

she continued sharing her powerful testimony and brought many people to faith in Jesus. More than 80% of the people in that area follow a different faith, and even the government opposed her because of her activities. About a year after she came to faith, Ruth* was imprisoned for 17 days on trumped-up political charges. They beat her and tried to force her to deny the Lord, but she said, “How can I deny? I’ve tasted it! I was a rich woman, then I lost all my money and went crazy, but the gospel changed me. I don’t have that money anymore, but I have the joy of the Lord.”

When she was released from prison, I spoke with her on the phone and said, “I want you to come to our center and get refreshed, at least for a couple of weeks.”

She replied, “Thank you for the invitation, but I have my disciples here. This is a troubled time. If I leave now, how can I be a model for them? Thank you, but no thank you. If I die, I will die with them.” I was humbled. I wanted to take care of her, but she was thinking in a different way.

She returned to her home and continued making disciples. Now, she prepares coffee at her house and tells people her story—it’s very vivid for her. Along with her testimony, she shares Bible stories to point people to the Lord. Though she’s illiterate, she’s a very effective storyteller and communicator. She also commands respect due to her age; her words carry a lot of weight. Although she doesn’t know how to read or write, she’s a leader. So far, she has personally led more than 40 people in her village to the Lord and planted churches that have multiplied through four generations of disciples, making more disciples. Due to ongoing strong persecution, the disciples all gather in house churches.

PLANTING CHURCHES—BOTH VISIBLE AND UNDERGROUND

Esther*, a highly effective evangelist and church planter, shares this testimony of the Lord’s work through her:

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I started preaching in the marketplace as soon as I came to faith. I've continued that practice through the years, even as my understanding of church planting has grown. When I go to an unreached area, the Lord leads me to where I should go, and I take another disciple with me. If I don't find a person of peace, I keep searching. In the markets, I begin by asking about some of the merchandise (e.g. vegetables). Then I transition to talking about the gospel, and people gather around to listen. Some don't pay much attention, but others get interested and come closer. When I proclaim God's word, demons come out of people. Generally, people respect and listen to me, whether I'm sharing in the market, on the street, or in people's homes.

One time, as I preached in the market, two women had very notable responses. One opposed and insulted me, while the other seemed receptive and asked for my phone number. Three days later, the receptive woman called and asked me to visit her. I walked three hours to reach her home. When I arrived, she was very sick, and her daughter was also seriously ill. I prayed for the woman and cast out a demon. I did the same for her daughter, and God instantly healed them both of their sicknesses. Both the woman and her daughter immediately repented and accepted Christ. After that, about 15 family members came to Christ, and the woman offered her home as a location for church meetings.

They began meeting twice a week for DBS—on Thursdays and Sundays. Many people were healed of sicknesses, including cancer and other diseases, and came to Christ. I raised up and trained an indigenous leader and returned weekly to follow up—to teach and train them. Their local leader is now passionate about leading the group.

Whenever I start a house church, I immediately train an indigenous leader. I always raise up one or more indigenous leaders, depending on the size of the group. All of the (more than 25) house churches I have started have indigenous leaders. In one location, the first house church has birthed other churches with up to eight generations. If I happen to be nearby when a baptism is taking place, I might

assist, but each generation of disciples can manage the baptisms of those they bring to faith.

When I initially reach people, I usually reach them as distinct households. I proclaim the gospel to all kinds of people—whether traditional Christians or those from a different faith. While each house church typically consists of people from the same faith background, we also have house churches made up of people from different religious backgrounds. As the disciples mature, if some of them have an apostolic calling, I send them out to reach other UPGs.

In addition to the underground churches I've planted with indigenous leadership, I serve as the main pastor at three above-ground churches, with many evangelists and missionaries under my supervision. We've also begun establishing a fourth above-ground church. One of the churches has 400 people, another has 180, and a third has more than 500. The fourth currently has 120. Altogether, we have more than 1,000 believers in these above-ground churches.

These are just a few examples of how God has blessed and used the holy boldness of our church planters, even in the midst of hardships. The response of those who interact with these disciples—both men and women—echoes the testimony recorded in Acts 4:13: *“When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished, and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.”* Through the holy boldness that God's Spirit provides, disciples are multiplying disciples in some of the world's hardest places.

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QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. What character traits or attitudes do you see in this chapter's testimonies that the Lord might want you to emulate?
2. What is God saying to you through the holy boldness of his servants described in this chapter?

CHAPTER 12

PERSON OF PEACE

*“When you enter a house, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’
If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace
will rest on them; if not, it will return to you.”*

LUKE 10:5-6

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- How to identify and engage with spiritually open individuals.
- How to focus on relational networks, not just individuals.
- The importance of diversity and sensitivity in identifying persons of peace.

PRAYER ENABLES US TO RECEIVE WISDOM AND HELPS US identify spiritually open people, who have been prepared by God ahead of time and will open their hearts as well as their communities. Our strategy comes from Luke 10:6. We look for the person who receives our peace, who welcomes us—the person who is spiritually hungry and key to his or her *oikos* (network or family). We seek to identify the places where God is already at work and join him.

Our strategy doesn't focus on individuals alone. We view individuals as the doorways to their families, as seen in the Bible. Lydia (Acts 16:13–15) was not an end in and of herself; she was a gateway to her family. The Philippian jailer (Acts 16:27–34) was not an end in and of himself; he brought access to his family. The gospel may touch one person first, which then opens the door to their group. Wherever we go, we look for the person God has prepared to open the door to their family or network. It may be a man or a woman, a young person or an adult. The key characteristic is their willingness to open their group to the messenger and to hearing the message.

After we pray, we pursue spiritual conversations. We don't want people to see us as *religious* people; we want them to know us as *spiritual* people who love God and initiate spiritual conversations. Those conversations help us identify persons of peace whom God has prepared. We don't prepare them; God does. Our job is to find them. Jesus said, "*Look for the person of peace*" (Luke 10:5–6), so, in our conversations, we knock, knock, knock to see who opens the door. It's important not to get distracted or go off course. Just focus attention on finding the person of peace—or *persons* of peace, if we find more than one. When we encounter someone interested in spiritual conversations, we engage with that person.

We start by talking about everyday things. We might say something like, “I’m thankful for my family. How many people are in your family? Are you thankful for them?” People generally enjoy sharing what they appreciate about their families. As we talk, we can often discern whether they have a spiritual question or interest in discussing spiritual matters. We engage them, beginning with what they know and then moving to what they don’t know. Our aim is to take a lost person on a journey from lostness to falling in love with Jesus. To facilitate that process, we involve them in a Discovery Bible Study (as described in the next chapter).

Persons of peace don’t always look alike, and they are often not the people we might expect. It could be a man who was once violent, attacking God’s children. It could be a religious leader from another faith, a scholar, a prostitute, a farmer, or a demonized person who was delivered. They may be rich or poor, well-known or only known within their family. Some people imagine that the person of peace will always be an elderly man with a big beard or a father figure. But, sometimes, God uses a child or a young person as a person of peace. A woman can be a woman of peace. God uses all kinds of people to welcome the gospel into their communities.

Sometimes, the person of peace holds significant influence in the community. It could be a father, mother, or uncle who opens the door to God’s interaction with their family. However, the person of peace may not always be the family decision-maker, so we need to be sensitive to the Spirit’s work in each situation. We shouldn’t assume that the person of peace will become the leader of the church that develops. In one case, the person of peace never came to faith, but their children became instrumental in spreading the good news and taking it to the next level. The person of peace is the door opener, but the filter for leadership is obedience.

For this reason, we always aim to follow the Spirit’s leading as we search for people of peace. We cast a wide net of relationships and watch to see whom the Spirit touches as door-openers to their family or relational networks.

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QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. How can you tell if someone is a person of peace?
2. What are other examples of persons of peace in the Bible?
3. Who could you connect with more substantially to discern if they might be a person of peace?

CHAPTER 13

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY

*“We no longer believe just because of what you said,
now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that
this man really is the Savior of the world.”*

JOHN 4:42

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- That DBS fosters an interactive, transformative, and personal connection with God's word.
- That DBS is simple and easily reproducible, making it very effective for multiplying disciples.
- That DBS can introduce new, spiritual insights in a non-threatening way by starting with common ground.

DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY GIVES PEOPLE THE OPPORTUNITY TO learn directly from God—both through his written word and through whatever his Spirit speaks to their hearts as they discuss the biblical text with others.

We do DBS in two ways. With people who generally accept the Bible as the word of God, we start by studying the person of Jesus, as they likely have some knowledge of the Old and New Testaments. For those who don't accept the Bible as inspired by God, or believe it has been altered, we begin with biblical stories about people and topics that are commonly agreed upon—usually starting with Creation and then exploring the stories of Old Testament prophets.

We encourage the person of peace to gather their family or friends and study the Holy Books together. They begin by studying commonly recognized biblical stories of figures like Adam, Abraham, and other prophets. We start with Creation, examine sin and the promise of a redeemer, and then progress to Christ's earthly ministry. Afterward, we share stories that describe what God has done for us through Christ. When we take this approach, we find that many people from other faiths are thirsty for God's word.

We aim to take people from what they already know into discovering God's truths that they don't yet know, through his word. As we see with Stephen in Acts 7, God's messengers often started with what their audience already knew and then brought them to the not-yet-known part of the gospel message. Paul also did this when he told the Athenians more about the "unknown God" to whom they had built an altar. We take people on a journey of discovery. We don't tell them what to do; we help them discover from God's word what *God* wants them to do. We don't have a set number of chapters or Bible stories that we use. With the Holy

Spirit's help, we guide people on this journey until they fall deeper and deeper in love with Jesus. Then, the person of peace and their family often come to the Lord.

We intentionally focus on the word of God, using a simple discussion model that leads people to obedience and transformation . . . a tool that enables groups of lost people to discover for themselves God's will for their lives. This simple DBS approach has powerful transformational impact. It's also a great way for believers to grow in maturity and obedience to Christ. They continue to discover what Scripture says, how to express it in their own words, and what God wants them to obey.¹

Discovery Bible Study must be interactive, not dependent on the skill of an outside church planter. The sooner an outsider can coach an insider and delegate facilitation of the DBS, the better. For that reason, we intentionally start with two simple questions: "What are you thankful for?" and "What challenges do you have?" Then, the facilitator opens the word of God and reads a passage two or three times. Afterward, they ask, "How would you retell this in your own words?" followed by, "What do you learn about God from this passage? (What do you learn about Jesus from this passage?) What do you learn about people from this passage? What does God want you to do to apply this passage? Is there something we can do together to apply this? With whom can you share this?" It's very simple, which makes it easily reproducible. This ease of reproducibility is crucial for those of us who are seriously aiming to make disciples of *all* peoples.

Each time the group gathers, they share testimonies of how they have obeyed what God revealed to them in the previous study. This provides mutual accountability, as well as edification and encouragement, for all the group members.

After six or seven weeks, the disciple maker can usually transition

1. Ibid, 247.

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to having someone else facilitate the study. Eight weeks is the maximum, but the sooner the better. It's not difficult to facilitate a DBS. The first time the person of peace or another participant facilitates the study, they may find it challenging. They might feel frustrated that they can't do it as well as the disciple maker, but we've seen time and again that they can do it. When people facilitate, they feel ownership. They think, "This is really mine. This is my group. This is for me." The main task of the disciple maker is coaching DBS facilitators.

We might start our conversation from a topic in the holy book they believe in. The journey consists of finding truths in God's word through discovery—not through preaching, convincing, or imposing. This way, people truly grasp the concepts. We ensure that each person shares with someone what they are learning. People love sharing good things with their families and extended communities. We see in the book of Acts that this is what Lydia did, what the Philippian jailer did, and what Cornelius did. The person of peace gathers people, and we take the group through the discovery process. They discover saving truths in God's word through DBS. After baptism, they become an *ekklēsia*—a biblical church.

The Creation story serves as a good starting point for DBS because many religions mention Creation, and we have a compelling account of how it happened. So, we usually start the journey with Creation, then touch on the prophets, and afterward, stories of Jesus. We often choose about 25 stories for the initial discovery series.² However, when God performs miracles, signs, and wonders, we might jump to different stories to maximize the opportunity. People who have experienced or witnessed miracles tend to come to faith more quickly. We always make sure to use Bible stories in making disciples, most often the series from Creation to Christ.

Among the groups we work with, we generally need to find about four persons of peace to start three Discovery Bible Studies. We typically need to start three DBS groups to see two churches emerge. Every person

2. Those can be found in Appendix C.

of peace we find has the potential to start a DBS, and every DBS has the potential to become a church. Each church planted has the potential to raise up grassroots leaders. However, not every plant bears fruit. We need God to make things grow.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. What advantages do you see in Discovery Bible Study over simply telling people what the Bible teaches?
2. Why is Discovery Bible Study more easily reproducible than other common approaches to Bible study?



CHAPTER 14

OBEDIENCE-BASED DISCIPLESHIP

“If you love me, keep my commands.”

JOHN 14:15

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Obedience is the core evidence of discipleship.
- Jesus’ emphasis on obedience.
- The cost of discipleship.

THE GREAT COMMISSION (MATT. 28:19–20) CONTAINS FOUR elements. Jesus said, “*Go and make disciples. Baptize them and teach them to obey everything I have commanded.*” Going is important, but the heart of the command, the main goal, is making disciples. Baptism is a key part of this process. Unless people commit their lives through baptism, they remain scattered believers who haven’t made a clear decision to leave their old life behind and follow Jesus as Lord. If we don’t teach them to obey everything Jesus commanded, their group can function as a club, but not as an *ekklēsia*—a biblical church.

This underscores the vital importance of the fourth element. Jesus didn’t say, “Teach them everything I have taught you,” but “Teach them to *obey* [emphasis added] everything I have commanded you.” The disciple-making process must include teaching believers to *obey all the Lord’s commands*. They don’t know all his commands at first, but they make a faith commitment to follow Jesus wherever he leads, obeying each of his commands as they learn them. Knowledge without obedience is useless. Obedience is the identifying mark of the disciples Jesus describes in the Great Commission.

Obedience didn’t start with the Great Commission; God called for it throughout biblical history, from Creation to Christ. We see the call to obedience in the early chapters of Genesis. The story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden reveals that obedience was the key issue. God gave them everything they needed, but he commanded, “You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden.” Disobedience of that command brought sin into the whole human race.

In the Pentateuch, God connected blessing with obedience. He showed his grace to the Hebrews by rescuing them from Egypt, then called on them to demonstrate their faith in him through obedience.

Deuteronomy 28 lists, in detail, the blessings resulting from obedience. It then lists, at even greater length, the curses resulting from disobedience. The foundation is always God's grace; obedience is the appropriate *response* to that grace.

After Saul had failed to completely destroy the Amalekites and made a sacrifice to the Lord, Samuel came and rebuked him, saying: "*To obey is better than sacrifice*" (1 Sam. 15:22b). In the Psalms, we see the value of heartfelt obedience. Psalm 119 repeatedly says, in many different ways, "*Your commandments delight me.*"¹ Again and again, the prophets called God's people to obedience and warned them of the consequences of disobedience.

Jesus described obedience as the evidence and sustainer of true love. "*If you love me, keep my commands*" (John 14:15), and "*If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love*" (John 15:10). Whoever says, "I love Jesus," must demonstrate that love through obedience. It's not about singing songs, wearing a cross, carrying a Bible, or speaking holy language—obedience is what truly shows love for God.

Throughout the Bible, we see the importance of obeying God. How can anyone claim to know Jesus if they ignore this? Our discipleship must include immediate, radical, and costly obedience. That is the cost of discipleship. It's what it means to truly be a disciple of Jesus. When Jesus called his first disciples, he said, "*Come and follow me.*" They obeyed immediately and radically. They left everything, and it cost them dearly. Real discipleship involves counting the cost (Luke 14:25–35). We see this

1. "I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word" (Psalm 119:16).

"Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors" (Psalm 119:24).

"Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight" (Psalm 119:35).

"For I delight in your commands because I love them" (Psalm 119:47).

"Their hearts are callous and unfeeling, but I delight in your law" (Psalm 119:70).

"Let your compassion come to me that I may live, for your law is my delight" (Psalm 119:77).

"If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction" (Psalm 119:92).

"Trouble and distress have come upon me, but your commands give me delight" (Psalm 119:143).

"I long for your salvation, LORD, and your law gives me delight" (Psalm 119:174).

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most vividly in the testimonies of those in our movement who have lost wives and children because of their faith, who have been imprisoned or exiled for their faith, and who have endured attacks and hardship for their faith. None of us knows in advance what discipleship will cost us personally. Jesus asks for a blank check for all of our lives—following his path in loving obedience, no matter where it leads. To receive Jesus Christ costs us nothing, to follow Jesus Christ costs us something, and to serve Jesus Christ costs us everything. The cost involved in the call to discipleship is not optional.

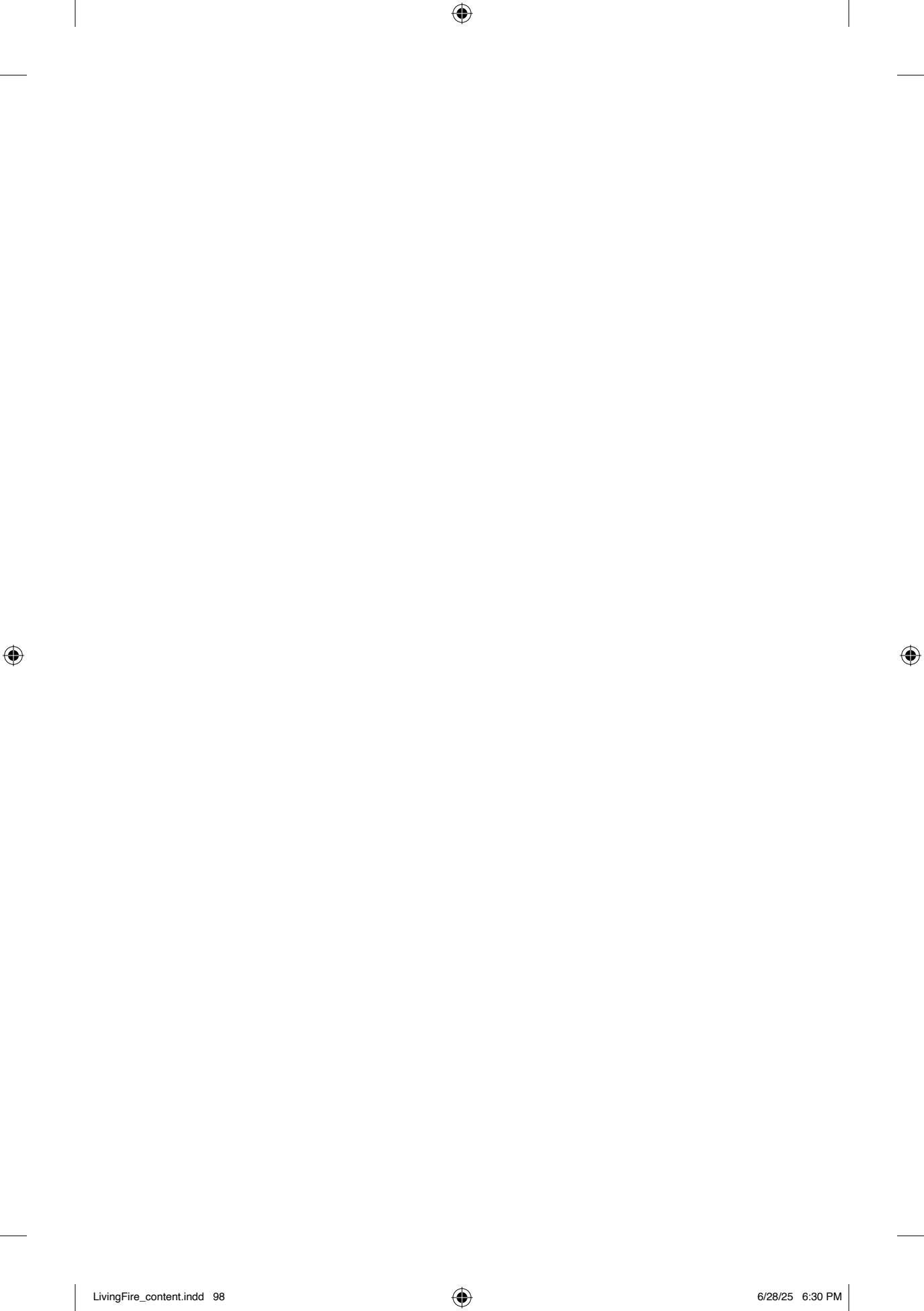
Jesus calls his disciples to radical obedience and has also told us to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves because he sends us out as sheep among wolves. Therefore, we take care not to bring artificial persecution through carelessness or by attacking someone else's religion. But Jesus said, "*If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also*" (John 15:20), meaning persecution *will* come. (See also 2 Tim. 3:12.) Persecution has a benefit when disciples respond as Jesus commands. When we equip our disciples, we prepare them to be ready for persecution because we know it will come. They need to understand how God wants them to respond and how to pray for their persecutors (Matt. 5:44). Equipping people to face persecution has to precede the experience of persecution.

Obedience is critical to a Disciple Making Movement. Why do we obey? Not because God wields a big sword, threatening to cut us off. It's not like the military concept of unthinking, unquestioning obedience. It's a love relationship with two-way communication. The Bible compares our relationship with Christ to a marriage. In my relationship with my wife, we want to bless each other and make each other happy. In the same way, the more we love Jesus, the more we want to please him. That means we want to become more and more obedient to him. Discipleship has to involve more than head knowledge. Real commitment to Christ results in obedience to Christ; otherwise, it's not discipleship. If a person doesn't obey what they know, that's a serious problem, as we see in James 2:17–20. Faith without deeds is

useless. Even demons believe the truth about God, but they don't *obey*. Obedience makes the crucial difference. The criterion for spiritual life and maturity is obedience. That's not too much for him to ask when he has already given us life—abundant and eternal. We love because he first loved us, and we obey him because we love him.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. How much does your heart resonate with the psalmist's delight in the Lord's commands?
2. What steps might you want to take to increase your delight in the Lord's commands?
3. Do you have any areas in your life where you're not yet fully, freely, and joyfully obeying Jesus' commands?



