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ABSTRACT

A STRATEGY FOR PASTORS TO MOBILIZE AND
EQUIP LAY MEMBERS FOR EVANGELISM
IN TANZANIA

by

Herry Mhando

Adviser: R. Clifford Jones

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: A STRATEGY FOR PASTORS TO MOBILIZE AND EQUIP LAY MEMBERS FOR EVANGELISM IN TANZANIA

Name of researcher: Herry Mhando

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Clifford Jones, D.Min.

Date completed: June 2000

Problem

The Seventh-day Adventist church membership in Tanzania is only over 200,000 while the population is more than 32 million. There is a need of a strategy to reach these millions with the gospel. Second, there are about 250 pastors, each taking care of an average of six to ten churches. This heavy pastoral responsibility makes it difficult for them to fulfill their evangelistic responsibilities. The only solution appears to be motivation and equipping of the lay members for evangelism.

Method

With the help of biblical resources and selected literature on the subject, this project focuses on the theology, theories, and methods currently employed in the field of evangelism, to foster mobilization of lay members for penetration to reach the unreached in Tanzania. Christ's method was examined, as well as the methods used by the apostolic church to evangelize their

generation. This forms the basis for this strategy: the intentional approaches to saturate the population with the gospel.

Conclusion

This study has accomplished two things. First, it has increased my awareness of intentionality in evangelism in my own life, as well as mobilizing others to do evangelism purposefully. As a result, it is my intention not only to promote it in Tanzania, but do hope that it can be a tool that will be used to evangelize the continent of Africa and the world.

Second, it has given me a new confidence in the practice of evangelizing that has taken me around the globe. Equipped with the results of this study, I hope to help other evangelists, whether they be pastors or laity, to sense the same assurance I feel, as they labor to bring a knowledge of Christ to their world.

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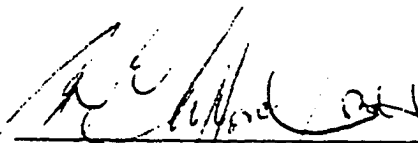
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IN TANZANIA

A dissertation
presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements of the degree
Doctor of Ministry

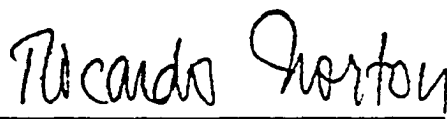
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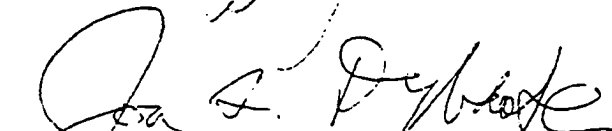
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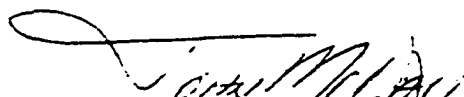
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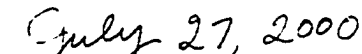
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Dean, SDA Theological Seminary
John McVay



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Dissertation

The Seventh-day Adventist Church understands the preaching of the gospel to be a central feature of its mandate and existence. As a result of this self-understanding, it has tried to reach peoples in all parts of the world with this good news. Yet as time has elapsed, the church has become aware that at the current rate of growth, with the methods employed in the present, it cannot reach all the people it targets as soon as it may desire, given the fact that populations grow at a higher rate than do most congregations. This points up the need for the church and its growth specialists to think of strategies that will foster expansion within itself that matches the demographic growth rate in the territories the church tries to evangelize. This dissertation is an attempt to contribute an answer to this need.

The purpose of this dissertation is threefold. First, it is an attempt to develop a workable strategy which Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) pastors and evangelists can use for evangelism in Tanzania. It is my hope that this dissertation will stir up the pastors to develop a deeper realization, because of the time in which we live, that the membership

needs to be involved in the sharing of the everlasting gospel in order that every tribe, every family, and every individual--the entire population, may be reached. On the basis of this study the pastors and evangelists will be able to begin an evangelism training program with every provision for on-the-job training, for a period of at least three months. Ellen White tells us: "Every church should be a training school for Christian workers. . . . There should not only be teaching, but actual work under experienced instructors. Let the teachers lead the way in working among the people and others, united with them, will learn from their example."¹

Further, with the information gained from this project, this study seeks to provide training methods to promote church growth in Tanzania.