CHAPTER 15

REACHING FAMILIES

“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”

ACTS 16:31

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- The biblical pattern of reaching families.
- The strategic importance of reaching families.
- Reaching families as gateways to broader impact.

THROUGHOUT GOD’S WORD, WE SEE THE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE of reaching families. Early in Genesis, we read of God’s call to Abram with a promise to give him descendants—a great family—and, through them, to bless all families of the earth. *“I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed”* (Gen. 12:2–3 ESV).

In the book of Acts, we see very few people coming to the Lord as solitary individuals. Most came to faith as households and groups, described in the Greek New Testament as their *oikos*. We see connections and relationships among those coming to faith. For example, we see Cornelius and *“his relatives and close friends”* (Acts 10:24), Lydia *“and the members of her household”* (Acts 16:15), and the Philippian jailer and his family (Acts 16:31–33). Families play a strategic role in advancing the kingdom. “So, we focus on reaching families—the *oikos*. If we focus on reaching individuals, they end up disconnected from their family and their natural network of relationships. That makes it hard for the Gospel to spread.”¹ We always try to reach families because family is the fabric of healthy community.

For us, reaching an individual is not the end goal. Individuals serve as doorways to their families and communities—their sphere of influence. While we celebrate when one person comes to the Lord, we lift our eyes to see the greater harvest waiting. When we find someone who’s open, we encourage them to share with the rest of their family. Or, we invite the family to hear and discuss biblical stories that can point them

1. Fruit to Harvest, 244

toward a better life as Jesus' disciples. Through group discussion, with respect given to the family's leader, they decide together to follow Jesus.

We focus on groups more than individuals, partly because people naturally share what's important to them with the people they care about. Focusing on groups also tends to reduce persecution. It's more difficult to persecute a family than an individual. When an individual becomes isolated from their community and culture and moves to a different place, their witness to that group ends. But a family has more potential to stay in place—like the 10 who came to our safe house for a month and then went back, continuing to live as disciples and minister within their community.

Individuals become the gateway to their family. In the book of Acts, we see families, friends, households (*oikos*), and circles of influence coming to the Lord together. Families turning to Jesus is a common biblical pattern. If we focus on reaching one person without their family, the devil may allow us to reach just one and keep the rest for himself. We need to intentionally pursue the pattern seen in Scripture: the family focus exemplified with Lydia and her household, the Philippian jailer and his family, and the Samaritan woman and her community.

Our focus on reaching groups accomplishes both quantitative and qualitative growth. Quantitative growth occurs because it's not just one person coming to Christ—it's a group. When a group comes to faith, they have support and accountability. They will be more likely to be able to establish some form of *ekklēsia*. They can discover together what God's word tells them about his will for their lives. They also have a connection that enables them to better resist persecution, which contributes to *qualitative* growth.

When a lone individual faces persecution, they often leave their geographical location and even their people group. They may be ostracized from their community, or they might choose to leave to escape pressure or threats. When this happens, the gospel witness is removed from that place and group of people, significantly slowing its spread.

In addition, group learning is much more effective. People help

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each other find richness in God's word, and then they hold each other accountable to obey what they have learned. When a family or group comes to faith together, it's much easier for them to transition from being a Discovery Bible Study to functioning as a church. They already have relationships of trust among them. If their extended family lives nearby, the gospel often spreads quickly from a nuclear family to others in their extended family. The gospel also jumps from one nuclear family to another.

When one solitary young person comes to the Lord, they often face a very difficult time. For example, if a young single man comes to faith and wants to get baptized, but his family resists the gospel message, we prefer him to wait to be baptized until the rest of his family comes to faith. However, if he insists on being baptized without waiting, we will honor that. He has the right as a child of God. But, strategically, it's better for them to be baptized as a family.

If the person of peace is young, they often ask the church planter to accompany them to their family's home. If they decide to follow Christ without their family's permission, they may face severe persecution from their family. So, they ask the church planter to go and share with their family. This opens the door for the whole family to come to faith, rather than one young person becoming an outcast and the rest of their family becoming hardened toward the gospel.

For example, one young, married man (still in high school) was able to plant a church within his family just two months after coming to faith. He first shared the gospel with his wife, then his niece. After that, his uncles and elderly family members came to the Lord, influencing many in his extended family—about 20 people in total. He didn't get baptized immediately after coming to faith; instead, he waited and was baptized together with the rest of his family, after a family decision. Through his discovery journey, he understood the importance of engaging his family for the rapid spread of the gospel. He learned that coming to faith as a family could help them grow together and resist persecution together. Because we love our families, we want as many of them as possible to come to faith *together* and join the family of God.

We don't hinder a young man like that from coming to the Lord. Instead, we disciple him with a focus on reaching his family. We don't disconnect new believers from their natural relationships. We encourage new disciples to engage their families and aim to reach their entire household. We try to connect with the father, the uncle, or whoever is the decision-maker in that household. By reaching the decision-maker, we can influence the rest of the family. In Africa, decisions are usually made as a family, with the head of the family making important decisions on their behalf. So, we work through individuals to reach their families. Individuals act as bridges to their families.

In one case, when a 12-year-old boy came to faith, his family persecuted him and drove him away. For a while, they searched for him, intending to kill him. He stayed away, living in various places, and grew in his faith. After he turned 18, he returned to his family and shared his life and testimony with them. When they saw his good character and positive testimony, they accepted him and listened to him. He told them about his life during the years he had been away and shared Scriptures with them. He stayed with them for 15 days, and by the end of that time, he brought his family to Christ. One of our movement leaders followed up with the family, helping them grow, become strong in the Lord, and multiply. That family's church has now multiplied into 21 house churches!

In another family, the father was a religious leader—very devout in his previous religion. He had nine children. The first family member to come to the Lord was his oldest son, followed by his second daughter. Both suffered terribly at their father's hand. He beat them and even tried to kill his eldest son. But that son prayed earnestly for his family, and God revealed himself to this religious father through a dream. In the dream, Jesus took him to a high mountain and asked, "Who do you think I am?"

The father replied, "You are a prophet. That's what I've learned, and that's what I tell people."

But Jesus said, "No, I am more than that. I am the Messiah. I died for you and rose again. If you accept me and welcome me into your heart, I will dwell in you by my Spirit, and you will be my witness to tell

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your people that I love them.” When he said this, his face was shining—indescribably radiant. The father then came to the Lord, and his oldest son connected him with a disciple maker so he could grow in his faith.

After this leader came to faith, he told his followers, “I believe Jesus has saved me, and I’m not ashamed to tell you that.” He experienced some persecution as a result, but he remains strong in his faith. Now, his wife and all nine of his children have come to the Lord. They have discipled others in their neighborhood and started a house fellowship there. He says, “I have nothing to be afraid of. If death comes today, I’m ready to accept it.” He’s crazy for Jesus.

We’ve had cases where a religious leader came to faith, and most of their followers or congregation also came to faith. We have a “Saul to Paul” strategy² in which we intentionally focus on the “Sauls”—leaders who are very devout in their faith. These individuals have significant influence over others because of their spirituality. When a person like that comes to faith, many others often follow in their footsteps. Sometimes this takes a while, but in some cases, the process happens within a year. Once, about 76 such leaders entered God’s kingdom and came to faith while maintaining the same family leadership structure. They now lead different streams of multiplication—all within the same people group, but each in their own location.

We praise God that, in cases like these, radicals from other areas have not come to attack or harass the group. The families have circles of influence that help protect them when they come to faith together. Unless the tribe or family permits outsiders to attack, these new believers continue living in their natural setting as part of the tribe or community to which they belong. The community may not feel entirely comfortable with the disciples’ new faith, but because the believers remain within that circle, they are protected. They are not strangers; they have family and relational connections in the community. As the number of disciples increases,

2. We note that Saul’s use of a different name was not because of his conversion; it was still used in Acts 9:28-13:7. The change described in Acts 13:9 was apparently related to his calling to reach Gentiles.

their visibility also grows—they go from being invisible to visible. That’s why the indigenous focus is so critical in disciple-making. If an outsider arrives with a message people don’t like, they might be attacked because they lack supporting connections within the community. However, tribe and family often form a protective circle around new disciples.

God promised Abraham, “*In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed*” (Gen. 12:3b, ESV). We praise God that in these movements, we see the ongoing fulfillment of that promise in our time. Countless families are discovering God’s truth together, learning the gospel of salvation together, and becoming faithful and fruitful followers of Jesus together. In more individual-oriented cultures, it may be less common to see families and households come to faith together, but we see this pattern frequently in Scripture and consistently among the unreached groups to whom we bring the gospel. God is still in the business of reaching families as families.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. Can you describe any cases you know of where a whole family (or a significant part of a family) came to faith together or in close proximity to one another?
2. Can you envision what it might look like, in your context, to find a person of peace who would open the door to bringing the gospel to their family (or group of close friends)?



CHAPTER 16

SUPERNATURAL MANIFESTATIONS

“Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.”

ACTS 2:22

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- The confirmation of the gospel through supernatural events.
- Supernatural protection and deliverance.
- Miracles as a bridge to the gospel.

IN AREAS WHERE THE GOSPEL HAS NEVER BEEN PREACHED or where traditional religions have reigned for a long time, those engaged in DMM or CPM¹ often confront spiritual conflicts, ranging from annoying to life-threatening. Yet, God's power is much greater. A significant percentage of churches in these movements started as the result of a healing, deliverance, dream, or vision. We often see:

God confirming His Word through signs, miracles, healings, deliverance, and visions, especially among the UPGs on whom we focus. God confirms His message by revealing Himself to people in very unique ways, related to their situation. He shows His power in their lives and in their families.²

For example, one young man had begun hearing the good news from a friend and started reading a New Testament he had been given. However, he became confused and didn't know what to do. He wanted to obey God, but part of him resisted. Finally, one evening, as it was getting dark, he picked up two holy books. One was the Bible, which he held in his left hand. He held the other book in his right hand and said, "God, show me which one is right." Then, he fell asleep. In a dream, he saw the Bible he was holding shine with light. When he woke up, he remembered the dream and thought, "That must be true." He went to the back of his house and welcomed Jesus into his life, even though no one else was with him at the time.

As soon as he came to the Lord, he began sharing the good news with

1. Church Planting Movement: the *result* of a Disciple Making Movement. Some movement practitioners prefer this broader, more inclusive term. We affirm CPMs but more commonly use the more specific term, DMM.

2. Ibid, 247–248.

his wife, his only child, his uncle, and his uncle's children. They all came to the Lord. Within two months, he had brought over 20 people to faith and was baptized along with them. He planted a church that day because no one told him, "You can't plant a church." He just did it. Today, he leads a movement in his community.

Miracles occur quite commonly in these movements, especially among those coming to Christ from other religions. Amazing things happen, with God confirming his truth to people through visions, dreams, and miracles. We see God using miracles, signs, wonders, and deliverance ministry in about 60% of people coming to faith. We don't treat these things as a goal or an end in themselves, but rather as a means of access for proclaiming the gospel that brings salvation.

Sometimes, deliverance takes place before someone becomes a believer, opening them up to the gospel. Other times, they come to faith first and experience deliverance afterward. People have a variety of problems—sickness, bondage, curses, addictions, other spiritual problems, marriage issues, drunkenness—and they're searching for solutions. After much searching, they may believe no solution exists. But when a church planter or disciple maker shares the gospel with them in a language they understand, they realize that Jesus can heal and deliver. The disciple maker asks, "Can I pray for you?" They pray a simple prayer with faith, and miracles happen. God uses these moments to reveal himself powerfully to people.

As mentioned in Chapter 8, one man had been a leader in his religion for 30 years. A friend of his became born again and tried to talk to him about the gospel, but he resisted. One day, the man went home and said, "I don't know if this is true or not. I'll ask for just one thing." He had a sore on his hand from some illness and said, "If I see any miracle happening with this, I will talk more and find out more about the gospel." He then went to sleep, and when he woke up the next morning, the sore had almost completely disappeared. It wasn't 100% gone, but it had healed enough to amaze him. He went to his friend and said, "I apologize for not believing. I asked God to heal this sore, and no one heard me but God."

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While I slept, it almost vanished. Will you forgive me? What can I do?” His friend led him to the Lord, and he, in turn, led his wife and children to the Lord. When they were baptized, their group consisted of about 17 people. By God’s grace, he continues to make more disciples.

In one dangerous area, the police were looking for one of our church planters by name. He shares:

Two cars full of police were assigned to capture me in the city. As I was walking, one of the cars stopped right in front of me, and the policemen asked if I knew a man by my name. I replied, “Yes,” and they asked, “Where is his house?” I pointed them to my house and left. They went to my house and asked where I was.

The people there told them, “He recently left.”

The police, frustrated, asked, “Is he a spirit, or what?” Later, they found out that the man they had spoken to was me. They were furious that they couldn’t catch me.

When God protects you, he knows how to do it. The one who said, “I am your protector,” knows how to protect us.

Daniel*, a highly respected and well-educated leader in another faith, came to faith in Christ, which made his radical friends very angry. They took him to a place from which he couldn’t escape, confiscated his passport, and told him he needed to publicly recant his faith in Christ, or they would kill him. They had a plan to make him recant via a live feed on YouTube, giving him a set date to comply—or else. He began fasting and praying, as he had no intention of denying Christ.

The day before the scheduled broadcast, the leader of the radical group had a stroke. He was taken to a local hospital and later flown to the capital city of another country. The next day, the group was entirely focused on their leader’s health, and in the turmoil, they forgot about Daniel. Two or three days later, someone came at night and threw his passport to him, allowing him to escape.

As the terrorist leader began to recover, he felt afraid and concluded,

“I think this happened because of my bad treatment of Daniel.” He sent messengers to Daniel, instructing them: “Can you ask him to forgive me?” Through the Lord’s deliverance, Daniel continues to proclaim the good news of Jesus and has now written over 120 songs for the Lord’s glory.

THE TESTIMONY OF A FORMER RELIGIOUS TEACHER

“I was a religious teacher in my former faith. I tried my best to kill my older brother because he became a follower of Jesus. Five of my friends and I burned the big church building of one of the denominations. May the Lord forgive me for what I did long ago. For six years, I taught people from that book; then one day, Jesus came into my life. One morning, at about 5:00 A.M., I had a dream in which I saw a being who said, ‘I am Jesus.’ The first question he asked me was, ‘Do you know your holy book?’

“I said, ‘Yes, I know it very well. I’ve been educated, and I teach it.’

“Then he asked me, ‘What is the right way to go to heaven?’ He asked me 16 questions, requesting answers from my holy book. I couldn’t answer any of his questions. I began to feel afraid, realizing, *I’m on the wrong path.*

“My brother had come to Christ many years before but had never shared the gospel with me because I had opposed him so strongly. When I shared my vision with him, I asked, ‘What should I do now?’ He prayed for me and began to disciple me. Now, many religious leaders come to meet with me, and after some interaction, they come to know Jesus.”

SUPERNATURAL PROTECTION

One of our church planters shares this testimony:

“One time, we were living in the midst of an unreached community of another faith, and we had begun to see many people coming to faith in

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Jesus. Some of the local religious leaders felt threatened by this advance of the gospel, so they hired some young people to attack us. The youths were instructed to burn our house down at night while my family and I were inside sleeping. We didn't know their plan; we prayed as usual and went to bed. The young men came during the night, carrying a bomb to destroy our house. But when they got close and were about to throw the bomb, it turned into corn in their hands. They thought, *What's going on?!* They weren't going to throw corn at our house, so they went back home.

"But when they got close to their home, the corn had turned back into a bomb. So, they returned to our house. But again, as they approached, it turned into corn. Perplexed by this strange occurrence, they concluded, 'This guy must be a magician,' and went back home. When they arrived home, the corn turned back into a bomb once more. They finally said, 'This isn't going to work,' gave up the effort, and returned the money they had been paid to bomb our house.

"The religious leaders weren't happy at all. They hired a different group of young men to come burn down our house. These young men came to our house at 1:00 A.M., and as soon as they got close enough to see the house, they saw a very handsome, strong-looking man standing at the gate, all dressed in white. It was dark all around, but they could see his radiant white clothes. They concluded, 'This guy must have hired a guard.' So, they left.

"They waited a few days and then came again on a different night. Again, they saw the man in white standing at the gate. So, they left again. They came a third time, at a different time of night, and the man in white was still there, and they became very afraid.

"They went back to the leaders who had hired them and said, 'That guy has hired a very strong guard who seems to never sleep. We can't get close to the house.' The leaders were very upset that none of their plans were working. Those young people then came and told us the story: 'We came to your house, and this is what happened. We couldn't attack you.'"

As one of our songs says, "The Lord is our protector." Five years ago, there were no believers among that group. Now, there are more than 250,

and the number keeps growing. We recorded the first audio Scripture in that language a week ago—five stories in the Creation to Christ DBS series. The people were amazed and delighted when they heard it, because they didn't know God could speak their language.

CONCLUSION

We see many signs and miracles happening, but those are not our main focus. They're just evidence of the reality and power of the God whose message we're bringing. Jesus said, *"As you go, proclaim the good news, heal the sick, and cast out demons"* (excerpted paraphrase of Matt. 10:7–8). These signs serve as a bridge, opening opportunities for engagement so people can hear the true gospel. We don't focus on miracles or deliverance, but God uses these things to reveal himself to people. Miracles, signs, and wonders beautifully adorn the gospel message. When packaged together, people experience the power of God, taste the love of God, and clearly see who Jesus is: the Savior they need in their lives.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. Can you describe a time when you've seen God work miraculously, or in an especially powerful way, to confirm the gospel message to unbelievers?
2. Would you like to pray and ask God to do powerful works in your ministry to lost people? Do you see Matthew 10:7–8 being applicable to your ministry?



CHAPTER 17

INDIGENOUS INCARNATION OF THE GOSPEL

“To the Jews I became like a Jew . . . To those not having the law I became like one not having the law . . . To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.”

1 CORINTHIANS 9:20-22

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- The importance of presenting the gospel in a way that aligns with the local context.
- That we should focus on empowering indigenous leaders.
- The value of stripping away cultural trappings that are nonessential to the gospel message.

AS I HAVE PREVIOUSLY WRITTEN:

We aim for indigenous incarnation of the Gospel, so the churches we plant “smell” like the community. It’s not like one tribe is giving their Jesus to another tribe. We want people to feel: “This is *my* Jesus. He speaks my language. He talks like me.” That kind of incarnational ministry has contributed a lot. As much as possible, we try to reduce cultural barriers. Culture is so much in people; they might not realize they are unintentionally transferring their culture. We try to give people nothing but the Gospel and allow the indigenous people to contextualize to whatever fits in their community, without compromising the full truth of the Word of God. That way they are not robbed of their culture and the Gospel is not foreign to them.¹

“This is *my* Jesus. He speaks my language. He talks like me.”

The gospel reaches people in a way that fits their culture. In the example mentioned in Chapter 5, among a group that was 99% of another faith, no gospel efforts had seen success in the past 65 years. We sent an indigenous leader (along with a team) from a movement in a nearby tribe to serve as a catalyst among them. Because he came from a nearby community, he spoke their tribal language, which greatly helped him connect with them. His first prayer was that God would give him some leaders from within that group, in whom he could invest. God answered that prayer by giving him three or four men whom he began to disciple. Those men started bringing others to the Lord, who then brought even more people.

He didn’t need to run to all the places where groups were starting. He focused on investing in key indigenous leaders, which resulted in generation after generation of groups coming to faith. Within 23 months,

1. Ibid, 244.

multiplication exploded in several different locations (see diagram on page 32 in Chapter 5). It also created a “Saul to Paul movement”—religious leaders came to the Lord and spread the gospel to new areas. These new believers were able to worship in their own language, and leaders led using their own language. The new fellowships developed worship patterns completely different from those in the area where the original catalyst came from. Right now, that brother is mentoring 15 key indigenous leaders. He meets with them twice a month for coaching and mentoring, and they, in turn, lead and train the next generation of leaders. He himself is being mentored by one of our area managers. Everyone has a mentor who helps them grow in the Lord and gives them accountability.

Worship in the heart language of the people keeps it accessible, welcoming, and within reach of all members of the community. It allows everyone to participate in the formation of a new church.

Earlier missionaries, even those with good intentions, made a big mistake. They brought an imported church culture, including a monologue from a pulpit, passive listeners in the pews, a choir, and other elements that came not from Scripture but from their own culture. Those things are okay, but they’re not part of the gospel message. In a new context, they made the gospel seem foreign. Additionally, in some cases, evangelism was viewed as numerous gospel presentations, and conversion as mainly a change in religious title, information, and ritual habits, rather than a heart change leading to a biblically guided lifestyle change. Converts were often forced to abandon much of their culture and adopt Western culture as a standard of spirituality. These practices created many unnecessary barriers for the gospel, leading people to view it as a foreign imposition. Even compassion ministry often came to be viewed as a trick, aiming to buy converts with material goods.

In reality, the gospel is not a Western import. Jesus was not a Westerner. We need to consider how best to convey the biblical realities of the gospel without importing Western baggage or traditional Christian baggage that feels and smells like a Western import. People need to feel, “This is our Jesus, who has come to save us,” not, “This is *their* Jesus, who

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they're trying to coerce me to accept.” We aim to remove cultural barriers from the gospel, doing our best to present the gospel without the trappings of outside culture. This allows new disciples to apply the kingdom message well within their own cultural context. We don't try to analyze or figure out a contextual plan to tell them what the gospel should look like in their culture. When the disciples see the Bible instructing them to do or stop doing something, they obey—out of love for God, not out of conformity to our ideas or preferences. They focus on loving Jesus and radical obedience to the word of God.

This underscores the importance of Scripture translation and access so that disciples in every language group have the best opportunity to study, understand, and apply God's word in their lives and cultural context. For oral-preference learners, discipleship should be oral-friendly. For communally minded groups, evangelism and discipleship should be communal rather than individualistic.

We use very little extra-biblical material or training manuals in our discipleship because the material needs to be easily translated and multiplied. By staying rooted in Scripture, our effort can focus on mother-tongue translations of Scripture rather than on translating additional materials to help disciples become mature. When we interact with people in the language, culture, and learning style they understand, we see the Lord bringing very good fruit.

We don't require high levels of education or training for disciples to share their testimony and make other disciples. Scripture shows examples like the Samaritan woman, the Gadarene demoniac, and other illiterate people whom Jesus commissioned to share a saving message about him. He didn't demand that they begin with a deep understanding of Christology; they proclaimed the love and saving power of Jesus. When the delivered demoniac begged to join Jesus and his disciples for extended training, Jesus didn't permit it. He said, *“Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you”* (Mark 5:19). We believe in biblical training and sound theology, but not as *prerequisites* for beginning disciple-making.

Moses*, one of our strategy leaders, describes the importance of indigenous incarnation in his sphere of ministry:

I coordinate ministry in an area with 16 different animist groups, each with its own cultural rules, regulations, and language. We adjust our approach to fit these various contexts. If a person doesn't learn the language and cultural rules of these groups, they won't survive there. So, we prioritize learning those things.²

Sixteen years ago, there were fewer than 10 believers among these groups, and those believers couldn't multiply or grow in their faith. When we studied the background, we found that many missionaries had come from other parts of the region to share the good news, but they hadn't connected with the culture. So, we started presenting the gospel using the language and culture of each group. As people came to faith, we began raising up indigenous leaders from among them. We now have 280 churches among 10 of these groups, spanning up to nine generations.

These groups dislike each other so much that they don't cross into each other's territories. Tribal clashes frequently occur, with roads blocked and people dying. A strong culture of blood revenge persists between the groups. But when people come to Christ, reconciliation occurs among the disciples in stark contrast to the rest of their culture.

I've served in this area for seven years and have been responsible for planting 185 churches. On one occasion, some young people from one group were preparing a large campaign to attack and kill as many people as possible from another group, which now has many disciples. But God has given me favor, even with those who have not yet come to faith. I gathered the young people and told them we were called to deliver and save people, not to kill. As a result, they canceled the attack. God rescued that people group.

2. Learning such a variety of languages and customs comes more easily to someone who has grown up near such a context than it would for a distant outsider.

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I sometimes say, “Tradition is stronger than the devil.” By that I mean that if someone has a demon, we can cast it out in the name of Jesus, and it’s done. But when a person loves their religious patterns, they may not even realize that what they consider pure love for Jesus is mixed with an attachment to their traditions. They can be very reluctant to let go of their patterns and consider that the Bible might point in a different direction. Tradition can act as a stronghold in their life. So, I ask people, “What will it take for us to set aside our traditions and give new communities the Lord Jesus and his gospel?” We encourage new believers to write songs in their own language, using indigenous melodies, perhaps building on ideas from the Psalms. Songs like these speak directly to the hearts of both believers and not-yet-believers.

The indigenous incarnation of the gospel enables people to truly *own* the gospel message and kingdom lifestyle at a heart level. They don’t see the gospel as a foreign import. They feel that the message of Jesus is the best fit for them, the best way forward for their own people and culture. *He* is the one who leads them to discard sinful parts of their culture, strengthen the good parts, and creatively shape every aspect of their lives as they discover his will through his word. This context-appropriate incarnation of God’s kingdom becomes a message that can rapidly reproduce among each group. The people in each location say, “It’s not *their* gospel; it’s *our* gospel. It’s not *their* Jesus; it’s *our* Jesus.” It takes root deep in their hearts—not just in their minds—because it comes to them in their heart language and culture.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. Can you name any groups of people to whom the gospel seems like a foreign message?
2. What steps could be taken to bring an indigenous incarnation of the gospel to that group?

CHAPTER 18

HOT COALS

“It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else’s foundation.”

ROMANS 15:20

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Multiplication by sending experienced practitioners to new, unreached areas.
- Cultural sensitivity and replication.
- The empowering and training of local leaders.

IN OUR PART OF AFRICA, FIRE IS VERY IMPORTANT, ESPECIALLY in the morning. In the countryside, people didn't traditionally have lighters or matches handy. Some mothers still cover their fire with ash in the evening to keep the embers warm until morning. In the morning, they uncover the fire and use hot coals to start a new one. A neighbor who doesn't have fire can come and get a hot ember to take home and start their own fire. By carrying the hot coals, the fire multiplies.

We apply this strategy to DMM. When God is doing something amazing with a movement in one place, we take a couple of practitioners from that area and send them to another place so they can start the fire. We call this the *hot-coals* strategy. Once the fire starts in that new place, someone can then carry an ember to ignite a new fire elsewhere.

We want to be carriers of the hot coals of the gospel—the work of God's Spirit bringing salvation to many. We want to see movements igniting fires among additional groups until all have heard the message of salvation. It's good news, so people can't keep it just for themselves. They have to pass it on. As I wrote in the past: "We're moving from being a harvest field to a harvest force—sending out hot coals. We're now sending workers not only within our region but also beyond our region. This *hot-coals* strategy has worked so effectively here, we're planning for it to go further."¹

Once a DMM is happening among one group, they realize that the good news is not only for their own group. They start to see other nearby groups who need the gospel and begin praying and planning for a *jump-over* to happen. They ask God to send someone to share the gospel with those groups that have not yet heard. God imparts a vision for the gospel

1. Ibid, 246

to be contagious and to extend to new peoples and places. This happens most easily and most often with nearby groups, but the Lord also gives some disciples a wider vision for different regions and countries.

The people we send as hot coals have already been on fire in making disciples. People most easily reproduce what they have experienced and are familiar with. For example, a person who has experienced only traditional church patterns will naturally reproduce traditional church patterns and will need to think creatively to catalyze a movement. But someone who has experienced God's work in a movement already has a clear grasp of how movement dynamics work.

In the hot-coals process, we need to take care not to export our culture, but rather to bring *only the gospel* to these new communities because culture can imprison people in different ways. In our hot-coals strategy, the core of the gospel message remains the same, but the packaging, shape, and delivery system are different. We send disciple makers from a near-neighboring people group to one still far from the gospel. However, we take care not to package the message in our traditional church culture, as that would prevent replication. We always ask, "What is transferrable and what is not transferrable?"

The criterion for who to send as a hot coal is based on a person's fruitfulness in ministry. First, we provide them with cross-cultural training and coaching, equipping them to enter a new context and do what they've already been doing in their home context. We usually send them as a team, starting with two individuals or two families, just as Jesus sent out the disciples two by two. Their stay might last one or two years initially, depending on various factors, which we decide on a case-by-case basis.

The process of choosing people to send depends on clear information. First, the leaders in a network become aware of the need for someone to take the gospel to an unreached area. Then, they seek the Lord for someone to send. As I write, next week, a new hot coal is scheduled to cross over into another country. This is happening because of an awareness of the need and through a partnership that enables cross-cultural sending. The couple or team being sent has a burden for the group they are going

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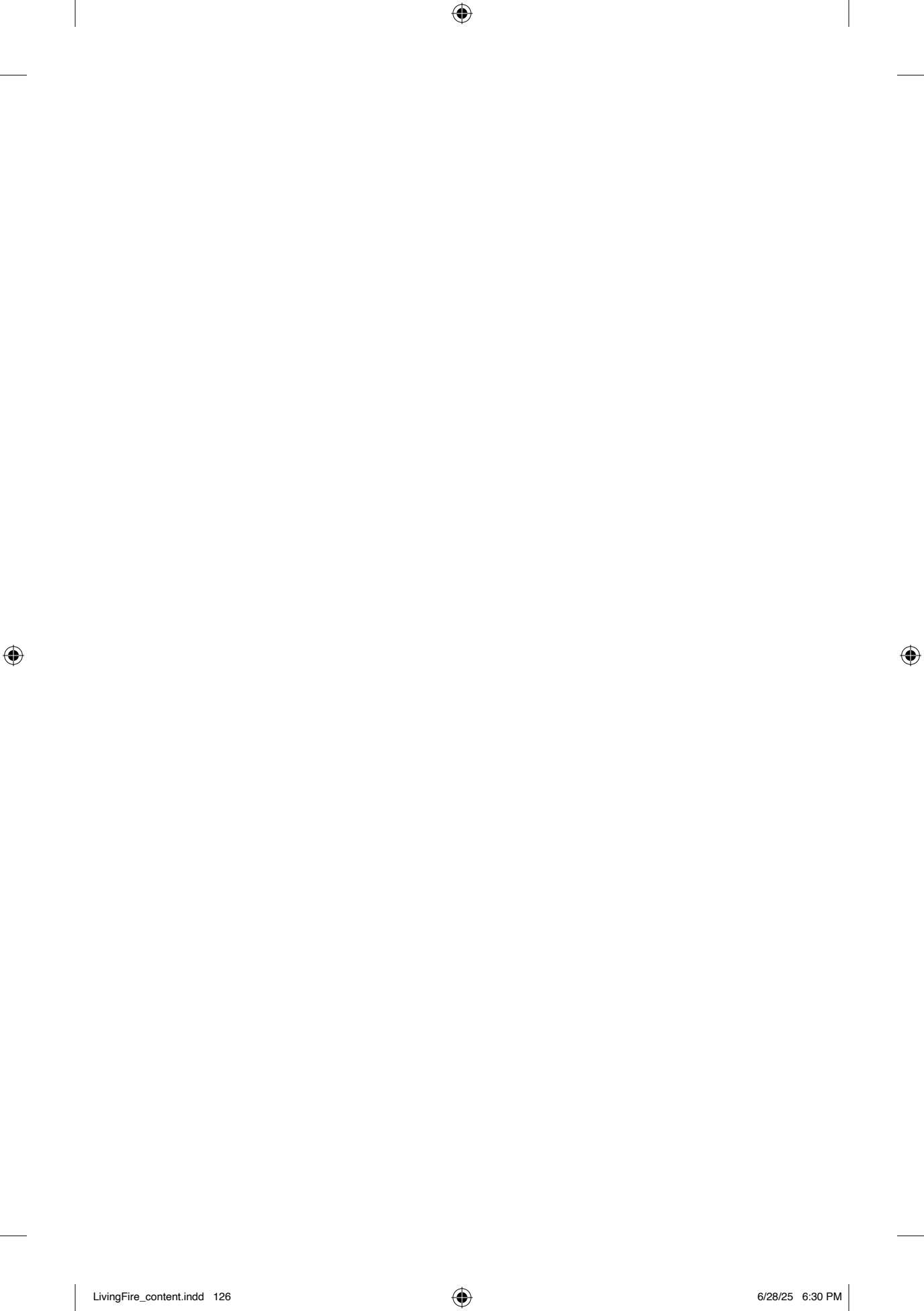
to. In many cases, we're responding to a Macedonian call: the people in that area want us to come. They are saying, "Come and help us!" We go to an area, train partners there who are asking for help, and equip them to reach the unreached without us remaining on-site. We don't want to create dependency or plant our flag; we want to see God's kingdom expand through a multiplication that doesn't depend on us.

Once a few hot coals start a fire, it will burn on its own and can ignite additional fires. That's how multiplication happens. We envision that the hot-coals strategy will continue until every tribe, language, and people group has heard the gospel. As the Lord spoke to Joshua in his old age: *"there are still very large areas of land to be taken over"* (Josh. 13:1b). And as Jesus told his disciples: *"open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest"* (John 4:35b). We keep lifting our eyes to see the remaining fields that are ripe and large areas full of lost people needing the message of God's kingdom.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. Why do you think the hot-coals strategy is so effective for reaching unreached groups?
2. In what ways can you imagine playing a part in this hot-coals strategy?

PART II: ACCELERATE



CHAPTER 19

THE IMPORTANCE AND CHALLENGES OF ACCELERATION

*“So the word of God spread. The number of disciples
in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number
of priests became obedient to the faith.”*

ACTS 6:7

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- A balance of quantitative and qualitative growth.
- Overcoming challenges to acceleration.
- Strategic adaptations and innovations.

IGNITING DESCRIBES THE LIGHTING OF A FIRE. BUT JUST STARTING a fire is not enough. We want to discern how we can accelerate the flames, which we call replication. We don't do anything that's not replicable. One of the barriers of the historic church-planting strategy is making things big, which results in people getting stuck with a lot of unreproducible elements.

From the beginning, in everything we do, we consider how we can accelerate it. How can it fly? How can it multiply? We want to see disciples making other disciples, who can make other disciples, and so on. Likewise, we want churches that plant other churches, which start other churches, which then plant more churches. And we aim for leaders who can develop other leaders, who can equip more leaders.

In Africa, and in many other cultures, grandparents are respected because of their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. We want to see that happen in disciple making, so we consider multiplication very important. We accelerate in two ways. One is *quantity*, because we see God and his servants paying attention to numbers in the Bible. The Gospels and book of Acts tell us about 12 disciples, then 70 others, then 120, and 3,000 were added, and then 5,000. In Acts 19:10, we read that “*all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord*,” and “*Paul . . . convinced . . . large numbers of people . . . in practically the whole province of Asia*” (Acts 19:26). The Bible portrays numbers of disciples as important.

We also accelerate the integration of kingdom DNA into the fellowships, which helps us to ensure quality. Based on texts like Acts 2:42–47, we assess the spiritual health of the churches. Are they worshiping? Are they committed to the Great Commission? Is discipleship occurring? Is the community supporting one another? Do they have a strategy for

outreach? Are people being added to the community? Does their growth reflect only addition, or is there also multiplication? Those are some of the things we look for.

We ensure that quantitative growth is balanced with qualitative growth, as we believe the Great Commission includes both. “Go to every *ethnē*” emphasizes *quantitative* growth—an urgency to reach those who need to hear the gospel and multiply disciples among them. “Make obedient disciples” emphasizes *qualitative* growth, so we focus on both. The word of God is our central authority, and obedience to Scripture shapes everything we do.

For people to obey God, they must know him and experience a loving relationship with him. At the foundation, they need a clear understanding of who Jesus is. Christology is essential because when a person falls in love with Jesus, they want to do what he commands.

Understanding community is also important. In our contexts, community is essential for everyone, but disciples must grasp the unique nature of biblical *ekklēsia*. What does that mean in their context, and what does such a group do when they gather? Acts 2:42–47, for example, describes how the Early Church gathered from house to house. They shared the Lord’s Supper, prayed, received teaching, supported one another, worshipped, and added new believers every day. God’s Spirit was at work, and they had a clear sense of identity and mission as they followed Jesus. In other texts, we see them declaring the resurrection of Jesus and refusing to compromise the pure gospel. They had joy in the Holy Spirit, obeyed God, loved one another, and displayed various manifestations of God’s kingdom at work among them. Their identity as Jesus’ disciples was clear, and everyone could see their transformation.

We encourage new believers to reach out to their families, friends, and circles of influence—their *oikos*. This outreach is incredibly important. As the gospel fire spreads, we aim to ensure both the quality and the quantity of the growth. We plan intentionally for generations of disciples, churches, and leaders. For example, 2 Timothy 2:2 speaks to the importance of equipping multiple generations for healthy growth and

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multiplication. In line with that, we use a cascading system of training in which each leader passes on what they have learned to others, who then share it further. Every generation requires new leaders, so we ensure clarity about these key questions: “Who’s your coach? Who are you coaching? Who is being coached by the one you are coaching?” We aim for at least a four-generation strategy of hands-on, relational coaching, mentoring, and training.

The connection with those at the third and fourth generation often consists of awareness rather than direct contact. We may not meet them, but each generation holds responsibility for the next. Strong DNA in the generational pattern ensures the quality and the quantity in the movement.

As mentioned, baptism plays an essential role in accelerating discipleship. The specifics of baptism depend on the situation, as the Bible doesn’t dictate how long someone should wait to be baptized or how many should be baptized at one time. Based on the context, we teach new believers the biblical truth about baptism. Most importantly, each person has to understand the commitment to follow Christ and decide: “I want to get baptized,” or, “My family and I want to get baptized.”

Often, people desire to be baptized in groups. We frequently baptize entire families—sometimes 10 or 20 people. But, in some cases, these groups can grow as large as 100, 250, 600, or even 1,250 at once. These are usually relational groups within a 15-minute radius who already know one another and want to celebrate their newfound faith together. In some areas, new disciples are baptized every month. God is moving in marvelous ways.

We believe the baptizer should be a disciple maker who has been discipling that person to faith. We don’t view baptism as graduation from a class. The Bible portrays it as a response to saving faith, a first step of obedience, and a joining of the body of Christ. We encourage the church planter who knows the individual’s faith well to lead the baptism. We don’t bring in an outside person with a title to perform the ceremony. Personally, I baptized only a few people in the early days.

Now, I never baptize anyone. If a disciple asks me to baptize someone, I make it clear, “No, we can come and celebrate with you, but you should do the baptism.”

We train the disciple makers on how to baptize. The training is brief, but enough to give them confidence to lead the baptism. The decision of when to get baptized is made by the person(s) getting baptized, not by the baptizer. They are the ones who best understand their own heart and situation. As they engage with the relevant Scriptures, we wait for them to say, “I want to get baptized.” The baptizer then confirms that they have truly committed their life to Christ and are ready to follow him as Lord. We strive to remove any obstacles that might prevent them from taking this step of obedience.

Do you remember the man whose hand had been healed? After he was baptized, he asked the disciple maker, “Now that you’ve baptized me, can I baptize the rest of my family?” We view that as biblically acceptable. So, with the church planter present, he baptized the rest of his family.

HINDRANCES

Sometimes, when the gospel is advancing well, people hinder multiplication by joining small house churches together to form large congregations. People see attractional church models through media or existing churches from outside influences, and they are tempted to create something similar—bigger and more visible. They merge and shift toward a traditional church model. Traditional churches often don’t understand the movement mentality and instead promote patterns that slow multiplication.

An ethnocentric Christian culture can also impede the movement by shutting out other ethnic groups. When Christians insist on maintaining the same structures they’ve always known, they confine the gospel, limiting its spread to unreached people and places. Multiplication stalls. Too many Christians focus on their own comfort and preferences, losing

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sight of eternity and the urgency of bringing the good news of salvation to the unreached.

Some Christians extract new believers from their existing networks, creating barriers to the gospel. They encourage new believers from different backgrounds to “worship like us and be like us.” In some cases, Christians from other areas even bribe new believers to join their group with financial support, benefits, or promises of assistance. Outside organizations may offer to pay leaders or new believers in order to take credit for what God is doing. However, separating a new disciple from their family or community hinders kingdom multiplication within that people group. This extraction approach to evangelism becomes a significant obstacle to the substantial advancement of the gospel.

Another hindrance occurs when Christians convert people without making disciples. This results in shallow spirituality rather than lives transformed by God’s Spirit, leading to what has rightly been described as Christianity that is “a mile wide and an inch deep.”

Some Christians attempt to make disciples using a knowledge-based approach, focusing heavily on teaching, rather than an obedience-based approach. This can lead to Christians acquiring a great deal of information but not necessarily living in obedience to the Lord’s commands. The testimony of such people rarely becomes the fragrance of Christ to those around them—especially unbelievers.

Other common hindrances we encounter include:

- Believers reverting to old traditions. Some people who join the movement after years in traditional church backgrounds default to old ways of living and ministering, causing growth to stall or plateau.
- Groups losing the DNA of generational multiplication and becoming content with what they’ve already achieved.
- Leaders attempting to control the movement.
- Good but distracting projects that divert resources from the main mission.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

We have found creative ways of handling challenges—such as when we need to perform a baptism but don’t have access to a body of water. In those cases, we bring benches and a plastic tarp, fill it with enough water, and baptize people. It’s an easy, simple, and replicable method. By obeying God’s word in culturally relevant ways, we ensure that the movement remains sustainable.

To address the challenge of illiteracy, we established an Equipping Center where people can learn to read the Scripture for themselves. The focus is not on the Center itself but on the entire learning mechanism for overcoming illiteracy. Our community consists mostly of oral-preference learners. We use stories, skits, audio/visual aids, listening to Scripture, and other oral-friendly approaches. The people are highly intelligent, but their culture is not a written one. They prefer to hear God’s word rather than read it. Even those who can read often prefer to listen to Scripture stories being told.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we faced a communication challenge because the majority of our people don’t have internet access. To overcome this, we implemented a “G6” communication strategy. We began conducting group calls with six people at a time, using these calls for prayer, coaching, and training. As a result, we ended up doing *more* training and coaching than before. In the past, I met with some leaders every three months, but now I meet with them roughly every other week. The G6 calls are affordable, convenient, and easily transferable, allowing leaders to quickly pass on what they’ve learned. We initially thought COVID would negatively impact our numerical growth, but it actually accelerated it.

Currently, we are dealing with tribal conflict and political instability. The country is fragile, and we can’t move from place to place. Yet, despite these challenges, we recently reached more than one and a half times as many people as we usually do in a single quarter. The Lord uses troubles for his glory. Brokenness often opens people’s hearts, making

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them more likely to think about God and search for something more. In such times, as Christ's disciples, we are called to respond to the question: "Who is my neighbor?" My neighbor is anyone in need. By meeting people in their need, we can guide them to encounter God. Compassion answers the prayer of the lost. Next week, two of my leaders are going to a very troubled area. It's risky, but we see a great opportunity to make an impact. Whatever we do in such areas, we act intentionally, because love in action opens communities.

Sometimes, due to war and other security concerns, I have to choose carefully *when* and *how* I will meet with leaders in certain areas. But in principle, we go everywhere except hell. Jesus promised, "*On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it*" (Matt. 16:18). He is building his Church today in some of the most challenging places and circumstances.

Crises are bittersweet. Whether we face war or other crises, history teaches us an important lesson. Brutal governments may close church buildings, but contrary to what people expect or what the devil intends, the foundation of the Church is Christ. We currently have disciples in very dangerous places, and their prayer lives have deepened significantly. The sense of brotherhood among believers has flourished, and they have become more eager to be equipped for expanding God's kingdom. That's why our leaders are going there—to equip them. As we bring help and hope, we also equip local believers, which has been immensely beneficial. The crisis itself is bitter, but the fruit of it can be sweet when we respond in Jesus' way. This is the bittersweet nature of kingdom life in our broken world.

DISCIPLES' IDENTITY

The disciples and churches in the movement have the freedom to choose a biblical identity that accurately reflects who they are in Christ, both to themselves and to outsiders. We don't impose a name on them. They

take a name, in their own language, that is both biblical and culturally suitable. Sometimes, they feel uncomfortable with traditional words, like “Christian” or “church,” because those terms may carry a negative connotation from the media or their previous worldview. In such cases, they prefer to use other biblically based descriptors.