It is also the intent of this dissertation to provide a tool for the pastors and lay members in Tanzania to use to meet their own local needs in evangelizing their own people, within their own local situations. I also intend to provide training for the new members who join the Seventh-day Adventist Church to learn the art of soul-winning and so become actively involved in evangelism. It is emphatically stated by Ellen White that

no sooner does one come to Christ than there is born in his heart a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus; the saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. If we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ and are filled with the joy of His indwelling Spirit, we shall not be able to hold our peace. If we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good we shall have something to tell.²

¹Ellen G. White, *Christian Service* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1983), 59.

²Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1956), 78.

Justification for the Dissertation

Six factors force one to reflect upon the need to develop a strategy to evangelize the unreached in Tanzania. First is the ratio of the Adventist church membership vis-a-vis the population in the country. While the Seventh-day Adventist church membership in Tanzania has grown tremendously during the last century from zero to more than 200,000, there is still a vast unfinished task. With a population of more than 32 million, it is evident that there is need for a strategy to reach these millions with the everlasting gospel of salvation.

With more than 2,000 churches and companies, each of our 250 pastors is responsible for eight or more churches. Their heavy pastoral duties make it difficult for them to adequately fulfill their evangelistic responsibilities. A strategy to assist them in more effectively training their lay members to carry an evangelistic load would greatly relieve them of guilt and time pressures. The pastors could lead the lay people to be more effective in caring for their local church needs.

The second factor is the distribution of the Adventist population in the country. When we compare the membership concentration in the cities and villages of northern Tanzania, and those in the south and central areas, the northern parts have very high membership, more than 80 percent. Most of the towns and villages in the central and southern regions have either few members or no Seventh-day Adventist presence at all. The best solution for reaching the unreached with the gospel in these parts appears to be in the motivating and equipping of the lay members and sending them out to enter these unentered

territories.

The third is the philosophy that prevails among the ministers and members of the church. Having been in the ministry for almost twenty-five years, I am realizing more and more that reaching the people around us with the present truth is a low priority for most of our congregations in Tanzania. "What was once the heartbeat of the entire church, particularly the early church, has diminished enormously as a priority in the minds of its members."¹ Evangelistic activities are accepted only in principle, not really in practice as they should be. Most of our pastors and lay members no longer see the entire church as the instrument to reach the world around them. They have started to believe, mistakenly, that the television, radio, satellite, and mass evangelism rallies are the only effective ways to respond to the Great Commission and reach the millions of the unreached. Very few members feel able to effectively share their faith, and even give the reason of what they believe. There is, therefore, the need for a strategy to train our people in Tanzania so that they will be enabled to share with non-believers what Christ has meant to their lives in a natural effective way. One can almost say McCloskey is talking about the situation in Tanzania when he writes:

In my more than twenty years of doing evangelism, I have come to a painful conclusion that, after all is said and done, there is usually more said than done. Evangelism is much discussed, encouraged and taught but is seldom demonstrated. Evangelism is nothing if it is not done. For to fall short of doing evangelism is to remain neutral in the spiritual battle.²

¹Win Arn and Charles Arn, *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples* (Pasadena, CA: Church Growth Press, 1987) 7.

²*Ibid.*, 252.

The fourth factor that necessitates a new strategy is the dropout rate from the church. There is a general consensus among the Tanzania Seventh-day Adventist church leaders that, due to the lack of participation and involvement of the members in soul-winning and the nurturing process, the rate of apostasy is pronounced. Most of our mass and local evangelism has been focused on goals of "getting a decision" only, and not "making a disciple." There is a need for a strategy to motivate and train lay members in all our evangelism programs.

Fifth, there is the interest evident in those who have been trained to be part of the evangelistic endeavor. Recent evangelistic campaigns have had great success in bringing people to Christ with the help of the laity, indicating a strong current interest in and hunger for the gospel. Wherever training of the lay members has been conducted in conjunction with the evangelistic campaigns, large numbers came for training and great interest in learning and practicing evangelism was evident. It is urgent, therefore, that the lay members be trained in larger numbers in order to take advantage of this opportunity. For surely, "many would be willing to work if they were taught how to begin."¹

Finally, there are financial realities to take into account. Douglas Kilcher's general observation is apropos in this regard:

Today's budgetary realities do not allow for more full-time pastors added to the church staff. However, the answer is to be found in pastors understanding how important the work of equipping members must be. Ten members in volunteer ministry are equivalent to one full-time staff person. Yet most churches are under-

¹Ellen G. White, *Ministry of Healing* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1942), 149.

utilizing their available people-power by 80 percent. If every member in a church of 200 members were motivated to find his/her place of ministry, the church would add the equivalent of 16 full-time pastors to the staff.¹

Definition of Terms

Evangelism: An intentional act of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with non-believers. It involves mobilizing church members in a holistic manner and equips them to do the work. In this study it also includes person-to-person outreach, friendship evangelism, and public evangelism.

Friendship Evangelism: A system of evangelization based on the *koinonia* and *oikos* principles, basically involving human relationship, the spirit of fellowship, and caring exhibited by the local congregation and individual members as well as intentional outreach to share the everlasting gospel.

Oikos: This Greek word means household, members of the family. In this study it is used to refer to people in one's circle of influence, both Christians and non-Christians--close friends, relatives, and neighbors.

Great Commission: This refers to the last command of Jesus to His disciples before His ascension (Matt 28:19, 20) In this study it is a call to all believers. Every local church member is commanded to go and make disciples.

¹Raymond C. Holmes and Douglas Kilcher. *The Adventist Minister* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1991), 100.

Laity: In its broadest sense, and according to this study, the laity refers to every baptized Seventh-day Adventist church member. The laity includes pastors as well. All have been called to go and make disciples of every nation on planet Earth.

Mobilization: Within the context of a program of evangelization, the word mobilization takes on at least a threefold meaning:

1. It means spiritual revival. Each believer must re-examine his/her own heart to see where he/she is failing. The Holy Spirit must help the believer to re-order his/her life in such a way that God can use him/her as a clean witness. Spiritual renewal will cause Christians to establish a new set of spiritual priorities in their relationship with people in their own church and in other churches. This is the horizontal dimension of mobilization.

2. Mobilization also means motivation. This is the vertical dimension. God must move upon the heart of each believer and upon the whole company of believers to set them aflame with love and compassion. The only one who can and must motivate our hearts for evangelism is the Holy Spirit.

3. The third meaning of mobilization is the pragmatic dimension. Mobilization is an action-packed word. It involves the training of every level of involvement and the implementation of the program, and the gathering of all available resources including manpower, methods, money, and the setting up of a program for the whole task into which each resource is put to work.

Strategy: Refers to the art of organizing and employing resources to achieve an objective. In this project, strategy refers to an indigenous plan developed for pastors to mobilize and equip all their local church members to win their entire population with the

gospel.

Expectations from This Dissertation

This project will not only be helpful to the pastors and local church members in Tanzania, but I have also been personally blessed by being involved in this research. I have received new insight and ideas that I will use the rest of my life in my ministry to evangelize and in equipping others to do likewise.

The information developed from this project will be made available to the Seventh-day Adventist pastors in Tanzania for use in training lay members, and at the same time it can be adapted for use by church members to equip other members so that every member will be prepared to train others. This will be a contagious ministry and a ministry of multiplication in soul-winning in Tanzania.

It is also expected that both numerical and spiritual growth among the Seventh-day Adventist members will be experienced in Tanzania, and as a result of this, apostasy will be minimized at the same time. This is because the more the members are kept busy and active, the more they will stay and help others to stay.

Finally, it is expected that when pastors begin to actively mobilize and equip the laity, and the lay members begin to get busy in evangelism, this will bring about a powerful revival that will not only transform the lives of the population in Tanzania, but the same fire will be caught in Africa and the rest of the world, and thus hasten the return of Jesus.

Description of the Project

This project is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 discusses the purpose of the study, the justification, description, and gives a definition of terms.

Chapter 2 introduces the theological foundation for total lay involvement in evangelism. The Great Commission and its relationship to ministry of the members of the local church is discussed. This chapter also deals with the role of the pastor in the equipping of the laity from the biblical point of view. The writings of Ellen White are also consulted on the role of lay members and pastors in evangelism.

Chapter 3 gives a review of literature on this subject, and investigates the existing programs relevant to the mobilizing and equipping of the laity for evangelism.

Chapter 4 briefly discusses the development of the strategy for mobilizing and equipping the saints. In this chapter a brief description of the people of Tanzania and the way they could be approached with the gospel is provided. Various aspects and strategies for reaching the unreached, mobilizing, training, and assigning for evangelism and different methods of training and implementation are highlighted in chapter 4.

Chapter 5, the final chapter of the dissertation, gives the summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR LAY EVANGELISM

Biblical Rationale for Involvement

For people to be dedicated and consecrated to anything or to any business, they need good reasons. In order for the church as a whole to be totally converted to the idea of total involvement of every member in the business of evangelism, a sound biblical reason will be helpful. There are at least four key reasons why every member needs to be enlightened on this matter:

1. The Character of God: Evangelism follows from the nature of the God we worship, who did not keep Himself in icy isolation from our predicament. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). The God we worship is a supreme lover, and all lovers will give anything, endure anything, and do anything for the object of their affection. That is what our God is like. We worship a God who had only one Son, whom He gave to be a missionary. Such love becomes infectious.¹ And when Christ died on the cross He was not alone. The Father suffered with His Son, for "God

¹Michael Green, *Evangelism through the Local Church* (Nashville: Oliver Nelson Books, 1992), 18.

was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself" (2 Cor 5:19). If God can love me that much, I can devote the rest of my life to the ministry of introducing others to Him. As they accept God's love, they will also introduce others to Him.