Recently, 42 former religious leaders who had come to faith in Christ had a great discussion among themselves. They recognized that 99% of their community had a negative view of the word “Christian,” associating it with a different tribe they disliked. These leaders said, “We know some disciples of Jesus call themselves Christians, but among our people, that word would send the wrong message. We believe in Jesus, we believe in the Bible, and we boldly share our faith—so what should we call ourselves?”

My colleague and I told them, “We’re not going to give you a name. What do you want to be called?” We showed them several names used in the Bible for followers of Jesus—“Christian,” “Follower of the Way,” “the Saints,” and others. Jesus didn’t give one specific label for his followers; the important thing is to *live* as his disciples.

The group brainstormed around 13 different names and eventually chose one. They approved it and now use that name for themselves. We don’t impose an identity on them; we help them discover who they are through Scripture. Some feel comfortable being called Christians, and they may refer to their gathering as a church. That’s fine. Others feel uneasy with those terms and use different names. What matters most is who they are in Christ and how they function as part of his body.

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QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. How are you applying (or could you apply) 2 Timothy 2:2 in your life and ministry?
2. What is your attitude toward followers of Jesus who use a different name to describe themselves than the name commonly used in your church?
3. What could be done to accelerate multiplication of disciples and the advancement of the kingdom in your context?

CHAPTER 20

AIMING FOR MULTIPLICATION

*“Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up,
grew and produced a crop, some multiplying
thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times.”*

MARK 4:8

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- The value of prioritizing multiplication over addition.
- The rabbit vs. elephant analogy.
- Implementation and training for multiplication.

WE CONSIDER IT VITAL TO AIM FOR MULTIPLICATION RATHER than addition. In the past, we did many things that resulted in addition—adding people to create a big church.

Although adding new people is good, addition tends to extract people from their social context. We've learned that multiplication happens when new believers stay close to their social group and context, allowing multiplication to occur, and often quickly. In chapter after chapter of Acts, I saw that God gave the Early Church rapid multiplication. We have seen a similar dynamic as we have shifted our focus from addition to rapid multiplication.¹

God is a God of multiplication. From Genesis to Revelation, we see his plan for multiplication. Beginning in Genesis 1:28, God's design included the multiplication of generations. When he created man and woman in his image, he commanded them to multiply so their descendants would fill the earth. When God spoke to Abraham, he described multiplication: *"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you . . . and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you"* (Gen. 12:2–3). Later, God told him, *"Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them . . . So shall your offspring be"* (Gen. 15:5). That's multiplication—more than anyone can count!

We also see multiplication in the book of Acts. The Church began with a foundation of 11 disciples. In the Upper Room (Acts 1), about 120 were gathered in prayer. Then, in Acts 2, around 3,000 more came to faith. By Acts 4:4, the Church had grown so much that the men alone

1. Ibid, 243.

numbered about 5,000. In Acts 19:10, we learn that during Paul's two years based in Ephesus, all the Jews and Greeks in Asia Minor heard the word of the Lord. We can be confident this didn't happen because Paul himself visited every house in the entire province. Instead, Paul multiplied himself and his ministry.

God also intends leadership to grow through multiplication. Paul wrote to Timothy: *"What you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach each other also"* (2 Tim. 2:2). God clearly desires multiplication. It's the most effective way to accomplish the enormous task of making disciples of all nations.

If a ministry works by addition, it grows very slowly. What brings a movement is multiplication—disciples making other disciples who, in turn, make more disciples, and churches planting other churches without waiting until they become "mature." They obey what they know of God's word, and that provides enough maturity to begin another church. In our work, the youngest churches have the highest potential to multiply, and the newest disciples have the highest potential to multiply themselves. For this reason, we intentionally implement a strategy of multiplication from day one.

We use the analogy of elephants and rabbits to illustrate multiplication. The elephant is a large animal—so big that people want to see one. Tourists visit Africa to see elephants in their natural habitat. But if you said, "Come, see a rabbit," no one would come; rabbits are small and common. However, the rate of reproduction is very different between elephants and rabbits. Rabbits can reproduce at just four months of age, with a gestation period of one month and an average of seven kits per litter. In contrast, an elephant takes 18 years to reach maturity, has a 22-month gestation period, and gives birth to only one calf at a time. In three years, a pair of mature elephants might grow from two to three. In the same period, a pair of mature rabbits can grow from two to 476,000,000. In our church-planting approach, we don't use an elephant strategy. We use a rabbit strategy—multiplying as rapidly as possible.

In our disciple-making paradigm, every disciple is a disciple maker,

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and every disciple maker is a church planter. In every Discovery Bible Study, the final question is, “Who needs to hear this?” Disciples typically share with their families, friends, or circle of influence. Everyone can do this; no one needs a special calling to multiply disciples. Often, it’s relationally based—starting with families or even a tribe. Everyone in the circle of influence multiplies themselves, and then they spread to different circles of influence. They might have relatives in another village, so the multiplication jumps from one community to another. Everyone is equipped with the DNA of multiplication. We always aim for multiplication in three areas: disciples, churches, and leaders. All exhibit the same DNA of multiplication.

Our basic training for any disciple from outside the movement who wants to get involved in movements lasts about five days. After the initial training, we have a three-month gap to observe how the trainees apply what they’ve learned. Then, we follow up with those who seriously implement the training. We never conduct training without follow-up.

During the initial five days, we spend time in prayer and discuss the Great Commission. It’s critical that they understand Christ’s command in Matthew 28 to do four things: go, make disciples, baptize them, and teach them to obey his commandments. We present this quite simply, as every disciple maker must grasp it. Going doesn’t just mean physical movement; it also involves adopting a mentality of going.

Sometimes, a people group has been neglected by believers nearby. There might be a church in the midst of an Unreached People Group, but it consists only of outsiders—people from a different tribe or people group. The church focuses on their own people and needs, with no thought of reaching the majority around them. They think, “Those people aren’t like us. They eat different food, have a different butcher, different habits, and so on. They’re difficult.” But Christ says, “Go to them.” Going is the New Testament pattern.

Another essential aspect of our training clarifies that Jesus didn’t command us to make converts; he said to make *disciples*. Discipleship involves taking a person or group through a process of training to follow

Jesus in their life. We also emphasize that baptism is not optional; it is an essential part of discipleship. And knowledge alone doesn't accomplish discipleship—discipleship requires an obedient relationship. Knowledge bears fruit when it leads to obedience in a relationship with Christ.

We look for the person of peace, start a Discovery Bible Study, and multiply. We have different leadership streams for our leaders. For higher-level leaders, we hold regular gatherings. In these gatherings, we update one another, pray for one another, share what God is doing, and discuss what we believe God is about to do. In this way, we learn from each other. We aim to discover what God is doing among us and follow that discovery.

We always ask, “How is God at work in your area? Where do you see his fingerprints? And how can we share that? How can we adopt it and multiply it in other places?” These regular equipping times are critical for us. Those who meet at this higher leadership level take the same process back to their local leaders. In this way, equipping for multiplication happens in different sectors on a regular basis.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. Where do you see a difference between the mindset of *addition* in ministry versus *multiplication*?
2. What is your response to these questions: “How is God at work in your area? Where do you see his fingerprints? And how can you share that? How can you adopt it and multiply it in different places?”



CHAPTER 21

GENERATIONAL FOCUS

*“He remembers his covenant forever, the promise
he made, for a thousand generations.”*

PSALM 105:8

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Generational multiplication creating self-replicating communities of faith.
- The role of strategy coordinators.
- Indigenous leadership and empowerment.

WHEN JESUS TOLD PARABLES TO DESCRIBE THE GREAT JOY OF finding life in God's kingdom (Luke 15:3–32), he revealed that *“there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents”* (Luke 15:10). When heaven rejoices, we also rejoice. All God's children love to hear the testimony of someone who was once far from God but has now entered his family.

Even more, we rejoice when not just an individual, but an *entire family*, comes to saving faith. Better still, we love to hear when multiple families come to faith, and churches are planted among the unreached—churches that can continue to worship, serve, and glorify God. But even then, we're not satisfied with the fruit of just one generation of new believers. We don't want them to be like seedless grapes: the fruit is real but lasts for only one generation. We believe God desires the multiplication of generations—disciples reproducing disciples, churches reproducing churches, and leaders reproducing leaders.

For that reason, we measure the movement in terms of generations—generations of disciples, churches, and leaders from the harvest. We consider something a movement if, in less than four years, it has grown to at least four generations of churches, with 100 churches in a social segment or people group. As of a few months ago, we have 25 such movements in this part of Africa, with a total of 452,319 disciples in 20,651 churches.

In our disciple-making, we expect that every disciple is a disciple maker, and every disciple maker is a church planter. Everything becomes generational. In Africa, a man gains honor when he becomes a father. He gains even more honor when he becomes a grandfather. He becomes a highly respected decision-maker when he becomes a great-grandfather. Likewise, in movements, we consider generational multiplication very important.

We have generations of strategy coordinators who lead by example. The title “strategy coordinator” reflects not their position but their function as role models. Strategy coordinators work near the Unreached

People Groups that their ministry focuses on. These leaders have developed multiple group leaders—grassroots strategy coordinators and disciple makers. The leaders they develop come not only from their own denomination but also from various churches. A strategy coordinator has to be able to coach, mentor, and train leaders from a variety of churches. They provide necessary course corrections, verify reports of fruit, and assess the quality of outcomes. Living close enough to the field, they can visit to confirm what's happening on the ground. They also submit a quarterly report to a central database for the ministry.

We expect each strategy coordinator to fully engage with two generations in training, mentoring, coaching, and implementing. They must also be aware of the third and fourth generations, though they don't directly train, mentor, or coach those generations. If they were to reach too far down the generational line, it would take away responsibility from the next generations for leadership and development. Our pattern for influence and mentoring is based on 2 Timothy 2:2. We try to ensure that each disciple maker takes responsibility for the two following generations while maintaining awareness of the third and fourth generations. This four-generation connection—two generations with full engagement and two with awareness—works very well for us and ensures the quality of the movement. It combines adequate oversight with the ongoing development of new leaders for the multiplication of disciples and groups.

Many of the heroes in these movements are those who have been given leadership opportunities and have stepped up effectively. Each generation of indigenous leaders baptizes their new disciples. One of the movement leaders who partners with us says:

I oversee many different streams,¹ and they give me updates by phone or by sending photos. The indigenous leaders are doing the

1. A stream is a generational line of disciples making new disciples and churches planting new churches.

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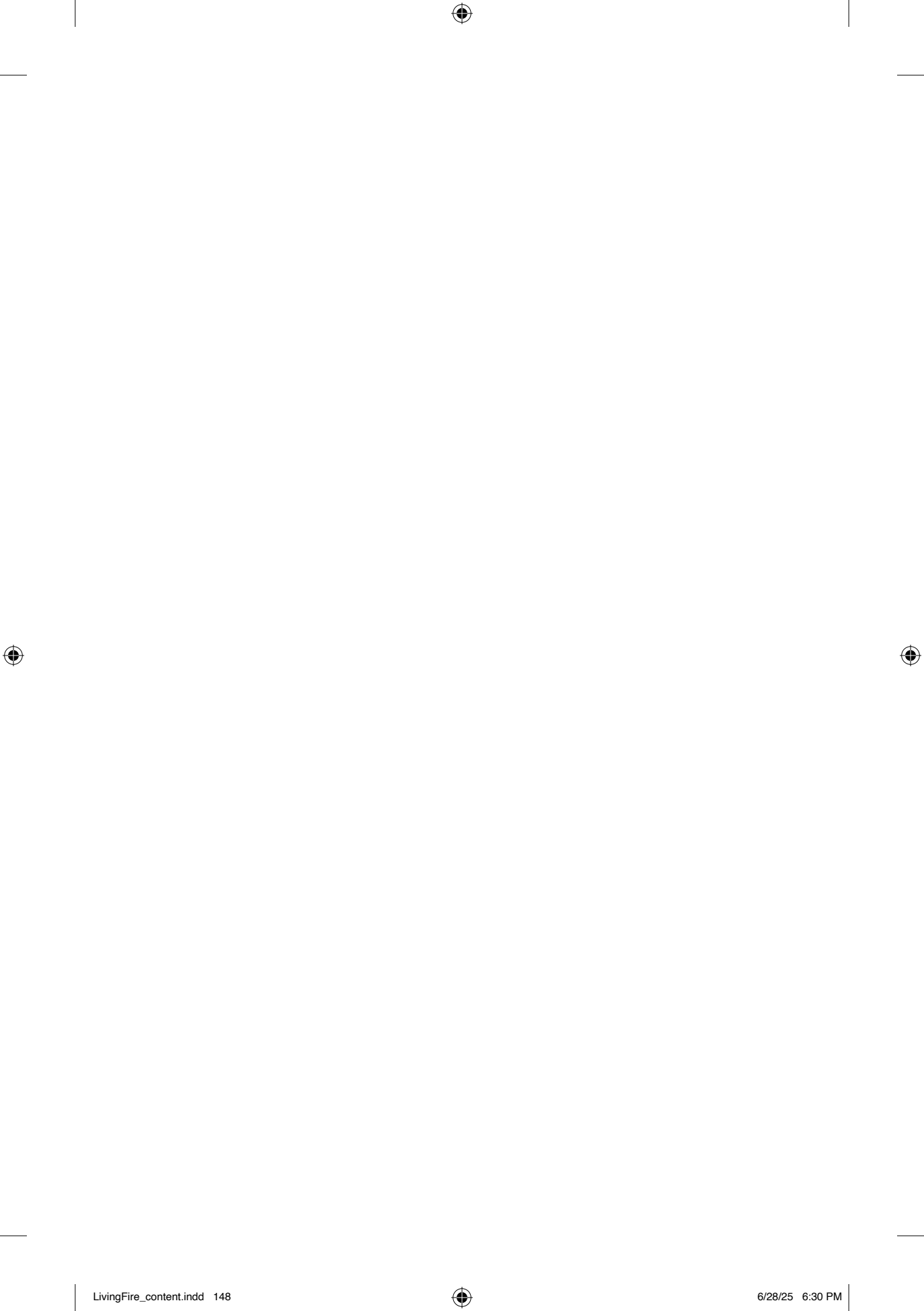
work themselves; they don't depend on me telling them what to do. For example, seventh- or eighth-generation leaders might be trained by the first-, second-, or third-generation leaders. But it's all done by indigenous leaders, not by outsiders. Without this strategy, it would be impossible to reach all these people.

The greatest number of generations we've seen in any of these movements is 25. People in the generations further downstream don't know who I am. If I met somebody from the twelfth generation, they wouldn't have any idea who I am. Even people in the fourth generation don't know me. If they knew me after the fifth generation, I would see that as a big problem. I invest in the first- and second-generation leaders and become aware of the third and fourth generations through what I hear from the first and second generations. Occasionally, I might visit a group further downstream—not as a teacher or facilitator, but simply to observe and encourage them.

I recently returned from a 10 day journey to one of these areas. I traveled with one of my area managers to an eastern region, where the ministry is currently in the third and fourth generations. God is bringing a great harvest among that people group. While I was there, I didn't teach—I just watched and cheered them on. We also brought a special intercessor with us. Our purpose was to encourage and bless them. At night, I spent time with the leaders, listening to how they were doing and the challenges they were facing. By following empowering patterns like these, we strengthen generational growth and continually raise up new generations of leaders to shepherd and preserve the good fruit the Lord is bringing.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. What has been your experience with generational spiritual fruit?
2. How could the idea of spiritual generations make a difference in your ministry?



CHAPTER 22

SHARING FRUITFUL PRACTICES

*“I chose you and appointed you so that you might
go and bear fruit—fruit that will last.”*

JOHN 15:16b

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Peer-to-peer learning and collaboration.
- Simplicity and practicality in leadership development.
- Structured, yet flexible, training gatherings.

MUCH OF OUR TRAINING INVOLVES PEER-TO-PEER INTERACTION. When we first introduced this type of learning, it was new to our leaders. It hadn't previously been part of their culture. They were accustomed to a hierarchical approach to life and had a strong expectation for hierarchical training. The idea of meeting to share and learn together was radical. It took considerable time and effort to get them to engage deeply with one another. Initially, they believed they had come to listen to an expert speak. But, over time, they came to appreciate and see the benefits of peer-to-peer learning, and it has since become a key component of our growth process toward reproducible training.

We develop our leaders through quarterly meetings called Strategy Coordinator Leaders' Training (SCLT), where leaders share fruitful practices with one another. SCLT is a practitioner-focused, field-outcome-based learning lab—an easily reproducible equipping system. It helps different levels of Disciple Making Movement leaders grow together by celebrating field outcomes, addressing field challenges, and finding field-based solutions. This approach flows through the various streams in the field, impacting all generations.

On a trip to Sweden, I visited an IKEA factory and was struck by the simplicity of their assembly manuals. Most of the content was picture-based rather than text-based, making it possible for anyone to assemble the furniture without needing to read. I thought, "What if we aimed for that level of simplicity in our leadership development?" We believe disciple making must be simple, obedience-based, and reproducible.

We see a vital link between disciple making and leadership development. Rather than viewing leadership development as a process that begins only when a disciple reaches a certain level, we open both channels at the same time. Anyone who makes disciples simultaneously develops

leaders. We focus on reproducing three entities: disciples, churches, and leaders.

The SCLT is a valuable time for growth and accountability, both *from* and *for* fruitful DMM leaders and field practitioners. An average of 20–25 strategy coordinators, each responsible for a specific region, gather quarterly for five days of prayer, sharing, and training. On the first day, we fast and pray. On the second and third days, we have a roundtable where we all share what the Lord has been doing in the past three months. The main focus is not numerical reporting but rather analysis of the health of the ministries.

We ensure that we sit in a circle, not in rows. Everyone shares, and everyone is accountable to the group. The sharing is oriented toward the team, not the organization. There's no big boss to report to. Participants don't share as if I'm their audience; the sharing is for the benefit of the entire group. People can ask any questions they have, and we discuss any important topics as they arise. This is a shared priesthood circle, where trust is key, and confidentiality is a high priority. We all have permission to ask questions, challenge, correct, and offer suggestions. Our comments are focused on the content, not the person. Everything is done with love and humility, and we embrace mistakes as opportunities to learn.

Our leaders focus on ministry among diverse groups—nominal Christians, tribal religionists, and those of other faiths. They come from a wide range of Bible-believing traditions, including Pentecostals, Charismatics, Evangelicals, and other branches of Christendom. They also represent diverse geographic regions: east, south, north, west, and central. The diversity of backgrounds and regions provides ample opportunities for learning and growth as leaders. It also serves as an important reminder to include and empower every leader present. We all must be willing to accept questions and challenges from anyone, not as attacks, but as opportunities for sharpening strategy: “How does that relate to the Disciple Making Movement?”

Trust is a vital element among us. We say we're here to build one big puzzle. Though we may come from the north or the east and work

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in different contexts, we are all part of the same body. When you suffer, I suffer. Your success is my success. Whatever you are learning benefits me. The glue that holds us together is our common commitment to the cause. Our meetings are based on oral learning, ensuring that all leaders can participate, regardless of their level of education.

We structure our time to focus on the main thing. A timekeeper helps keep the group on track with the agenda and facilitates the meeting's flow. Unless the Holy Spirit clearly leads in a unique way, we don't allow one person to dominate the gathering. SCLT is a platform for sharing and learning, not for teaching or preaching. Our motto is, "No ego, no logo." The groups often include partners from various ministry networks, but our priority in SCLT is the King and his kingdom. No one introduces their organization or talks about how great they are. A person's profession doesn't matter—everyone is a brother or sister, so we avoid using official titles. We are all on this journey together. We take these guidelines very seriously, and anyone not abiding by them is removed from the group.

The leadership gathering is for doers, not for hearers or spectators. No outsiders attend unless specifically invited. We don't rely on experts; we value the practitioner-based model because solutions tend to take root best when they come from the field, not from an expert or teacher. This has brought a new level of strength to our group of leaders, and best of all, it is reproducible.

Our sharing includes updates on family and life, connecting on a personal level. This is very important in our African setting. We also share the current status of ministry in each area, including the social-political situation, so everyone in the group can understand the ministry contexts. We ask, "What have you seen God doing in your area in the last three months? What's new, and what has been the outcome?" (We share *current* testimonies, not old stories.)

We also have accountability: "How did your accomplishments compare with your plan for the past three months? How is your intercessor team doing? How are the flocks under your leadership being coached for transference? What challenges have you faced? Were you able to solve

them? If so, how? What new opportunities are you seeing? What are you learning?”

After each person shares, anyone in the group can comment, ask questions, or challenge what has been said. They don't report to me; they report to the team. If someone is facing a significant challenge, we may turn it into a case study for group discussion to find a solution.

The group also explores areas where we might be able to help the leader or team, based on the challenge(s) shared. We then pray for the leader, covering everything we have heard. We recognize the importance of praying for challenges and celebrating victories together.

We also check on each person's activities: “Tell us how what you're doing contributes to accelerating the Disciple Making Movement in your area or among a specific people group.” Sometimes, people have good intentions but employ poor strategies—projects that are actually counterproductive.

As leaders share, we have two scribes write key learning points on a whiteboard or large sheets of paper. One records the things to ADOPT (new principles learned that we need to pay attention to), and the other records things to AVOID (practices to stop because they don't bring accelerated kingdom outcomes).

We repeat this process for each leader. We consider relationship and prayer very important, along with sharing, learning, planning, replicating, and relearning. We prioritize God's kingdom, not anyone's denomination or individual growth, nor desire for everyone to see “how big I am.” We don't focus on activities but on outcomes. We don't ask how many trainings a person has conducted or how many people attended. Instead, we want to know the *results*. We don't just want to hear about deliverance from a demon; we want to know what happened afterward. The main focus isn't the healing—it's the fruit God brought as a result.

Sometimes, SCLT functions as just-in-time training. Most of the time, an area leader prepares what to discuss: what is needed or what ministry area could be improved. Based on this, they assign certain attendees to prepare something in advance to share with the group. For a discussion of a unique skill set or an exceptional topic, we may invite

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outside speakers. After the discussion, each leader creates a plan with a timeline for the next three months. They then review the plan with a coach and agree on it together. We continue learning together.