2. The Great Commission: Among the other roles He fulfilled, Jesus was a Teacher, a Preacher, as well as a Healer. The Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-18; Luke 24:48, 49) is one of Jesus' many teachings. The Commission itself reflects a burden Jesus shares with His audience early in His didactic ministry. In the Sermon on the Mount, He makes a declaration on the mission of His followers. In this discourse, He is addressing a multitude, possibly including some of His apostles. Among other things, He asserts that His hearers are the light of the world as well as the salt of the earth. Given the composition of the audience He is addressing and the gravity of the task He assigns them, we must conclude that He expects His followers to live with both the consciousness of the need for moral rectitude as well as with the keen realization that they are under a specific mandate to make it possible to glorify the "Father who is in heaven."

The breadth of this mandate is matched by the response of the early church to Jesus' Commission. The apostles were constant in teaching and preaching about Jesus. But the propagation of this good news was not restricted to this group alone. Philip, who was one of the Seven chosen to take care of the mundane needs of the church, also worked as a foreign missionary on the road to Gaza and in Samaria. So did those who were scattered abroad when persecution arose in Jerusalem. This gives an indication that the members of the Way generally saw themselves as witnesses to Jesus, the light of the

world, and the salt of the earth, that He talks about in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:13-16).

Before Jesus ascended to His Father, He spoke His final command, the Great Commission, as it is often called. "Go therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded: and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt 28:19, 20). While it seems possible from the setting in which this command was issued that Jesus was talking to the apostles here, it is also clear from His general teaching and practice that He expected all His followers to bear fruit (Matt 7:16; John 15:16), and function both as light and as salt in the world (Matt 5:13-16). There is a sense in which all members of the church are witnesses in whatever station they find themselves. While this does not mean that every person will do uniform tasks or that all will be evangelists, it does mean that all will contribute, either directly or indirectly, to the work of evangelism (2 Cor 5:18-20; 2 Tim 2:2; Acts 8:1, 4).

In other words, it is imperative for the genuine disciple of Jesus Christ to seek to make disciples for Jesus in a deliberate way. There are several reasons why obedience to the Great Commission applies to all believers. First of all, many church growth specialists support this view. Donald McGavran believes that obedience to this command energized the lives of the apostles, and will energize the lives of all Christians. All Christians march under this command and that unless Christians listen to and obey

this command they cannot be fully Christians.¹

Secondly, some Bible commentaries say that in the words "go ye" Christ included all believers to the end of time.² In fact, according to the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Matt 28:19, 20 constitutes the great charter of the Christian church.³ Mission is what Christ died for, and that is the supreme passion of the loving, rescuing God He came to reveal. Evangelism is very close to the heart of God, and that should be imperative enough for us. If we love Him, and seek to obey Him, then we must carry it out.⁴

Regarding obedience to the Great Commission, Bob Moorehead argues that mission isn't optional. It's what the church is all about. What we call the Great Commission has too often been the great omission. Yet Jesus declared that missions is why the church exists. That's why the Great Commission appears five times in the New Testament (Matt 28:18-20; Mark 16:15,16; Luke 24:47; John 20:21; Acts 1:8). What oxygen is to the fire, mission is to the church. As fire exists by burning, so the church exists by missions. No missions, no church.⁵

The fact that this command is recorded in all of the first five books of the New Testament was meant to make people sense the power behind the command. Our risen

¹Donald A. McGavran, *Effective Evangelism: A Theological Mandate* (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1988), 16, 18.

²Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1940), 822.

³"Matthew," *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 5 (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1976), 557.

⁴*Ibid.*, 18, 412.

⁵Bob Moorhead, *The Growth Factor* (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Company, 1988), 104.

Savior wanted His disciples to sense the seriousness of the command.

According to Tambunan, the Great Commission was to evangelize all the people of the world. There is no evidence that this commission has ever been rescinded. It is as valid today as it was in the first century. Nobody has the right to reduce the scope of Christ's commission to fit his or her own inclinations.¹

Regarding the power of absolute obedience to this commission, McCloskey reasons:

The King speaks and His subjects carry out His order in the power of His authority. Therefore to "go" is to obey, to stay is to disobey. To proclaim forgiveness of sins in His name is to align ourselves with the wise instructed path of life. To keep this information to ourselves is to be foolish and out of step with the Master's design for our lives and His purpose for history. This commitment to evangelism, grounded in obedience to the command of Christ, made the expansion of the church inevitable. The first-century Christians were found by their opponents to be an irresistible force, the overwhelming minority.²

The Great Commission in Matt 28:19-20 involves three elements: (a) Helping people to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior; (b) Bringing them into the fellowship of the church; and (c) Nurturing, training and supporting them until they become ministering members of the body of Christ.³

Chaney and Lewis believe that a church is not fulfilling its mission, and is not

¹Duma D. Tambunan, "A Program for Training in Personal Christian Witnessing to the Muslims in Indonesia" (D.Min. dissertation, Andrews University, 1987), 5.

²Mark McCloskey, *Tell It Often, Tell It Well* (San Bernadino, CA: Here's Life Publishers, 1985), 141.

³Paul R. Orjala, *Get Ready to Grow* (Kansas City, MO: Beach Hill Press, 1978), 15.

obedient to that for which it is sent, if it is not making disciples to Jesus Christ and planting churches within each and every ethnic segment of society. "We can know how faithful we are being to God in this regard. How are we doing in persuading men to believe in Jesus and become faithful members of His new people?"¹

The church is God's appointed agency for the salvation of people. God organized it for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. "From the beginning it has been God's plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light are to show forth His glory."²

3. The Coming of the Holy Spirit: The Book of Acts gives several accounts of the descent of the Holy Spirit (2:1-12; 4:31; 8:14-17; 10:44-48; 19:1-11). It is clear from reading all these accounts that the Holy Spirit was interested in the spiritual welfare of a wider group of people than the group of the apostles. In the Upper Room, on the day of Pentecost, the evidence is that all believers there were filled with the Spirit. In Samaria, when Peter and John laid their hands on the believers, Samaritans received the Spirit. Now, in case Peter succumbed to the temptation of discriminating against Cornelius and the group assembled at his house, the Spirit came on this group unbidden. He came upon these gentiles and placed His ownership and approval of them beyond doubt. Another

¹Charles L. Chaney and Ron S. Lewis. *Design for Church Growth* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1977), 7.

²Ellen G. White. *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911), 9.

group of common believers receives the Holy Spirit in Ephesus on Paul's insistence.

Two things are clear from these instances. First, the Christian life depends on the Holy Spirit. Christianity is a religion of the Holy Spirit. Before people can claim to be followers of Jesus, they need to be born of the Holy Spirit, as Jesus taught Nicodemus (John 3:3-8). Paul says whoever does not have the Spirit does not belong to Christ (Romans 8:9-15). Likewise, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, harking back to Jeremiah (31:31-34), intimates that only when the Spirit of God resides in the believer can that believer hope to live a life consonant with the divine will (Heb 8:8-12).

Yet, like all God's gifts to humanity, the Spirit is not given only for the benefit of the recipient. He also is the Enabler of the church, to facilitate both its witness to the world and to edify it as the Body of Christ. "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-- whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free-- and we have all been made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor 12:13). A wide range of *charismata* are available through the work of the Spirit (Eph 4:3-13; Rom 12:4-8; 1 Cor 12:12-31). This brings us to the second observation arising from the occasions of when the Spirit descended in Acts.

The Spirit is intimately connected with mission. Jesus left His disciples in the world to continue the work He Himself had carried out as led by the Holy Spirit. He said, "When the helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning" (John 15:26, 27). Further, He said, "you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be witness to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the end of the earth"

(Acts 1:8).

There is, without any question, a vital link between the receiving of the Holy Spirit and bearing witness to Jesus. If we are full of the Spirit, we will be full of the desire to share Christ with those who do not know Him. If we have no burning desire to share Christ with other people, there is every reason to doubt whether the Spirit is present in our lives at all. The Holy Spirit is given for mission. Without the Holy Spirit the disciples would not have dared to venture out into evangelism. With the Spirit in their lives, they could not hold back.¹ In sum, both Christian life and Christian witness call for the presence of the Holy Spirit, regardless of the vocation to which one is called. Therefore all of Jesus' followers through time are assured of the power of the Spirit for their personal lives as well as their witness.

4. The Second Coming of Christ: Jesus said, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come" (Matt 24:14).

One of Satan's most successful strategies has been to confuse the church members on this issue. Well does the devil know that the finishing of the work on earth depends upon the relationship of the church to this principle. Ellen White tells us that "the work of God in this earth can never be finished until the men and women comprising our church membership rally to the work, and unite their efforts with those of ministers and

¹Green, 18.

church officers."¹ "The gospel must first be preached to all the nations" (Mark 13:10).