THE FRUIT OF THE SCLT

We have seen the Lord bring great fruit as a result of SCLT. Here are some highlights:

- **It ensures the health and quality of a movement.** Movements can be messy, so systems are necessary to provide both health and growth.
- **It accelerates outcomes.** Together, we can go further, and faster.
- **It cultivates relationships.** Disciple making is not an individualistic goal; we do this together. When we cultivate relationships, we see much better outcomes. As an African proverb says, “To go fast, go alone; to go far, go together.” We can achieve much more when we work together.
- **It increases accountability.**
- **It keeps holy ambition alive.** When leaders get discouraged, feel negative, or want to quit, the SCLT provides great encouragement.
- **It enables leaders to edify one another.** This group focuses on building each other up in the Lord.
- **It enables leaders to equip one another.**
- **It brings alignment.** Various ministry approaches—like compassion ministry, children’s ministry, prison ministry, or Saul-to-Paul conversions—can be woven into effective disciple-making strategies. The SCLT helps align these approaches for maximum impact, much like aligning the tires on a vehicle.

Each of the strategy coordinators involved in the SCLT implements a similar process with those who report to them, down through the

generations. The planning time empowers them to do this well. While we meet quarterly with the strategy coordinators, they might meet with their leaders every month or every other week, depending on their context. We don't want to disconnect generations. It's very important to have a plurality of leaders—the New Testament consistently advocates plural leadership, never just one pastor serving alone. Having a singular leader tends to make the movement stagnate. In the end, we remind ourselves that this is all about God's kingdom—how can we manifest and accelerate its advance?

In some places, speakers discuss leadership but end up causing confusion because they're motivational speakers, not DMM practitioners. We find the biblical approach to leadership simpler than the formal leadership models some people promote. DMM is not rocket science. Disciple-making equals leadership development. Consider Jesus' example: when he chose his disciples, he intended to make them leaders. He cultivated their leadership and gave them responsibilities. In Luke 10 and Matthew 10, we see Jesus empowering the disciples while he was present. He was alongside them—modeling, assisting, and observing their ministry.

Leadership development at the grassroots level doesn't require extensive knowledge. It involves learning while leading in the field. The cycle is simple: learn, lead, learn, lead. It's very practical. The DNA set in the beginning becomes the DNA of the end product. We start with obedience-based, reproductive disciple-making, which yields the multiplication of churches, disciples, and leaders. This is how our leadership team multiplies. We have consistent, obedience-based, reproducible leadership development to sustain the movement.

KINGDOM MOVEMENT PRACTITIONERS GATHERING

Each year, we hold a Kingdom Movement Practitioners Gathering (KMPG), where we bring together fruitful leaders on a larger scale. The leaders who attend (from any generation) must have borne fruit to at

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least three generations beyond themselves. We also invite some fruitful partners to join the gathering. It's not a seminar—it's about sharing and celebrating the good things God is doing, as well as addressing the challenges. The gathering also includes special sessions for those focusing on ministry to different groups. Some of these meetings are closed due to security concerns; even other training participants aren't allowed to attend. But many of the victories are ones we can celebrate together.

At the KMPG, we have leaders from all three religious backgrounds among whom we minister. All apply the same basic DNA, though there are differences in their ministry approach and how the movement spreads within their respective groups. Their context may differ, but the core ministry framework remains the same.

MOBILE EQUIPPING CENTERS

God has raised up new churches and believers in some of the most resistant places on earth, and training plays a key role in this process. National leaders are being equipped to plant replicating churches and to train others to do the same. The epicenter for this training is what we call Mobile Equipping Centers (MEC). These Centers serve as the core for discipleship training, leadership development, and the equipping of church planters in each area. Each Center provides on-the-job, locally based training, which is a critical element of our strategy to launch Church Planting Movements. Mobile Equipping Centers have no fixed locations—they are designed to move and meet the needs of rapidly expanding movements in a given area. Instead of bringing leaders to a central location, we bring the training to them.

Each Equipping Center trains at least 50 new church planters annually, in groups of 10–15, and provides ongoing, on-the-job training for those already in the field. These Centers serve as the hub for church planting in each region, and periodically bring church planters and

leaders back for further training to ensure biblical accuracy and consistency of movement DNA.

Since each MEC consists of local indigenous believers, interaction is more effective. The MEC provides culturally relevant materials—biblical content with cultural sensitivity. It also creates a space for participants to obey what they are learning as a group and to hold each other accountable. Additionally, the MEC offers flexibility—it can meet at night or in the morning and as frequently as needed by the participants. One of the critical factors accelerating movements is training indigenous disciples to make other disciples, and the MEC takes this multiplication to a new level.

OTHER GATHERINGS FOR EQUIPPING

In addition to the SCLT, KMPG, and MEC, we also host:

- Regional, medium-sized gatherings for strategy coordinators. These take place quarterly and consist of 20–25 people.
- Small gatherings for strategy coordinators where coaching takes place. These gatherings might consist entirely of workers focused on a single people group, so the participants are familiar with each other. They typically meet monthly and include 10–15 people serving in relatively close proximity to one another.
- Grassroots leaders' gatherings. These coaching gatherings are for those serving at the grassroots level, working within a few nearby communities.

These gatherings help accelerate and sustain the movement. At each level, we strive to provide reproducible, just-in-time training, along with fellowship and mutual encouragement. These connections offer ample opportunities to share fruitful practices and accelerate the movement. In everything we do, we aim to develop DNA within the movements that

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continually empowers, equips, and releases people to be used by God. Developing leaders plays an essential role in this process.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. In what context do you share and learn fruitful practices from others doing similar ministry?
2. When you gather with your peers in ministry, do you believe your time together maximizes fruitfulness? Or can you think of ways to make your gatherings more fruitful?

CHAPTER 23

EVERY BELIEVER ACTIVE

*“You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of
him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”*

1 PETER 2:9

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Every believer has a crucial role in fulfilling the Great Commission.
- The strength of a DMM lies in equipping all believers to actively participate in ministry.
- The impact comes from believers living out their faith boldly and serving others selflessly.

NO ONE NEEDS A SPECIAL CALLING TO OBEY THE GREAT Commission. Every believer has a role.

We believe the Matthew 28 calling to make disciples is different than the Acts 13 calling to apostolic work. Every believer has a part to play in making disciples—from the new believer to the person who has followed Christ for many years. In fact, those who have been believers for two years or less are often the most effective disciple makers and church planters. They have the passion, commitment, and boldness to share the sweetness of Jesus with their families.¹

An example of this is Ruth, the widow described in Chapter 11, who went from “crazy” to “crazy-about-Jesus.” Soon after God healed her, she began sharing her testimony effectively and bringing people to the Lord. This illiterate new believer became such a powerful disciple maker that enemies of the gospel worked creatively to stop her by having her imprisoned.

In the past, foreign missionaries played a role in reaching some indigenous people in our country, but it was often their gardeners, guards, and housekeepers who became the bold evangelists. The real heroes of these stories were frequently left out of the written biographies. If we are serious about fulfilling the Great Commission in our generation, we must prioritize equipping ordinary people for the work of the ministry.

The strength of a movement lies in equipping all disciples to do the work of the ministry, as described in Ephesians 4:11–13. These

1. Ibid, 248.

movements have no spectators; we expect all disciples to be involved in making disciples at all times. We help people understand that they were not only saved *from* something but also saved *for* something—living for God’s glory and making disciples. New believers become immediate witnesses (as seen in John 4:28–41 and Mark 5:18–20) and even participate in church-planting activities.

We witness the power of prayer, the power of obedience, the power of listening to God, the power of courage to go wherever he leads, and the power of relationship—going to serve with no title. The disciples aren’t concerned with titles or status; they go as a farmer or whatever role they serve in. Being nameless and without a title isn’t a problem for them—they’re heroes. One of our leaders walks more than nine miles every day. His house is tiny—just a few meters square—but religious leaders come to him, and he leads them to faith.

One disciple recently testified:

As X* was discipling me, I was discipling my wife. The local religious leaders said, “We know the reason you have become a believer is that you’re getting support from America. People in America are sending you food, money, and clothes.”

I said, “No, I don’t follow Jesus for worldly things, but for eternal life. You follow a dead man. I follow a living Lord. He lives in heaven and is coming back to take me home.”

When Hannah* received Jesus as her personal Savior, she experienced severe persecution for her faith. While pregnant, she was beaten and bled so badly that her persecutors thought they had killed her. But she survived, and so did the baby, who was born healthy. She traveled a great distance to study and be discipled because no disciple maker lived in her area. Her motto is, “If they beat me, they hit my flesh, not my soul. If they kill me, they only kill my flesh, not my soul.” Though she appears physically weak, she is full of energy and passion. She leads many house churches.

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Her husband, who was also beaten, testifies:

When I came to Christ, my father took away all my farmland, my house, and my possessions. He persecuted me for four years. At one point, he chased me with a machete, and I ran away because he truly wanted to kill me.

But after four years, he said, “Please come back. I’ve realized you are a good person. Come back to me and return to our faith. I love you. If you come back, I’ll return all your possessions.”

I responded, “I love you, but I’m not going to return to your religion. If you love me, I will come to you, but I will not come back to your faith.”

After some time, he said, “I want to believe in the God you believe in and follow the Lord you worship.”

Now, I’m going back to my village to help him come to Jesus. My wife and I are just a small example of what the Lord is doing in our neighborhood. Many people have come to Jesus, and I now have many disciples. A house church meets at our home in the middle of the night, and many other house churches in our area meet at night due to the persecution around us. The majority don’t know that there are now many believers, all underground. I have a scar—not from doing something evil, but as a mark of Jesus. And now I’m working to bring my father into the kingdom of God. We don’t have freedom in our community, but we are growing in number underground.

Thomas*, one of our movement leaders, adds:

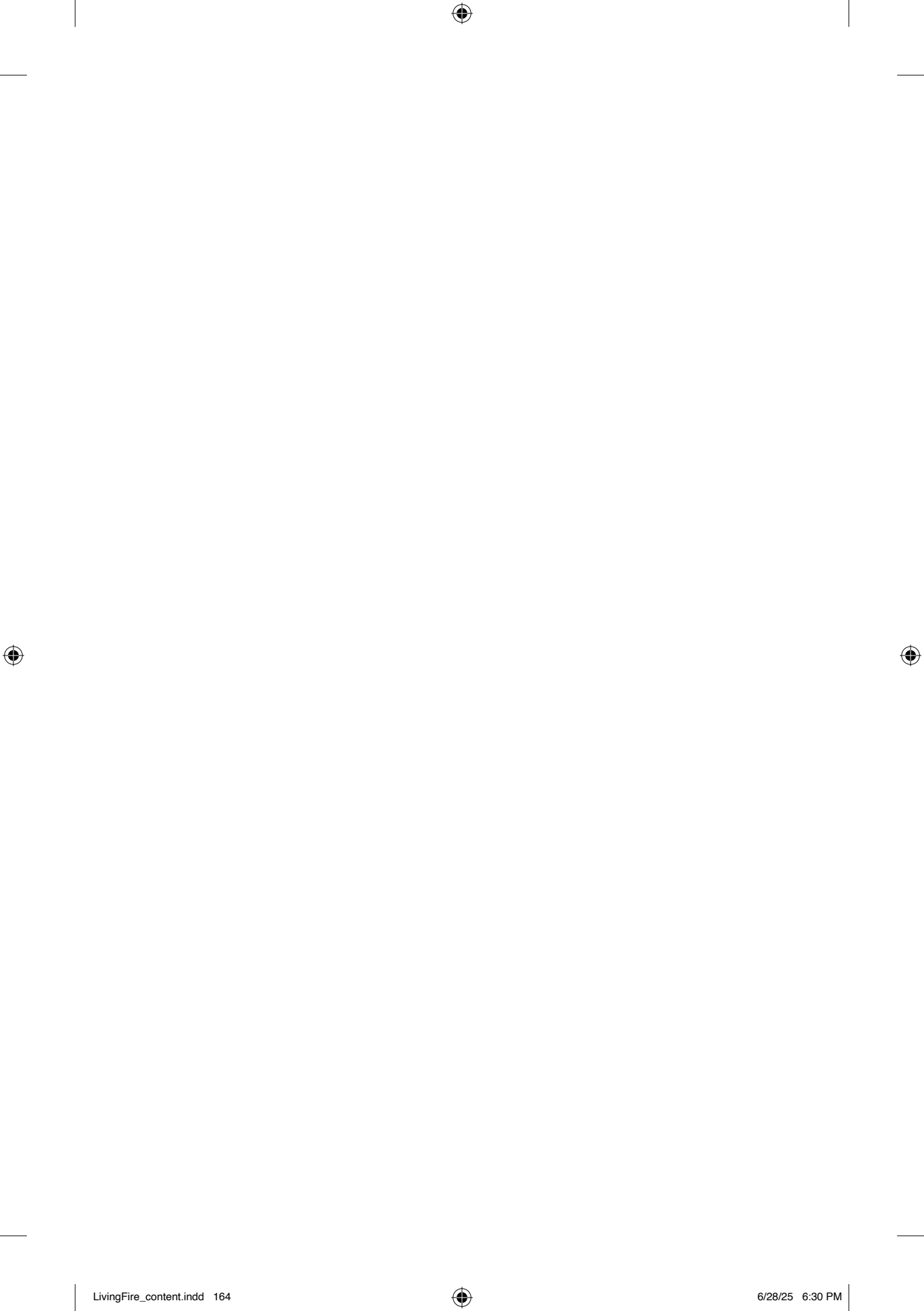
We see the gospel spreading mainly through regular people. In the big-church model, you might see many people come forward during an altar call. But after that, you never see them again. I was a pastor in a large church in a city. Many times, we held big three-day conferences. At the end of one, 78 people accepted Christ. We invited them to come back the next day for follow-up, and they all said they would. All

our leaders, evangelists, and deacons were ready to meet with the new believers. We waited and waited, but no one came. Finally, one woman showed up, and we learned that her husband was already a believer. Now, we use a different approach. Most of our fruit comes from *regular people* who reach those they already know.

A few believers may become well-educated or receive theological training. But *all* disciples can make other disciples. Jesus intended this and commanded it. We see it happening by the power of his Spirit. New disciples are being born (reborn) every day, and they become the plentiful laborers Jesus told us to pray for, to bring in the harvest of lost people. Any ministry that depends on professionals will move slowly. But a ministry dependent on ordinary, active disciples can multiply daily in every direction.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. To whom do you think the command of Matthew 28:18–20 best applies in our time?
2. Can you think of some fresh ways to encourage and empower “ordinary” disciples to make more disciples?



CHAPTER 24

CHURCH REDEFINED

*“Now you are the body of Christ, and
each one of you is a part of it.”*

1 CORINTHIANS 12:27

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- The redefinition of church as a local, organic community of baptized believers.
- Church models that can be easily duplicated in different contexts.
- Strategic partnerships between DMM and existing traditional churches.

MANY CHRISTIANS AROUND THE WORLD THINK OF CHURCH first as a building (“Where do you go to church?”) and second as an organization led by a man with a special title (“Pastor X” or “Reverend Y”). But we don’t see the church as a building. We had to ask ourselves: “If there’s no special building where the group meets, is it still a church? If there are no pews, pulpit, or choir, is it still a church?” We redefined church to align more closely with the model of *ekklēsia* that we see in the New Testament.

The church is not a building. The church is a local group of baptized believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who gather regularly for worship, nurturing, and fellowship. Then, they depart the gathering, seeking to obey all the commands of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It’s a very reproducible and organic community of faith. We always ask, “Is this reproducible? Will they be able to do this without us?” As much as possible, we try to minimize the number of believers in each group: on average, 25 people, or two families. We don’t mean just two or three people. That’s the seed that grows to become a church. These churches meet in various places. Some meet at different times, like Friday evenings, or Saturday mornings. Some even meet every day. It depends on the situation and their availability. But it’s always more than just a Bible study.¹

We look for the DNA—the essential elements of a biblical church. These groups identify as a church, and it’s their primary fellowship gathering.

1. Ibid, 248.

The name believers use to describe themselves depends on the context. Those from one background say, “We are followers of Jesus the Messiah. We believe we’ve been transformed, and we believe that the Bible is the word of God. But we don’t need to build a visible church building.” We help them establish house churches in their homes. Sometimes, some of them also attend visible churches, and we don’t discourage them from doing so. However, those who effectively reach their friends and family are the ones who fellowship underground and stay connected with their local community. We advise them to continue with whatever previous activities they can.

They use the same vocabulary as the rest of their community—the same word for God and for prayer. In house churches, disciples use their own songs and local worship styles according to their context. A typical gathering of a DMM church includes musical worship (using indigenous songs), intercession, interactive group discussions to study God’s word, questions for obedience and application, updates on how the Lord is working, and discussions about meeting the community’s needs together. The format differs from that of many traditional churches, but we worship the same Lord, by the same Spirit, based on the same Scripture. Our orientation is not only upward (toward God) and inward (toward one another), but also distinctly outward (toward actively reaching those who don’t yet know the Lord).

After people come to faith in Christ, the community often notices a change in their character and lifestyle. This change is how they realize that someone has become a follower of Jesus. While traditional churches may not fully *accept* them because of their different culture and worship patterns, they usually don’t persecute them either. We see in Acts 15 that the Early Church had to address the idea of people coming to faith from different and unexpected backgrounds. The Holy Spirit guided them to acknowledge that believing in Jesus and obeying the word of God, with cultural sensitivity, was sufficient. This way, all can grow within their cultural contexts as part of the larger body of Christ.

In some places, house churches meet as late as 11:00 P.M. Some

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members are herders (of cattle, sheep, or goats), so the evening works best for them, after they've brought their flocks back from the fields.

THE PROBLEM WITH A BUILDING

Five years ago, we began working among a people group of 60,000–70,000 who had no believers among them. Today, we have more than 300 disciples within this group. Though they continue to face significant persecution, God is working, and we're seeing leaders and church planters being raised up.

This is how the intense persecution started: one day, the disciples said, "We want to gather and worship together—all of us who meet regularly in our house fellowships." We encouraged them to keep meeting in homes, but they wanted to hold a larger gathering and managed to collect some money to build a church building. When construction began, the community asked, "What are you building?"

They responded, "A church."

The community was shocked: "What?! You can't build a church here. There aren't any Christians in this community or even in this entire area."

The disciples replied, "Yes, there are some."

The community leader was skeptical: "No, we know our community. There are no Christians here."

After further discussion, the community leader finally said, "Okay, when you have a believer in our community, you can build a church building. Call them to come see me."

So, they called the believers to meet with the community leader. When they arrived, the leader said, "Oh, I know these people. But I didn't know they were Christians." The leader took down their names, and the very next day, significant persecution began. The work on the building stopped, and the disciples were attacked in their homes. They learned from this experience and now continue to meet in homes for worship without attempting to build another church building.

RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING CHURCHES

While we have sought to biblically define the church in each context, we do not oppose traditional, existing churches. As I've previously written:

Existing local churches play a vital role in this Disciple Making Movement. From the beginning of our ministry, we underlined this principle: whatever ministry we do, we make sure the church will be actively involved in Kingdom ministry. Sometimes people think, "If a church isn't traditional, it won't be accepted by existing churches." But I believe the vital key is *relationships*. We approach church leaders at whatever level they are and share the bigger vision: the Great Commission. That's more than just a local church, more than their neighborhood, more than their immediate context. If we share with love, relationship, and a sincere motive of Kingdom expression, we have found that churches will listen.

In this process, we don't try to change the ministry patterns of existing churches, which would make them feel threatened. The existing church can go on as it is. Our mission priority is to reach the unreached. The paradigm shift we aim for relates to the unreached. We challenge, train, and equip the church to reach the unreached. We communicate clearly that the church's normal patterns will not effectively engage Unreached People Groups. We want them to have a movement mentality and attitude towards unreached groups.

Sometimes, that new mentality ends up coming back and transforming the whole church. Some of the church leaders also become practitioners and movement leaders. The movement paradigm sometimes impacts the local churches directly, but that's a by-product, not our goal.

Partnering with existing churches is a critical element that has helped us accelerate the Disciple Making Movement. We all came from those churches and our goal is to impact other churches and start new churches. We praise God that He is present and working—in

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and through existing churches—to bring movements of brand-new churches planting churches among the unreached.²

When conducting introductory DMM training, we include pastors and church leaders as well as indigenous disciples. We aim for a participant mix of approximately 10% church leaders and 90% other indigenous believers. Focusing solely on church leaders can pose challenges, as they are often too busy with their existing ministries to invest in a new approach. Or, if only regular disciples attend, church leaders may not understand the strategy and could resist it, potentially hindering the movement. Church leaders need to understand and support their members' involvement in disciple making, while also ensuring shared definitions of key terms like “church” and “disciple.”

We follow up with each group about three months after the initial training. This allows us to assess who implemented what they learned and the results. At this stage, we provide intentional coaching and mentoring to those actively applying the training, regardless of the amount of visible fruit at the time.

We make sure the strategy coordinators take responsibility for those reporting to them. Numerous denominational leaders have expressed, “We are in this *together*.” I regularly receive hundreds of letters from church leaders who are excited to see fruit among groups they had never been able to impact before.

STRATEGIC KINGDOM PARTNERSHIPS

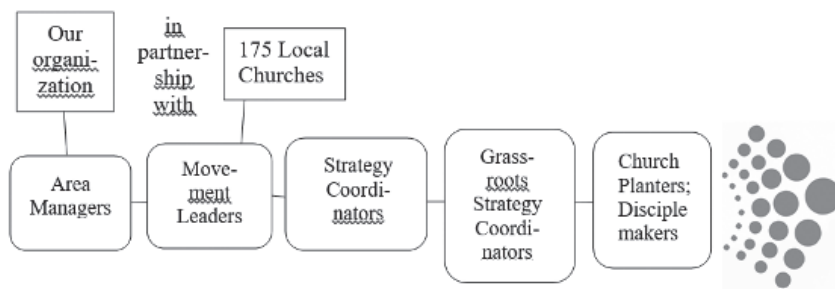
When establishing a strategic kingdom partnership with a church, we ensure the DMM approach is not overshadowed by traditional church practices. Simultaneously, church planters maintain accountability within the existing church structure, which supports the health of new

2. “The Role of Existing Churches in an African Movement,” in *24:14 – A Testimony to All Peoples*, Dave Coles and Stan Parks. (Spring, TX: 24:14, 2019) 263, 265-266.

churches. As a catalytic organization, we facilitate mentoring and coaching from nearby churches while respecting the indigenous culture of the new churches. This approach provides us with the freedom to minister contextually while still offering oversight, ensuring both boundaries and permission are in place.