According to Green we can actually, through evangelism, "hasten" the day of the Lord in the sense that we can fulfill His purposes in spreading the gospel and facilitating His return. How human ministry of this nature can be reconciled with the sovereignty of God that controls the things and destiny of history we may never know. But we are clearly given an assurance that the mission of the church, in the power of the Spirit, is a significant factor in deciding when the final end of history will be. And this is a noble vision and a powerful stimulus.²

Ellen White tells us that God has waited long for the spirit of service to take possession of the whole church so that all shall be working for Him according to their abilities. "When the members of the church of God do their appointed work in the needy fields at home and abroad, in fulfillment of the gospel commission, the whole world will soon be warned and the Lord Jesus will return to this earth with power and great glory."³

In Christ's farewell discourse in John 14-16, the mission of the church, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the ultimate return of Christ are inextricably woven together. And when in Acts 1 the puzzled disciples are speculating about the end of history and the end of the world, Jesus strongly discourages them, tells them to wait in Jerusalem until they have received the power of the Holy Spirit, and then, armed with the

¹Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1915), 352.

²Green, 20.

³White, *Act of the Apostles*, 111.

Spirit, to go and be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. No less a commission must be undertaken before Jesus returns to wind up all history at His coming.¹

These biblical reasons should move every leader and every pastor to awake out of sleep in order to mobilize every member and to make sure they are well equipped for evangelism. The God we worship is a missionary God, and we, too, should be committed to mission.

Evangelism is the heartbeat of God. His concern should be our concern. It is God's will for men to be saved (1 Tim 2:4). He does not want humans to perish (2 Pet 3:9). Consequently, our motivation to evangelize rests on our purpose to be in accord with God's purpose for humankind.²

Paul declares: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new. . . . God . . . has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ" (2 Cor 5:17-20). Rex Edwards calls this passage "the charter for ordained ministers and also a possible charter for the ministry of all believers, laymen and clergy alike."³

In a similar manner, Paul Little comments:

¹Green, 19, 20.

²Herbert W. Byrne, *Motivating Church Workers* (n. p., c. 1982), 79.

³Rex Edwards, *A New Frontier--Every Believer a Minister* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1979), 58-59.

We are God's representatives, appointed to be His messengers, ambassadors for foreign policy of the kingdom of heaven. What a tremendous appointment! In a real sense we are God's only mouth. His only feet. His only hands. When the apostle Paul said we are ambassadors, he was actually addressing the entire church in Corinth, not just a select few. As soon as we are born into the family of God through trust in Jesus Christ, we automatically receive this commission to share Christ's message.¹

Evangelism in the Early Church

It is interesting to note that although the Bible does not use the term "evangelism," it does talk a lot about the activity of "proclaiming the good news." More than fifty times the New Testament speaks of such proclaiming (evangelism) taking place. This term "evangelism" is derived from the Greek word *evangelize* meaning to bring, proclaim, or announce good news. Acts 5:42; 8:4, 12, 25, 35, 40; 10:36 and 11:20 tell us that the first-century church was busy about the work of evangelizing. Evangelism involves persuasion, persuading lost sinners whose heaven and hell hang in the balance, to change their minds and live for Christ.²

Evangelism also involves the activity of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit through both our lives and lips, so that others may believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and serve Him as Lord. The good news may be revealed by either an evangelist or by a witness. The word "evangelist" is used only three times in the Scriptures, referencing certain gifted believers (Eph 4:11; Acts 21:8; 2 Tim 4:5).

¹Paul Little, *How to Give Away Your Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 36, 37.

²McCloskey, 49.

The word "witness" is used many times in reference to all believers. In Acts 1:8 Christ referred to all believers when He said, "You will be my witnesses." A few Christians are evangelists, but all are witnesses. The evangelist—*euangelistas*—is a messenger or proclaimer of good news. The "good news" or gospel—*euangelion*—is clearly explained in the New Testament (1 Cor 15:1-5; 1 Tim 1:15; 2 Tim 1:8-11). Evangelists are not called only to spend their time in taking the gospel to those who have not yet heard and those who have not yet been won, but they must feel responsible for teaching the other members of the church to do likewise.¹ One may be a witness without being an evangelist, but one cannot be an evangelist without being a witness. Witnessing is to be a characteristic of all who have placed their trust in Jesus Christ. None can be a Christian without being a witness.²

It is generally agreed among church historians and Bible students that the New Testament period was one of the times of greatest expansion for the gospel. But what is generally overlooked regarding this period of growth is the vital part played by the local congregations in helping to increase the number of believers. From a Jewish perspective, Christianity arose largely as a lay movement. Its members were seldom from the priestly class. Jesus had gathered a community of believers bonded in love, who were to continue His work on earth. The church started with 120 members. Within a few days, there were 5,000 members. By the end of the generation, it was beyond enumeration, having reached

¹*Beacon Dictionary of Theology* (1983), s.v. "evangelist."