I believe the Great Commission is entrusted to the local church, which must *own* it. At the same time, we should not overlook traditional churches but rather work in harmony with them. This approach has helped us foster strong relationships with existing churches, both large and small.

This diagram outlines the reporting patterns, accountability, coaching, mentoring, and training channels. It serves as a conduit through which our core values are transmitted. Area managers oversee regions or countries, while movement leaders work among multiple people groups. Strategy coordinators focus on a single people group. Grassroots strategy coordinators operate in a few communities within one people group, typically across two or three provinces, within a 15–30 mile radius. Movement leaders are not part of our organizational structure; they belong to one of the 175 local (traditional) churches with whom we partner. They are not appointed to the role of movement leader but grow into it through fruitful ministry.



Each of our strategy coordinators is affiliated with an existing (traditional) church. We don't want them left alone. They need a network of indigenous ministries. If challenging issues arise, such as church

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discipline, the Grassroots Strategy Coordinator handles them. If the issue is too large, their Strategy Coordinator takes over. As much as possible, local indigenous teams take responsibility for ministry challenges. If an issue escalates to the senior level, we address it together. Ministry reports are checked and approved by the local church to ensure accuracy before they are sent to us.

The partnership thrives because we all acknowledge that God's kingdom is bigger than the Church, and the Church is bigger than our organization or denomination. Each strategy coordinator has a commitment to the group or denomination, but they hold an even greater commitment to the kingdom at large. They have been set apart by their church to focus on Disciple Making Movement ministry.

We all share a deep sense of urgency, knowing that people are dying without knowing the Lord, and eternity is a long time. If my son were gravely ill, and I knew of a medicine that could heal him, I wouldn't delay—I'd go and get it immediately. We have the remedy for the sickness of sin and separation from God. We can't afford to wait, thinking, "Maybe they'll hear the gospel next year." Scripture says, "*Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation*" (2 Cor. 6:2b). We need urgency if we want to see the Great Commission fulfilled. We need to act now; we don't know if we'll have tomorrow.

Years ago, the Lord impressed upon me the urgency of fulfilling his calling. A teenage boy, whom I'll call Nathaniel*, had a heart condition, and a mutual friend brought him to our city for treatment. He and his mother stayed at a hotel. While home from college, I met them, shared Jesus with Nathaniel, and led him to the Lord. He was very receptive, and I promised to visit him the next day to pray for him again. However, I became busy and chose to visit him the following day.

The next morning, I went to the hotel and learned that Nathaniel had passed away during the night. His mother told me, "Nathaniel waited for you until midnight. He kept saying, 'Don't close the door. Aychi will be coming. Don't close the door.' We left the door open for you until midnight."

I didn't realize that the day I had promised to visit was my last chance to pray with him. Since then, I have carried a profound sense of urgency. We may never get another opportunity to minister to people.

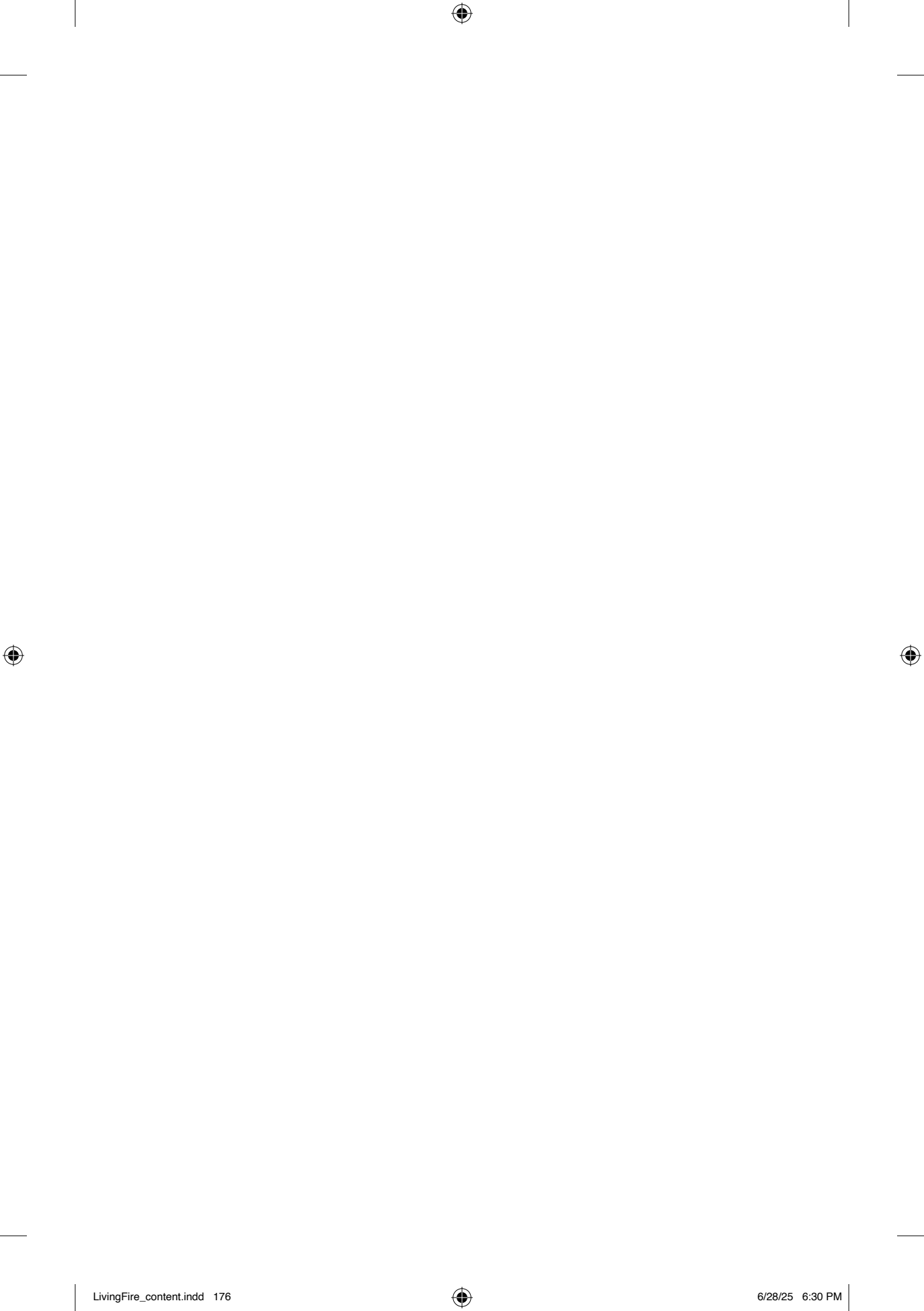
That sense of urgency frames our strategic kingdom partnerships. We hold a high view of the Church, and we collaborate with a wide variety of churches to plant new ones among the unreached. We don't view existing churches negatively; we love them and invite them to partner with us in planting different kinds of churches—indigenous churches—that can more effectively take root and multiply in unreached contexts. We praise God that so many churches in our region have embraced this vision and set apart leaders to play a key role in Disciple Making Movements.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. How would you describe your view of traditional churches versus DMM churches?
2. Do you see potential for fruitful relationships and partnership between the two types of churches in your context?
3. What do you envision as your ideal role in that connection?



PART III: SUSTAIN



CHAPTER 25

PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

“This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

JOHN 15:8

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Sustainability through cultural sensitivity and support.
- How to develop theological maturity and reproducibility.
- How to plan with the end in mind.

WE DON'T WANT TO MERELY *START* MOVEMENTS; WE INTENTIONALLY plan for their sustainability. Jesus said, *"I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last"* (John 15:16). It's very important to bear fruit that lasts. If tomorrow's fruit has lesser quantity or quality than today's, then the fruit has not truly lasted. In everything we do, we ask, "What's needed now to ensure this fruit will continue for generations—tens and hundreds of generations?" We view sustainability as a key indicator of the health of the movement. In this, we face unique factors and challenges.

MARRIAGE AND BURIAL

In African culture, marriage and burial are significant concerns, particularly burial, which is especially important to the elderly. How families navigate these major life transitions affects the long-term viability of a movement. When a community has a significant number of disciples, they can appeal to the local government to get secure land for believers' burial. However, when there are only a few disciples, the local government may refuse burial in the cemetery. Religious leaders often want to discourage people from following Jesus, so they refuse permission for burial. Being buried in a backyard of a house or near a house is considered shameful.

In two different areas, former religious leaders who had come to faith in Christ were denied burial in community burial grounds. They had to be buried in backyards, causing many believers to pray for land where those who die in the Lord could be buried properly. Recently, in one of those places, the believers were granted land for burial, which was

a great encouragement. Cultural issues like this can significantly impact the spread or hindrance of a movement.

In one instance, our strategy coordinator called me for advice. When he officiated the burial of a disciple, he was able to sensitively present the gospel to the entire community gathered for the event. The family witnessed the love of the other believers—how they stood together with the brother who had passed away. We view death and burial not just as challenges, but also as opportunities the Lord can use. It's an open door for us to demonstrate his love. Standing with the believers during times of trouble is critical. They deeply appreciate it, and it helps them feel truly part of the larger family of God.

DMMs involve love for both God and fellow believers. Just as baptism strengthens new believers in their faith, standing with them in times of trouble is vital. The important thing is not how much you give, but how quickly you respond to their needs. That love and care makes a huge difference. I've witnessed it time and again. When trouble arises in one of our movements, we don't delay. I stop what I'm doing and go to be with that person. This brings tremendous encouragement. Showing practical love for persecuted believers during times of trouble is essential. I know disciples who, during a particularly sensitive time, struggled to continue in their faith. But being there for them, crying with them, made all the difference.

Showing up in person is crucial. If one of my leaders is imprisoned, I'm the first to visit and encourage them. Throughout the generations of the movement, the strategy coordinators have adopted the same approach. They practice it on the ground, standing with those being persecuted—often in ways beyond what I could do in every location. When Ruth was imprisoned, and again when she was released, our strategy coordinator for that area was there, advocating for her and providing strength during the threatening situation.

Marriage can also present challenges, particularly because, in African contexts, marriage always connects one family with another. Families, rather than individuals, typically make marriage decisions. Marriage can

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bring either honor or shame to a family. This highlights the importance of reaching families. We generally focus on families where people are already married or have close networks of relationships through which the gospel can spread. The family focus is both biblical and the best strategy for reaching the unreached.

If a movement has significantly taken root in an area, when the children of believers reach marriageable age, they can find other believers available to marry. Some young people in the movement have married and now serve as strategy coordinators. Our focus on family and reaching the *oikos* often makes this easier.

We encourage disciples to find a spouse within their own group as an indigenous testimony of God's kingdom (rather than marrying someone from outside their group). This facilitates one of the dynamics of multiplication and tends to reduce persecution. Families staying within their own people group increases the sustainability of the ministry. If, as sometimes happens, a local believer marries a foreign missionary, they often leave the area. They have that right in Christ; it's not a sin. But it works against the sustainability of gospel advance among that UPG.

DEVELOPING THEOLOGICAL MATURITY

We teach sound doctrine in a highly reproducible way. We have intentional equipping strategies with leaders training other leaders, who, in turn, train grassroots leaders. They use the discovery approach, focusing on the word of God, with very minimal extra-biblical materials. The teaching comes directly from the Bible. Because of consistent patterns of obedience to God's word, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we see very little heresy or false teaching arise. Each worshiping community has a leadership structure that is accountable to other leaders, as illustrated in the diagram in the previous chapter [page 171].

A few years ago, a leader from outside the movement conducted interviews with a wide range of people in the movement, from new believers to

leaders. He interviewed them individually and asked a variety of theological questions on topics like Christology and ecclesiology. They gave solid and powerful answers. He remarked that some believers who had been in traditional churches for several years wouldn't likely have answered as accurately as those disciples within the movement.¹

We always make sure to teach about transition points in spiritual growth to ensure the disciples have a clear foundation. We ensure they understand the person of Christ and the biblical meaning of the gathering of believers. We explain spiritual truths and biblical principles in simple but powerful ways. We believe theology must be biblical, intentional, applied, and practical.

The movement is currently impacting more than 35 different people groups, with a couple of affinity groups focusing on areas like prison ministry, urban areas, youth, women, and children. We track the multiplication of each stream in the movement, and some streams of fellowships have more than 25 generations.

START WITH THE END IN MIND

For a work to be sustainable in the long term, the right DNA must be instilled from the beginning. Everything must be reproducible and sustainable. We have to start the way we want to finish. Too often, missionaries focus on how to start but don't think ahead about how they intend to finish. As a result, they unintentionally create dependency, and then the movement collapses when they leave. When Jesus began his ministry, he knew how he would finish. He did everything with the end clearly in mind. Near the end of his earthly life, Jesus prayed to the Father, *"I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do"* (John 17:4). He knew his goal and consistently moved toward it

1. After writing this description, we contacted this leader to confirm its accuracy. He endorsed it heartily: "Yes, these brothers were more orthodox than many of those filling our pews back home."

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in everything he did. He equipped his disciples to continue his ministry after his death, resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit. David Garrison² describes the process as “reverse engineering.” We need to be intentional, ensuring the movement does not depend on one talented individual but becomes multi-generational, with healthy and reproducing DNA.

TRANSFORMED COMMUNITIES

Churches become sustainable as the work of God’s Spirit brings transformation in disciples’ lives, allowing them to truly experience new life within themselves, among others, and in relation to the world around them. We’ve researched the transformation that has occurred where movements have flourished, and we found that crime has diminished, and unbelievers can see real change in believers’ lives. These changes include:

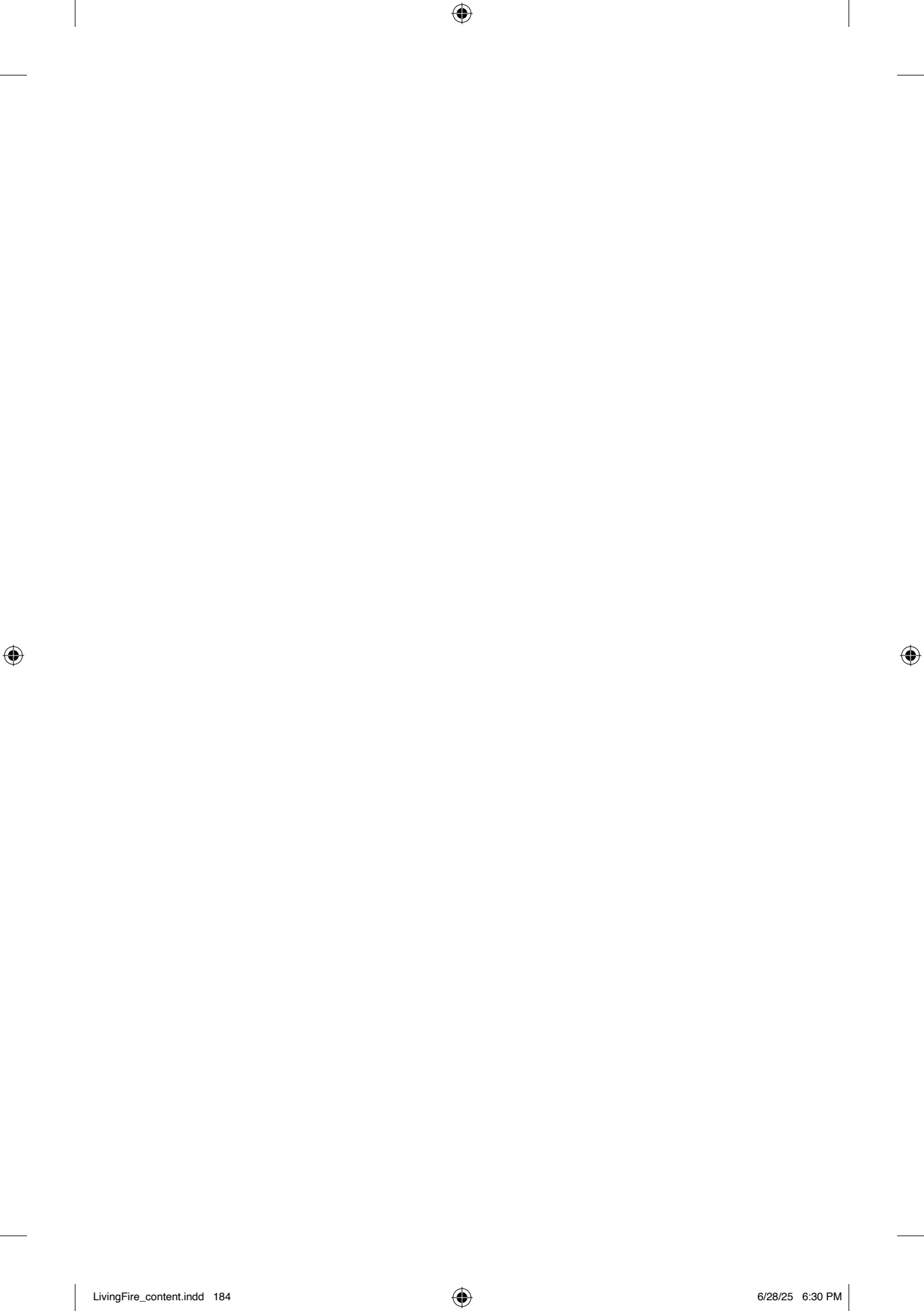
- Joy and peace as a result of salvation.
- Freedom from addictive drugs, khat-chewing, and demonic oppression.
- Men treating their wives and children kindly.
- Violent people becoming peaceful, resulting in reduced crime.
- Greater diligence in their work.
- Crops becoming more abundant and cattle multiplying.
- Children being freed for education and a positive future.

These are some of the fruits we see as we invest in developing patterns that contribute to the sustainability of the movements.

2. *Church Planting Movements*, (Arkadelphia, AR: Wigtake, 2004) 11.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. What challenges impact the sustainability of effective ministry in your context?
2. What opportunities does your context hold for laying foundations for sustainability?
3. What would you consider a healthy balance of multiplication and sustainability in your context?



CHAPTER 26

INDIGENOUS LEADERS

“The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.”

TITUS 1:5

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Developing and empowering indigenous leaders.
- A focus on plural leadership and character-based training.
- Contextualized and culturally relevant equipping.

WE WORK HARD TO DEVELOP INDIGENOUS LEADERS—leaders who speak the local language, know the culture, and can say, “This is mine.” For this reason, we never need to find someone to replace an outsider. In the past, many mission efforts were led by an outsider missionary who would establish a ministry, lead it for a time, and then try to hand it over to someone else to take their place. That kind of outsider-led ministry results in a transfer, not a Disciple Making Movement. In a Disciple Making Movement, an outsider enters a place or group, goes through the process of making disciples, and establishes a multiplying church. Before exiting, they ensure that they have developed indigenous leaders from *within* the harvest—not just one leader, but multiple *leaders*—who can multiply themselves in that context. This is our first step toward ensuring sustainability.

When our disciple makers go to a new area to bring the gospel, we tell them: “When you enter, you need to have an exit strategy. You should plan to exit within two years, so think carefully about how you will use those two years. Form a circle of prayer, look for a person of peace, choose an access ministry, find the person of peace, start a Discovery Bible Study to lay a foundation and bring them to faith, get them baptized, and plant churches with indigenous leaders.”

One common mistake in cross-cultural ministry is failing to think about the exit strategy at the entrance level. Trying to figure it out in the middle of church development is too late. Crises often occur as well, forcing the outsider to leave the work prematurely. The plan must be clear from the beginning. Every church planter knows, “I am here to find a person of peace, and that person will start an indigenous church. I won’t start a church—the person of peace will start an indigenous church.” This approach enables the gospel to spread more quickly.

Without indigenous leaders who can live out the gospel in their language and culture, the church will always appear foreign and remain dependent on outsiders.

Without indigenous leaders, it's very difficult for the Gospel to spread.

So, we intentionally focus on grassroots leadership development. The leaders emerge from the community and are identified by the community. Most of our leadership training happens on the job in short segments.¹

When the ministry is indigenous from the start, the church planter can leave and move on to another place, and the movement remains indigenous. Without indigenous leadership, a group will not multiply effectively. We don't raise up a singular indigenous leader for a church; we raise up a *plurality* of leaders. The New Testament always describes plural leadership, not singular leadership, so we develop plural leadership for the groups.

We use a simple, biblical definition of leadership: leading a Christ-like life and serving as a model for a person or community, paving the way for others to grow in Christ. It's about influence, not position. A person doesn't need to be ordained or officially recognized as having one of the five gifts (or offices) mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 to be a leader. An indigenous leader can often communicate the gospel better than an outsider and lead others to continue spreading the fire of the gospel in their community. Indigenous leaders emerge from within the fellowship. They are identified by others in the fellowship and grassroots strategy leaders who observe their obedience to the Lord because discipleship equals leadership development.

We can often identify a potential leader even before they commit to following Jesus when they appear as a person of peace. That doesn't mean a person of peace automatically becomes a leader in the church, but they

1. *Fruit to Harvest*, 245.

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often have potential we can observe. We especially invest in leaders who emerge from a new faith community through the person of peace. The essential criterion is not age or knowledge; it's obedience. Most likely, the person of peace will become one of the leaders, but the decisive criterion is obedience. That's how we observe leadership developing.

In our DMM process, we observe what people are doing and how they are growing. When they show signs of growth, we give them some responsibility and develop a coaching relationship with them. This involves modeling and traveling together to do ministry, allowing us to interact in various contexts. In this way, both the coach and the person being coached can observe each other in ministry and discuss lessons learned and areas for growth. Whatever lesson anyone is learning, they should be able to pass on to someone who is one step behind them in experience.

EQUIPPING STRATEGY

We ensure we have an equipping strategy in the movement streams to provide just-in-time training relevant to the opportunities, needs, and challenges of each context. Sometimes, when we penetrate a new people group, they may not have spiritual resources, such as the Bible in their language or any other biblically based materials. How can we help them become theologically rooted without imposing foreign cultural elements in the teaching? Many theological books are filled with Western teaching methods, while many people in our context are oral-preference learners. How can we develop useful materials that can easily be passed on to the next generation of disciples?

We don't compromise the word of God or compromise basic biblical equipping, but the delivery system has to fit the context in order to remain relevant. Culturally relevant teaching resonates more deeply and multiplies far better than teaching that carries foreign influence. Our equipping strategy focuses on discovery and centers around three areas:

1. **Character:** Facilitating growth in a Christ-like character.
2. **Knowledge:** The essential biblical knowledge they need at this time—about the Bible, from the Bible, and within the Bible.
3. **Skill:** The minimum skills required to equip them for the work.

As the ministry of indigenous leaders matures, the outside catalyst continues coaching in a way that equips and empowers. They remain engaged but do not control the work. The following diagram² illustrates this well. It shows the twin dangers of control and abandonment, both of which have occurred far too often in cross-cultural church planting. By avoiding the pendulum swing of too much or too little involvement, we encourage good coaching that enables leaders to develop strong leadership skills and become effective coaches themselves for the next generation.



2. Included with permission from Harry Brown of New Generations.

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QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. How do you identify potential leaders?
2. How do you (or would you) assist in equipping indigenous leaders so they become empowered to multiply within their context?

CHAPTER 27

EQUIPPING STRATEGY APPROPRIATE FOR THE CONTEXT

“Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.”

1 CORINTHIANS 9:19

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Contextualized equipping.
- Oral and story-based learning.
- Strategic Scripture translation and access.

OUR SECOND FACTOR FOR SUSTAINABILITY IS USING AN equipping strategy that fits each specific context in which we minister. Most people in these groups are oral-preference learners. They “learn a lot by *doing*. So, we show one thing, teach one thing, and do one thing. It’s very simple and reproducible.”¹

The discipleship strategy and discipleship structure have to be culturally sensitive. This format enables people to grasp the biblical principles and become familiar with the pattern more quickly. It also affects the language and vocabulary used. Equipping needs to happen in a way that feels culturally natural, so disciples feel the process fits well for them and people like them. This means we have different patterns for people from different backgrounds. If a person comes from a folk-religious background, we use an equipping strategy appropriate for them. If people come from a Christian background or a different religious background, we disciple them in ways that fit their needs and issues. With young people, we use an approach that fits them. For a group of women, we provide equipping tailored to them. We always aim for a context-based equipping strategy, and different groups receive different emphases.

Some people are very religious; others are not religious at all. Some are particularly attuned to works of power. For them, miracles, signs, and wonders seem to accelerate the Disciple Making Movement. In other cases, God uses the Discovery Bible Study process to open hearts. It may start slow, but as the group multiplies, the work grows faster.

The majority of people in our communities are oral-preference learners. While they might be able to read and write, they still prefer to communicate and learn orally. That’s why, in our Disciple Making

1. *Fruit to Harvest*, 249.

Movement, we follow a story-centered approach—from the beginning of Discovery groups, even into developing disciples and leaders. We ensure that everything we do is oral-friendly, using audio, visual, drama, songs, and story-based learning. In the Discovery Bible Study, if people aren't comfortable with a written text, they listen to an audio recording or have someone, perhaps a literate child, read it to them.

Much of the Bible consists of stories, and people love stories. God has embedded eternal principles within these stories. While some parts of the Bible are poetic, such as the Psalms, and others are didactic, like the Epistles, a large portion involves stories. We use many Bible stories to teach biblical principles, as this approach feels very natural for communication in our communities. Additionally, audio Bibles offer security advantages, making them an ideal choice in many of our contexts.

We also incorporate drama and singing, especially among oral-preference communities. We encourage people to write and sing songs in their own language, rather than simply translating from English. Many of the groups do this, and some have even created albums of their music. In every part of life, they live out discipleship using elements of their own culture.

Currently, recordings of the biblical text are being developed for many language groups. We use some audio devices, but they are expensive, whereas Android phones are quite affordable. A micro-SD card is even cheaper, and apps are free. Scripture can be imported into the card or played on an app. We encourage disciples to integrate their phones with the app so they can hear God's word from their phone. Some also use Bluetooth. Having the word of God in oral form is a wonderful tool.

One of our challenges is that we don't yet have the Scriptures in the mother tongue of all these UPGs. The movement is spreading faster than the translations. We encourage our partners working on Scripture translation to do partial translations in oral form so we can begin sharing them with a people group. This allows them to start hearing the gospel in their mother tongue, which is much more impactful than hearing it in a second language. We do everything we can to encourage progress on

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translations because of the huge need. I believe the word of God must be available for a healthy church to endure. While we don't need the entire Bible immediately, starting with key portions that help people understand and receive the gospel is essential for their growth as disciples. However, it's also valuable to eventually have the full Bible available in a group's language.

The Old Testament stories we include in the Creation to Christ Discovery Bible Study are very important, especially the early parts of Genesis. In the New Testament, we begin with stories from the Gospel of Luke, followed by the historical narratives in Acts.² The first three books we aim to have translated are Genesis, Luke, and Acts. The stories from Genesis cover Creation, the Fall, and the Covenant with Abraham. Luke helps people come to know who Jesus is and understand God's heart, as seen, for example, in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Acts describes how to disciple a new believer. Many other Bible stories and teachings (including the "one another" Scriptures) are valuable for conveying the full picture of God's word, and *all* Scripture is "*useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work*" (2 Tim. 3:16–17). But when starting from scratch among a UPG, Genesis, Luke, and Acts provide a solid, initial foundation for conveying the story of God's kingdom.

EQUIPPING FOR NEW CONTEXTS

We are now equipping cross-cultural workers to go to parts of the world where movements have not yet begun to penetrate. We want to help brothers and sisters serve among the unreached—working alongside them to ignite Disciple Making Movements and accelerate the advance of the gospel.

Our primary staff, both within our organization and among our

2. See the list of initial discovery studies in Appendix C.

church-planting partners, now have significant engagement and field experience. I deeply value this team, who have devoted their lives and consistently sacrifice with holy boldness. I'm grateful for the church planters who risk their lives every day on the front lines to ensure people hear the good news and are discipled. They constantly cry out to God for the least and the lost.

While we oversee and serve the movements, our organization doesn't own them. By definition, no one can own or control a movement except God. We act as catalysts, implanting the DNA for kingdom multiplication wherever we can. We aim to function like yeast, multiplying and impacting many others, seeing God's kingdom grow and expand. We consider ourselves igniters, aiming to ignite movements as God pours out his blessing.

God has given us a very big vision for the future, which includes applying fresh equipping strategies for each context in which we minister. We use a culturally sensitive discipleship strategy and structure in each place, ensuring that everything we do is simple and reproducible. This approach maximizes the rooting and growth of believing groups in each new unreached context.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. What opportunities have you had (or will you seek) to conduct a Creation to Christ set of Discovery Bible Studies with a group of people who don't yet follow Christ?
2. What opportunities have you had (or will you seek) to plant the gospel among people from an unreached group?



CHAPTER 28

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

“You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.”

1 THESSALONIANS 4:11b-12

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- Self-sufficiency and local resource development.
- Cautious use of financial support.
- Biblical generosity and personal financial health.

OUR THIRD FACTOR FOR SUSTAINABILITY IS *FINANCIAL sustainability*—a crucial element of a Disciple Making Movement. For a movement to grow exponentially, we need to ensure that the kingdom can expand and accelerate in natural ways, without relying on outside support. Continuous foreign aid can never sustain a Disciple Making Movement in a community. Communities must find ways to sustain themselves, perhaps through farming or other means available to them. We equip them to develop different streams of financial resources. This is essential for sustaining a Disciple Making Movement so it doesn't become dependent on outside funding. Without financial sustainability, a movement can collapse. Therefore, we encourage every disciple maker to have a financially self-sustaining lifestyle. It may involve a small business, a medium-sized business, agriculture, or whatever suits their context. Movement leaders need to be proactive in establishing financial sustainability.

One facet of the transformation resulting from the movement (described at the end of Chapter 25) is that disciples become more diligent in their work. They witness God's blessing on their crops and experience his abundance. Some have even been recognized as model farmers of the year. In the past, they spent three to four hours a day chewing khat, but now, free from addiction, they can work more productively. They no longer waste money on drinking and drugs. Instead, they've become responsible stewards of the resources God has given them, viewing these things as gifts from God that they need to manage wisely.

As a catalytic organization, we don't encourage funding 100% of anything. When we present a coaching or training event, we invest some funds initially, but we don't provide continuous financial support. We never cover the entire cost. Instead, we encourage local churches to participate. We require the local host to cover at least transportation and

lodging, while we might help cover the trainees' meals. We support one another in ways that fit the situation, ensuring that no one is overly burdened, and dependency doesn't become an issue.

Financial complications and a lack of local ownership have paralyzed some organizations. If the ministry relied on us financially, others wouldn't develop a sense of ownership. Therefore, as much as possible, we include financial expectations in our written agreement with our 175 partners. When we send apostolic leaders to UPG areas, we collaborate on the finances. We discuss with the local partners, "What can you contribute, and what do we need to contribute?" The local churches or denominations cover some expenses, and we contribute for a season (usually two years). That way, we work together. The local church can continue the ministry we have started together, and we avoid contributing for years and years, allowing us to provide startup funds to send other apostolic workers.

Ultimately, the churches have the capacity to cover the sending costs. We simply help them get started with some operational or logistical expenses. When sending workers to another country, we encourage the churches to cover those costs as much as possible. Our area managers take responsibility for cultivating that relationship and ensuring that the agreed-upon plan is implemented in their areas of responsibility. We are very intentional about this process.

DANGERS OF MONEY

We're cautious about "destructive projects" that involve a lot of money. We recognize the need to remain focused on the specific calling God has given us and keep the main thing the main thing. At the SCLT gathering with our strategy coordinators and grassroots strategy coordinators, we ask of every activity, "How does this contribute to DMM?" Every leader has to answer that question.

Some outsiders come with their own project ideas they're excited

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about and want to implement in our context. However, we're not attracted to that kind of money. In fact, we carefully filter who partners with us financially. Our starting point is always joining in the journey and building a relationship of trust. This includes the freedom to speak honestly. I'm not afraid to say, "No, thank you." I've said that to dozens of attractive offers because I know that unwise use of money or destructive projects can kill a movement.

I've also seen outsiders bring money and lead leaders away from the calling they received from God. This happens far too often. Outsiders may see what's happening and be drawn to it. This includes cross-cultural workers from other countries. Some of them don't want to start from the beginning and invest relationally in a potential apostolic worker from within the harvest. Instead, they wait until a leader is maturing and becoming fruitful in the movement's context, then offer to "partner" by providing a nice salary and other benefits. In such cases, my principle is to let it go. I don't fight to keep someone who wants to leave for a more lucrative position in a different kind of ministry. God will handle the final accounts.

One former religious leader came to faith and was growing in the Lord, but within a year, outsiders began offering him money for various things. This distracted him from truly fruitful ministry. I stayed in touch with him, and after two years, he was heartbroken. He said, "They treated me like a piece of sugar cane. They squeezed all the juice out of me and then threw me away." He's currently in another country, and I'm unsure whether he's still walking with the Lord.

Another brother, a strategy coordinator, was drawn away by a cross-cultural worker from another country who offered him double the pay he was receiving. I confronted that foreign worker, asking, "Do you think this is a good model for ministry—trying to buy a worker?" But he ignored me. The coordinator left with him because he needed the money. However, when challenges arise, he still calls on us for help. The foreign worker has since left the country, and they no longer work together.

We need to remember that people are not projects. Whatever disciples do, they should do it for the Lord. We need to let go of ego and logo for

the sake of God's kingdom. If people have integrity and are growing, I don't argue with them. They answer to the Lord, not to me.

PERSONAL FINANCIAL HEALTH

Growing in a kingdom lifestyle consistently leads people toward personal financial health. Following Christ encourages them to work hard (Prov. 10:4; 12:27; 13:4; Eph. 6:6–8), break free from (expensive) addictions (1 Cor. 6:12), and experience greater blessing on their efforts (Deut. 28:1–13; Ps. 90:17).

We have equipped our people with an understanding of biblical generosity, teaching them that God calls and enables even those with little to give generously for his glory. Some of the biblical principles they learn include:

- **Generosity gives resources freely, as God gave freely to us.** *“Freely you have received; freely give”* (Matt. 10:8b).
- **God's generosity is primarily about spiritual blessings.** *“Praise be to the God . . . who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ”* (Eph. 1:3).
- **Generosity with a godly motive stores up eternal blessings.** *“Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven”* (Matt. 6:20a). *“They will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life”* (1 Tim. 6:19). *“Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail”* (Luke 12:33).
- **Generosity can also bring earthly blessings, such as happiness and others' appreciation.** *“It is more blessed to give than to receive”* (Acts 20:35). *“A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed”* (Prov. 11:25).
- **Generosity is not about seeking earthly rewards.** *“We do not*

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peddle the word of God for profit” (2 Cor. 2:17). “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever . . . loses their life for me will find it” (Luke 9:23–24).

- **Generosity is inseparable from the Christian life.** “Just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving” (2 Cor. 8:7).
- **Generous people recognize that the world is a passing mist.** “What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes” (James 4:14b).
- **Generous people rejoice in the Giver, not the gifts.** “Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you” (Ps. 73:25). “Though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior” (Hab. 3:17–18).

Our vision includes exponential growth and long-term sustainability of the movement in each place and among each group where we bring the gospel. Achieving such growth and sustainability requires financial sustainability alongside spiritual health and reproducible movement DNA. We aim to ensure that the kingdom can expand and accelerate in natural ways without outside support. To accomplish this, we equip disciples to depend on God and follow biblical financial practices for both financial and spiritual health.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. In what ways could you assist gospel outreach among an unreached group, without creating dependency?
2. How can you model generosity in your life?

CHAPTER 29

A KINGDOM-CENTERED COLLABORATIVE NETWORK

“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

IN THIS CHAPTER, YOU WILL SEE:

- The importance of prioritizing God's kingdom over individual ministries, churches, or denominations.
- Effective collaboration and accountability in a kingdom-centered network.
- The roles of outsiders in fostering sustainable growth.

IF WE WANT TO SEE GOD MOVE MIGHTILY IN OUR GENERATION, we need to make God's kingdom the center of our ministry agenda. We must stop focusing solely on *our* ministry, *our* church, or *our* denomination. The task of the Great Commission is far bigger than any one church or organization. As my wife says, we are working together on a puzzle: to see Jesus glorified among all *ethnē*. Each of us has a piece to contribute to that puzzle; we're not working on separate puzzles. If some of us don't do our part, the puzzle remains incomplete. We can't finish the puzzle without collaboration.

Collaboration helps us invest God's resources in an effective way, accelerating the work of the kingdom and avoiding unnecessary waste of energy, time, and resources. One of our core principles is to function as a strategic partnership, working with like-minded indigenous churches, parachurch organizations, and denominations. We have no hidden agenda—our only goal is to see all peoples reached with the gospel. We have no bosses or servants among us; our table is round. No one uses others to accomplish their own agenda. We build trust by having no competition. Our collaboration is action oriented. We don't just meet for coffee or tea; we focus on results. We constantly ask, "What are we accomplishing?"

Our organization has several collaborative groups: one specifically designed for those reaching people of another faith, another for sending workers from our country to unreached peoples in other countries, and the one I'm currently focusing on—collaboration for Disciple Making Movements.

The beginning and the goal of a movement is God: to bring him glory. Toward that end, our fourth factor for sustainability is a *kingdom-centered network*, working together to initiate movements.

We as an organization are not working alone. There's no ego or logo in this movement. This is God's movement; God the Holy Spirit is initiating and doing this. Nobody should take credit for it. We come together from many denominations, churches, and indigenous organizations. The goal is not to make our ministry bigger but to make the Kingdom bigger, because God's Kingdom is much bigger than our denomination or our ministry. The Great Commission is too big to do alone. We need each other. We don't compromise critical elements, but we share a voluntary commitment to work together in focusing on Kingdom movements.¹

That commitment is built on a passion for reaching the lost. Through whatever we do, we want the lost to enter God's kingdom. If that is our chief motive, we must be willing to let go of our logo and ego for the sake of the kingdom. The absence of a kingdom mentality is a major obstacle to gospel advancement in a community. If I have a denominational mentality or ethnocentric mentality, I become a barrier to the spread of the gospel. If I tell God's children that unless they follow my specific traditions, I can't affirm them, I become an obstacle to kingdom advancement.

The Early Church faced a similar issue, as described in the book of Acts. Gentiles began coming to faith and joining what had been a Jesus-following sect of Jews. A problem arose when some wanted to limit salvation to those who followed a specific set of religious rules and patterns (as written in the Old Testament Law). God's Spirit resolved that dispute through the Apostles and elders at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15). This example highlights the importance of a kingdom mentality. What essential criteria must a person meet to enter God's kingdom? What are the minimum biblical criteria for a disciple of Jesus from another faith? What are the minimum biblical criteria for a church? We have to figure out these things and agree together. Our discipleship doesn't stop

1. Ibid, 246.

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with the bare minimum. It must develop biblical patterns appropriate for each context. However, we cannot start by importing church traditions from another culture.

We must be willing to give up our traditional church baggage; we can't just transfer it. The church traditions we grew up with may have been good for us, but they were simply a "house" suited to our home context. We shouldn't transfer our house to another cultural context.

Kingdom-centered partnership facilitates great progress. In our network, God has given us the privilege of leaders and churches coming together and saying, "Yes, let's do this together!" One of the things we focus on is identifying the gaps—people groups and places the gospel has not yet reached. Then, we consider, "What would it take to see that situation change? Who can contribute what—capacity, calling, resources, and so on? How can we collaborate? If we're aiming for a DMM, what will we measure to move us toward that goal?" Our shared goal is kingdom replication—of disciples, churches, and leaders. To that end, we establish a pattern of open accountability. We also aim to send teams from a variety of churches, not just one. We make the process practical and conduct evaluations as well.

We've encountered some challenges in this process. To help navigate them, we assign a color code to each of our partners. Green designates those who are fully on board with DMM and very effective. Yellow designates those who have some issues. They're working and making an effort but haven't seen the level of replication we hope for. They might see some results, but not in ways that bring multiplication. They may need more coaching or other assistance to make adjustments. We also ensure the church leaders who send them aren't interfering or taking actions that hinder rather than help the potential for a movement, such as pulling the churches into a traditional model. We also make sure the indigenous leaders are developing and growing their natural networks, so the work doesn't stagnate.

Red designates those we're not currently partnering with. They've received the training and agreed to partnership but haven't made the

necessary changes to put it into practice. Part of our leaders' role is to consider, "Is this partnership doing what we agreed to do—investing in reaching an Unreached People Group? Does the strategy align with our agreed-upon approach (multiplication rather than just addition)?" The result is up to God. He is the one who converts people, but we do have a role to play. Are the partners fulfilling their part? And are we fulfilling ours?

If it turns out a partner is not fulfilling their part, or if the stipulations in the agreement are not being met, we sometimes have to disconnect the partnership. After a process of discussion, we establish a time frame to end the partnership, while keeping the door open for reestablishing the relationship later. Our goal is never to disconnect from anyone but to help them improve their ministry fruitfulness. Our leaders consider, "How can we help move the red to yellow and the yellow to green?" That goal is why our strategy coordinators invest so much of their time and energy in developing our partners through nurturing and coaching.

Our relationships are such that a strategy coordinator from one church can equip, mentor, coach, and evaluate a leader from another church. These are ongoing processes. In some ways, this involves shepherding, but it's based on influence, not position. They don't lead because they are educated, eloquent, elderly, or hold a title in the church structure. The criterion for becoming a strategy coordinator is fruitfulness. People from other churches or denominations listen to our strategy coordinators because they are actively *doing* the work. They lead by example. When people stop doing the work, they stop serving as strategy coordinators. When we gather each quarter, we all share how the work is progressing. The gathering is by invitation only. Those who stop doing the work stop receiving invitations.

When our coordinators gather, we come from many different churches. Our agenda is God's kingdom, with the Lord's people helping one another. This foundation has been crucial for accelerating the advance of God's kingdom.

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WIDER COLLABORATION: MOVEMENT SERVANTS

We believe that distant-culture outsiders (non-Africans) can also play helpful roles in an indigenous movement. They, too, have a piece of the puzzle. While their role might sometimes involve pioneering, it's more often about *joining* rather than *creating something new*. Outsiders can contribute in many helpful ways. As a first step, we consider their skills and what they could do to fan the flames to spread further, rather than trying to start a new fire from scratch.

Secondly, outsiders can be very helpful in working with indigenous leaders if they come with a desire and willingness to support and help supply what is missing. They can assist with various kinds of technology, which remains a challenge in Africa. For example, we have a huge need for Scripture translation. Additionally, the digitalization of existing Scriptures would greatly help take the gospel to the areas and peoples that have not yet been reached. Another role for outsiders is investing in coaching and mentoring leaders, much like Paul did with Timothy and Titus in the New Testament.

On the other hand, using money and benefits to “buy” indigenous leaders doesn’t help expand God’s kingdom. It only brings destruction. Outsiders should never allow everything to depend on them or the resources they provide. They should always ask, “When I leave, will this ministry continue? What will happen when I’m no longer here?” As I shared in Chapters 4 and 6, Dave Hunt played a vital role in my ministry. He didn’t come to take over or to take anything away. He modeled humility and a Christ-like life, making a great impact, particularly on the first and second generations of the movement. Although he doesn’t interact much with the fourth, fifth, or twenty-fifth generation, his impact has been passed on. He continues to play a useful role in the movements. This type of role has been described as a “Movement Servant.”²

2. We recommend that anyone interested in connecting with indigenous movements read the articles “Movement Servants Needed” (by Dave Coles and Stan Parks, *Mission Frontiers*, May/June 2021, 37-41) and “Movement Servants Helping Movements Multiply” (by Dave Coles and Stan

CONCLUSION

We want to emphasize Jesus' command: "*Go to everyone, everywhere, and teach them to obey everything I've told you*" (Matt. 28:19–20, paraphrased). We haven't yet finished that journey. As DMM groups, we are part of God's journey. We don't have everything figured out. We approach this work with tender hearts and an attitude of learning: to see what God is doing, how he's doing it, and to join him in it. We want to see the gospel reach everyone, and see every disciple become a disciple maker. Jesus didn't bring the gospel just for friendly people—he brought it for everyone. We are committed to that journey.