²Ron Rand, *Won by One* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1988), 31.

beyond the bounds of the then-known world.

According to Moorehead.

God created His church to grow. He designed it to grow. He equipped it to grow. And grow it did. On the first day of the church's existence, 3,000 people were baptized (Acts 2:41). From 3,000 the church grew to 5,000 (Acts 4:4), then on to "multitudes" (Acts 5:14). Its primary task, that of making disciples, necessitates growth. Some people are turned off by the talk of "numbers." They somehow feel that to talk of numbers is unspiritual. Let me remind you that God believed in numbers. He names a book in the Old Testament Numbers. All you need to do is to read through the book of Acts as shown earlier and you see numerical reports all the way through.¹

This phenomenal expansion of the gospel began in an explosive manner on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was given to the early believers. From that day the life of every member was never the same. For then

the glad tidings of a risen Savior were carried to the uttermost bounds of the inhabited world. The church beheld converts flocking to her from all directions. Believers were reconverted. . . . Every Christian saw in his brother the divine similitude of benevolence and love. One interest prevailed. One object swallowed up all others. All hearts beat in harmony. The only ambition of the believers was to reveal the likeness of Christ's character, and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom.²

McGavran tells us the characteristic of the early church's evangelistic passion. He says it multiplied itself beyond belief, and spread amazingly. Not only did it run through the Jewish population, but it spread to the Samaritan people and to the officers of the Roman army. Even when the official leaders, apostles, deacons, and elders of the existing Jewish churches were working busily in Jerusalem and Judea, some very ordinary

¹Moorehead, 24.

²Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1941), 120, 121.

Christians, "men of Cyprus and Cyrene went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also" (Acts 11:20). The gospel was also carried to Rome by unnamed lay Christians even long before Paul arrived there.¹

The secret of church growth during the era of the early church is highlighted here. These Christians were such ordinary people. We do not even know the names of most of them partly because they did not ask for recognition. Yet they carried the gospel throughout their then-known world in one generation. The leaders of the church were busy in Jerusalem, and the ordinary lay members were scattered around the world spreading the gospel.

The church of Christ, therefore, is "God's appointed agency for the salvation of men. . . . And the obligation rests upon all Christians. Everyone, to the extent of his talent and opportunity, is to fulfill the Savior's commission. The love of Christ revealed to us, makes us debtors to all who know Him not. God has given us light, not for ourselves alone, but to shed upon them."²

Mobilization of the Lay Members

The word "clergy" comes from the Greek word *kleros*, and "laity" is the English translation of *laos*. *Kleros* refers to calling. It is used in 1 Cor 1:2. "To the church of God in Corinth . . . called to be holy." All the members of the church are clergy, God's called

¹Donald A. McGavran, *Effective Evangelism*, 45.

²White, *Steps to Christ*, 81.

people. When used in relation to God's new community in Christ, it means the group of people who are redeemed through Christ, not a special group of leaders called clergy.

Laos means people, referring to the chosen people of God. It is used twice in 1 Pet 2:10: "Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God."¹ This suggests that the terms *kleros* and *laos* are synonymous and, in the New Testament setting, could be used interchangeably.

According to Leonard Doohan, we do not need to look "for a theology of the laity, instead we need a theology for laity. The task is not to specify the lay mission, but to be educated to awareness of who we are in baptism."² Lay persons do not belong to the church, nor do they have a role in the church. Rather, through baptism, they are the church and, in union with Christ, their mission is the mission of the church itself.³

This should give us a clear picture how all of us, as baptized members, need to regard ourselves as members of the body of Christ. Baptism challenges all to be and to live as a community of faith and love, two core ingredients of unity that Christ has brought.⁴

¹Roland E. Criswald, *The Winning Church* (Berkshire, England: Scriptural Press, 1986), 50, 51.

²Leonard Doohan, *The Lay-Centered Church* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1984), 25.

³Ibid.

⁴Gerald Foley, *Empowering the Laity* (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1986), 26, 27.