We still have a healthy dissatisfaction—the same one I personally felt 17 years ago. If you ask me how we're doing now, I'd say we see just the tip of the iceberg, as the Lord continues to teach us. We know we are focused on bringing his kingdom to the least and the lost, until Jesus comes.

When Jesus said, "*This gospel of the kingdom will be preached to all nations, and then the end will come*" (Matt. 24:14), he didn't leave everything up to God. He clearly gave us a role to play. Consider the story of Noah. God told him, "*Build an ark, and when it's finished, I'll bring the animals in, and I'll bring the water*" (Gen. 6:14–7:4, summarized). If Noah had finished the ark in 60 years, I don't think God would have said, "My schedule says 120 years; you'll have to wait a while." The pace of Noah's work on the ark played a role in the timing of the flood.

Jesus said, "*When you finish this job, I will return*" (Matt. 24:14b, paraphrased). Many people long for Jesus' return. The Apostle Peter writes that all believers "*ought to . . . look forward to the day of God and speed its coming*" (2 Pet. 3:11–12). This doesn't happen through wishful thinking or an encouraging sermon. The way to speed his coming is by accomplishing the work he has given us to do in this age: the Great Commission. That Great Commission holds the even greater hope of Jesus being with us

Parks, *Mission Frontiers*, Nov/Dec 2022, 20–22), and connect with the 24:14 Coalition—both "Get Involved" (2414now.net/get-involved) and "Movement Basics" (2414now.net/movement-basics).

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until the end of this age (Matt. 28:20), and then enjoying all eternity together, face to face with our beloved (1 Cor. 13:12; Rev. 22:4).

I invite the body of Christ—as a family of believers, as churches, and as individuals—to take an active part in this journey. Each of us should consider before God: “Am I satisfied with where I am? Or do I have a healthy dissatisfaction—a longing to see those who have not yet heard the gospel come to hear and believe the saving message of Jesus? What action step(s) does God want me to take?” This is part of the call to discipleship.

Obedying Jesus involves a cost. Jesus presents us with a radical call: to make his mission *our mission*. It’s not about expanding our denomination or organization. We want to lift up his name and have *many* more join us in his kingdom. I invite the Body of Christ to join us in this journey. It’s a brand-new strategy that’s 2,000 years old.

I’d like to ask every reader of this book to say, “Yes. I’m a believer. I’ll be a disciple. I’ll be a disciple maker.” If each of us takes this initiative—every believer becoming a disciple and every disciple becoming a disciple maker—I believe we can speed up the coming of Jesus Christ. Perhaps in this generation or the next, we will see Jesus’ glorious promise fulfilled.

QUESTIONS FOR APPLICATION:

1. Are you willing to take the steps needed to become a disciple maker?
2. With whom do you (or could you) collaborate for the purpose of kingdom advance among the unreached?
3. What radical change(s) would you need to make to play a greater part in this great adventure?

APPENDIX A

RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED WEBSITES:

24:14 Coalition: 2414now.net

New Generations: newgenerations.org

BEYOND videos: beyond.org/videos

RECOMMENDED BOOKS:

*Miraculous Movements: How Hundreds of Thousands of Muslims Are
Falling in Love with Jesus* by Jerry Trousdale

Contagious Disciple Making: Leading Others on a Journey of Discovery
by David Watson and Paul Watson

*The Kingdom Unleashed: How Jesus' 1st-Century Kingdom Values Are
Transforming Thousands of Cultures and Awakening His Church* by
Jerry Trousdale and Glenn Sunshine

Appendix A

A Wind in the House of Islam: How God Is Drawing Muslims around the World to Faith in Jesus Christ by David Garrison

24:14 - A Testimony to All Peoples by Dave Coles and Stan Parks

Cabbages in the Desert: How God Transformed a Devout Muslim and Catalyzed Disciple Making Movements among Unreached Peoples by Aila Tasse with Dave Coles

Bhojpuri Breakthrough: A Movement that Keeps Multiplying by Victor John with Dave Coles

RESOURCES FOR PRAYER:

δέομαι—weekly prayer guide: sign up at <https://justinlong.us1.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=c2bfc514437348a83f37050dd&id=436208a3bc>

Pray for the World: A New Prayer Resource from Operation World by Patrick Johnstone and Molly Wall

“Praying Through 12 Common Characteristics of Disciple Making Movements” by Robin Smith (*Mission Frontiers*, Sept/Oct 2023, 39–41)

“Key Prayer Points for Movements” by Shodankeh Johnson (*Mission Frontiers*, Mar/Apr 2022, 31–34)

“Develop and Implement a Contextual Prayer Strategy” by Jean Coles (*Mission Frontiers*, Mar/Apr 2023, 16–20)

APPENDIX B

OUR DISCOVERY PROCESS

THE DISCOVERY PROCESS BEGINS WITH FINDING A PERSON of peace and him or her inviting some close relational connections to study together. The people they gather might be close friends or family—people who the person of peace trusts. They may gather in groups of three, five, or six people as long as they share a level of trust and openness.

The structure of the Discovery Bible Study allows the same basic pattern to continue even after the group comes to faith and becomes a house church. In fact, they will experience some of the interactive elements of church life even before becoming a church.

The group interacts as a community, with no formal teacher. Even the church planter functions only as a facilitator. The interaction is not religious, but spiritual. Many people are sensitive to perceived attempts to change their religion. However, if they express spiritual interest, we build on that, guiding them to discover God’s truth in the Bible. That’s why we only use spiritual questions in the Discovery Bible Study—no questions about religion.

The first question is one everybody can answer: “What are you grateful for this week?” Responses vary widely, but everyone can find

something to be thankful for. In many African cultures, praising the name of God is even part of a common greeting.

The second question is: “What challenges have you faced this week?” Again, it’s an easy question for everyone to answer, as challenges are universal. This ensures participation from all members.

The third question is: “How can we help each other with our challenges?” This introduces, early on, the idea of *koinonia*—fellowship and mutual support.

After these initial questions, we begin the actual Discovery Bible Study. As oral-preference learners, we have one person read the Scripture, or we may play an audio recording. The Scripture texts chosen are those most relevant to the group members. For those from another faith who don’t yet recognize the Bible’s authority, we start with familiar biblical stories, like Creation and stories about the prophets. From there, we move from the known to the unknown, eventually studying the stories of Isa (Jesus).

If the group members already recognize the Bible as God’s word, we begin with the stories and teachings of Jesus, possibly using material from the Gospel of John or connecting with the Old Testament covenants. The biblical texts we select for study are always stories from Scripture, kept short to maintain focus.

One person reads the passage two or three times while the others listen. Then, each person retells the story in their own words. At this stage, no one—including the church planter—offers interpretation. Each person simply repeats the story as they heard it, without adding commentary or opinions.

Next, the group discusses two key questions: “What does it mean? What does it teach us about God?” and “What does it teach us about ourselves (humanity)? Are there promises that apply to us?”

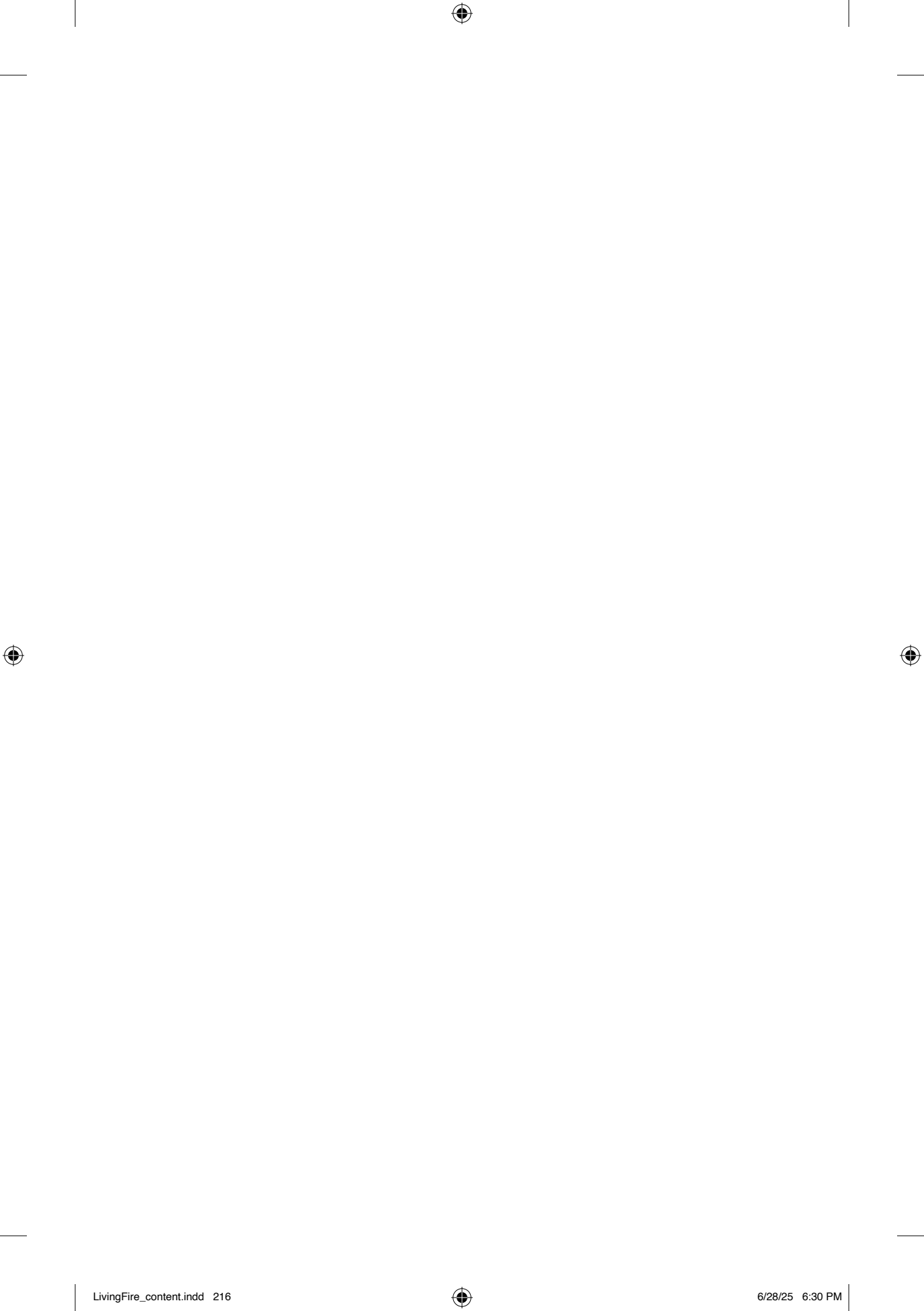
Following this, each individual shares: “What will we do to obey?” This includes considering whether there are actions they need to start or stop, or things they need to confess. The goal is to encourage simple, measurable acts of obedience. This approach creates simple,

reproducible patterns that can scale into movement. It emphasizes that every disciple's journey with Jesus involves active obedience to his word.

The final question is, "Who will you share this story with?" When the group meets again, in addition to the usual questions, each person reports what they did to obey the previous week's Scripture and what resulted from their obedience.

The group also has an assignment to start a new discovery group in another location. The church planter, who originally started the group, coaches the members as they lead the new group, ensuring they maintain the same DNA of discovery—using the same questions and avoiding preaching.

Throughout Church history, various methods of Bible study have been used. Discovery Bible Study is a form of inductive Bible study. Its simplicity sets it apart, with a focus on obedience and sharing the results of that obedience within the group. The method intentionally avoids using extra-biblical materials, as these could complicate the study and make it less reproducible.



APPENDIX C

SAMPLE DISCOVERY LESSONS

A STRONG BIBLICAL FOUNDATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR EFFECTIVE discipleship. Using only Scripture to guide the discipleship journey makes the curriculum simple, reproducible, and not dependent on purchasing or producing additional materials. It also allows disciples of every language and culture to grasp and apply biblical lessons in contextually appropriate ways.

CREATION TO CHRIST

We commonly use these lessons with people from another faith who may recognize many of the names and themes in these stories but have not yet come to saving faith in Christ.

Gen. 1:1–5	–God creates the heavens and the earth
Gen. 1:26–31	–God creates people
Gen. 3:1–7	–Adam and Eve sin
Gen. 3: 8–19	–Sin has painful consequences
Gen. 3:20–24	–Sin separates humanity from God

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Gen. 6:15–17	–Noah and God’s punishment of sin
Gen. 11:1–9	–Rebellion at Babel, God punishes sin
Gen. 12:1–3	–God’s promise to Abram
Gen. 22:1–19	–God’s provision for Abraham
Ex. 12:1–28	–A Passover lamb
Is. 53:1–9	–A promised suffering savior
Luke 1:26–36	–Jesus’ birth foretold
Luke 2:1–20	–Jesus is born
Matt. 3:13–17	–Jesus is baptized
John 1:29–34	–The Lamb of God is Jesus
Matt. 4:1–11	–Jesus is tested by Satan
Luke 5:17–26	–Jesus heals and forgives
Mark 4:35–41	–Jesus calms the storm
Mark 5:1–20	–Jesus has power to cast out demons
John 11:1–44	–Jesus raises Lazarus
John 18:1–11	–Jesus is betrayed and arrested
Luke 23:32–56	–Jesus is crucified
Luke 24:1–35	–Jesus’ resurrection
Matt. 11:28–30	–Come to Jesus and find rest
John 3:1–7; 14–19	–Believe in Jesus and be saved

Here are some additional lists of Scriptures we include as part of our discipleship journey:

DISCOVERING JESUS

- The Birth of Jesus Foretold–Luke 1:26–38
- The Birth of Jesus–Luke 2:1–7
- The Shepherds and the Angels–Luke 2:8–20
- The Visit of the Magi–Matt. 2:1–12
- Jesus Presented in the Temple–Luke 2:22–40
- The Escape to Egypt–Matt. 2:13–23

- The Boy Jesus at the Temple–Luke 2:41–52
- John the Baptist Prepares the Way–Matt. 3:1–12; Mark 1:1–8; Luke 3:1–18
- The Baptism of Jesus–Matt. 3:13–17; Mark 1:9–11; Luke 3:21, 22; John 1:29–34
- The Temptation of Jesus–Matt. 4:1–11; Mark 1:12–13; Luke 4:1–13
- Calling of the First Disciples–Matt. 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–20; Luke 5:1–11; John 1:35–51
- Jesus Changes Water to Wine–John 2:1–11
- Jesus Rejected at Nazareth–Luke 4:13–30
- Jesus Heals Many–Mark 1:21–34; Luke 4:31–41
- Jesus Heals a Paralytic–Mark 2:1–12; Luke 5:17–26
- Jesus Teaches Nicodemus–John 3:1–21
- Jesus Talks with a Samaritan Woman–John 4:4–42
- The Faith of the Centurion–Matt. 8:5–13; Lu 7:1–11
- Jesus Calms the Storm–Matt. 8:23–27; Mark 4:35–41; Luke 8:22–25
- Eating with Sinners and Tax Collectors–Matt. 9:10–13; Mark 2:15–17; Luke 5:29–32
- A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman–Matt. 9:18–26; Mark 5:21–43; Luke 8:40–56
- John the Baptist Beheaded–Matt. 14:1–12; Mark 6:14–29
- Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand–Matt. 14:13–21; Mark 6:30–44; Luke 9:10–17; John 6:1–15
- Jesus Walks on Water–Matt. 14:22–36; Mark 6:45–56; John 6:16–24
- Peter’s Confession of Christ–Matt. 16:12–20; Mark 8:27–30; Luke 9:18–27
- The Transfiguration–Matt. 17:1–13; Mark 9:2–13; Luke 9:28–36
- The Healing of an Epileptic Boy–Matt. 17:14–21; Mark 9:14–29; Luke 9:37–43
- Who is the Greatest?–Matt. 18:1–6; Mark 9:33–37; Luke 9:46–48

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- Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind–John 9:1–34
- The Parable of the Good Samaritan–Luke 10:25–37
- At the Home of Mary and Martha–Luke 10:38–42
- Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead–John 11:1–46
- The Little Children and Jesus–Matt. 19:13–15; Mark 10:13–16; Luke 18:15–17
- The Rich Young Man–Matt. 19:16–30; Mark 10:17–31; Luke 18:18–29
- Zacchaeus the Tax Collector–Luke 19:1–10
- Jesus Anointed at Bethany–Matt. 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; Luke 7:36–50; John 12:1–8
- The Triumphal Entry–Matt. 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11; Luke 19:28–44
- Jesus at the Temple–Matt. 21:12–13; Mark 11:15–19; Luke 19:45–46
- The Widow’s Offering–Mark 12:41–44; Luke 21:1–4
- The Greatest Commandment–Matt. 22:34–40; Mark 12:28–34
- The Lord’s Supper–Matt. 26:17–30; Mark 14:12–26; Luke 22:7–34; John 13:1–30
- Gethsemane–Matt. 26:36–56; Mark 14:32–52; Luke 22:39–54; John 18:1–12
- Jesus on Trial–Matt. 27:1–16; Mark 14:53–65; 15:1–15; Luke 22:66–23:25; John 18:13; 19–24; 28:19–6
- Peter Denies Jesus–Matt. 26:69–75; Mark 14:66–72; Luke 22:54–62; John 18:15–18, 25–26
- Jesus’ Crucifixion–Matt. 27:31–56; Mark 15:20–41; Luke 23:26–49; John 19:17–37
- Jesus’ Burial–Matt. 27:57–66; Mark 15:42–47; Luke 23:50–56; John 19:38–42
- Jesus’ Resurrection–Matt. 28:1–15; Mark 16:1–8; Luke 24:1–12; John 20:1–18
- The Road to Emmaus–Luke 24:13–35
- Jesus Appears to the Disciples–Matt. 28:16–20; Luke 24:36–53; John 20:19–29

- Jesus Reinstates Peter—John 21:1–25
- Jesus Taken up into Heaven—Acts 1:4–11

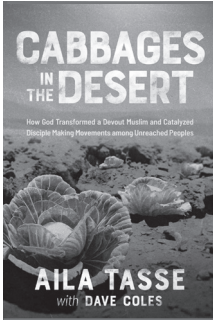
COMMANDS OF CHRIST

1. Repent—Matt. 4:17; Luke 13:3
2. Let not your heart be troubled—John 14:27; 16:33; Matt. 6:25–26; Phil. 4:6–7
3. Follow me—Matt. 4:19
4. Rejoice—Matt. 5:12; (also 2 Cor. 6:10; 12:10; Jas. 1:2–4)
5. Let your light shine—Matt. 5:16
6. Honor God’s law—Matt. 5:17–19
7. Be reconciled—Matt. 5:24–25
8. Do not commit adultery—Matt. 5:27–30
9. Keep your word—Matt. 5:33–37
10. Go the second mile—Matt. 5:38–42
11. Love your enemies—Matt. 5:44
12. Be perfect—Matt. 5:48
13. Practice secret disciplines (giving, praying, fasting)—Matt. 6:1–18
14. Lay up treasures in heaven—Matt. 6:19–21
15. Seek first the kingdom of God—Matt. 6:33
16. Do not judge—Matt. 7:1–2
17. Do not throw your pearls to pigs—Matt. 7:6
18. Ask, seek, and knock—Matt. 7:7–8
19. Do unto others—Matt. 7:12
20. Choose the narrow way—Matt. 7:13–14
21. Beware of false prophets—Matt. 7:15
22. Pray for those who spread the word—Matt. 9:37–38
23. Be as shrewd as serpents—Matt. 10:16; (also Rom. 16:19)
24. Fear God. Do not fear people—Matt. 10:28; (also Luke 12:4–5)
25. Listen to God’s voice—Matt. 11:15, 13:9, 13:43, Mark 4:23, Luke 14:35, 1 Kings 19:11–13

Appendix C

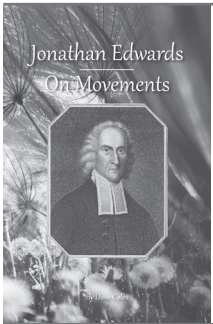
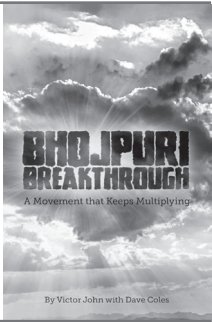
26. Take my yoke—Matt. 11:29
27. Honor your parents—Matt. 15:4
28. Beware of false teaching—Matt. 16:6, 11–12
29. Deny yourself—Luke 9:23; (also Matt. 10:38 and Mark 8:34)
30. Do not despise little ones—Matt. 18:10
31. Go to Christians who offend you—Matt. 18:15; (also Gal. 6:1)
32. Forgive offenders—Matt. 18:21–22; (also Prov. 19:11)
33. Beware of covetousness—Luke 12:15
34. Honor marriage—Matt. 19:6, 19:9
35. Lead by being a servant—Matt. 20:26–28
36. Make the church a house of prayer for all nations—Mark 11:17
37. Pray in faith—Matt. 21:21–22; John 15:7
38. Bring in the poor—Luke 14:12–14
39. Render unto Caesar—Matt. 22:19–21
40. Love the Lord—Matt. 22:37–38
41. Love your neighbor—Matt. 22:39
42. Be born again—John 3:7
43. Await my return—Matt. 24:42–44
44. Celebrate the Lord's Supper—Matt. 26:26–27
45. Watch and pray—Matt. 26:41
46. Keep my commandments—John 14:15
47. Feed my sheep—John 21:15–16
48. Make and baptize disciples—Matt. 28:19
49. Teach disciples to obey—Matt. 28:20
50. Receive God's power—Luke 24:49

ALSO BY THE AUTHOR



Are Disciple Making Movements really happening among Muslims? If so, how are they happening? And what do those movements look like? You'll find answers to these questions and many more in *Cabbages in the Desert: How God Transformed a Devout Muslim and Catalyzed Disciple Making Movements among Unreached Peoples*.

One of the largest Church Planting Movements in the world, the Bhojpuri movement began in the 1990s and continues to spread gospel light into the region of North India that has been called “the graveyard of missions.



The wisdom we glean from Jonathan Edwards’ comments on the First Great Awakening can shed helpful light on current discussions about movements taking place in our time.

Jesus promised: “This gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed in the whole world as a testimony to all *ethnē* (people groups), and then the end will come.” In *24:14*, you can read about many exciting ways this promise is being fulfilled in our time.