Through Jesus, the believers became an organic unit, living for mutual good. Their vocation was to conquer the world with the love of God (1 John 5:4, 5), a conquest that they could achieve only as a believing community. The individual Christian could not carry on ministry without joining the corporate life and worship of the church. Peter likens this closeness to the Aaronic priesthood in the Old Testament, but goes beyond that analogy by being ultra-inclusive--incorporating all believers (1 Pet 2:9).

We are challenged by the fact that apostles who were stirred to action by Jesus' command to witness were fishermen, tradesmen, and businessmen. They did not have the opportunity of receiving formal theological training. But they had one privilege, the privilege of association with Jesus. That association impressed upon their minds the urgency of carrying the gospel to everyone, everywhere.¹

Paul added that all the baptized have the gifts of the Spirit for the building up of the body of believers. Each individual was a part of the body. Consequently, early church members--perceiving themselves as part of this body--stressed community life and service to others. The good news was spread through domestic servants and small shopkeepers who taught through their work.²

The church in Ephesus provides an example. In keeping with this sense of mission to the general population and a feeling of obligation to other believers in particular, the

¹Kenneth B. Stout, "Developing, Implementing, and Testing a Training Program for Lay Pastoral Ministry in Selected Churches of the Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists" (D. Min Dissertation, Andrews University, 1983), 117, 118.

²Foley, 27.

biblical records indicate that the believers in Ephesus saturated the geographic area of Asia so that within two years "all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks" (Acts 19:10).

"From Jerusalem the believers were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles" (Acts 8:1). The occasion God used for spreading the gospel was the persecution that arose from the stoning of Stephen. Acts 8:4 says, "Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere, preaching the word" (NKJV). The word for preach is the Greek word *euangelizomenoi* (evangelizing). The word indicates that they "announced the good news, gossiped, chattered about, and shared about" Jesus everywhere they went. All of the believers were evangelizing. They saturated the entire area with the gospel."¹

According to McCoskey, one of the most striking features of evangelism in the early church was the people who were engaged in it. Communicating the faith was not regarded as the preserve of the very zealous or of the officially designated evangelist. Evangelism was the prerogative and the duty of every church member.²

That is the reason White tells us:

The Savior's commission to the disciples included all believers. It includes all believers in Christ to the end of time. It is a fatal mistake to suppose that the work of saving souls depends alone on the ordained minister. . . . All souls who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellowmen. For this work the

¹Darrell W. Robinson, *Total Church Life* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1997), 171.

²McCloskey, 79.

church was established, and all who take upon themselves its sacred vows are thereby pledged to be co-workers with Christ.¹

Christians occupy a sacred position when accepting the life of Christ and declaring publicly through baptism into Christ. They are then ready to represent Christ to the world. "Every one who has received Christ is called to work for the salvation of his fellow men. . . . The charge to give this invitation includes the entire church. Every one who has heard the invitation is to echo the message from hill and valley, saying, 'Come.'"²

But if during the early church, Jesus used ordinary people for extraordinary tasks, He is also waiting for the ordinary lay members of His church today to do the extraordinary. However, this will never happen until Christ's concern for the lost sinners becomes the concern of the congregation. Jesus' primary concern was to "seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). Each congregation's life must develop Christ's imperative of seeking and winning the lost.

New Testament evangelism was accomplished by men and women who were spiritually in tune with their Lord, and were therefore ready at any moment to be used by God in the work of being witnesses to the gospel (Col 4:5, 6). Paul commands the believers to be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18). Therefore, our attitude of availability needs to be compatible with our being filled with the Spirit. We must be equipped with

¹Ellen G. White, *Desire of Ages*, 822.

²White, *Acts of the Apostles*, 110.

God's power through the Holy Spirit in order to engage in evangelism.¹

Effects of Effective Mobilization of Lay Members

During the first 250 years of the church's existence, the entire Roman Empire was seriously affected and altered by a "lay movement." Christianity shook the Empire. It was the fastest-growing movement in the history of civilization, all because believers understood it was their "responsibility" to win their neighbors. That movement slowed in the course of time, however, when soon the idea was injected that the "clergy" alone was equipped to fight all the battles for the church, including evangelism.²

According to Moorehead, Satan's biggest deception for the church occurred when he convinced most of the church that the task of winning the lost belongs to the trained professional. One of the fallacies of that deception is that the trained professionals represent only one half of 1 percent of the total membership of any given church. That plan is not of God. Proof of that is found in Acts 8:1,4: "At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word."

When the persecution broke out, all the believers scattered, that is, all except the apostles. It was those who were scattered who did the preaching and the evangelism, not

¹McCloskey, 80.

²Moorehead, 25, 26.

the apostles, who stayed in Jerusalem. It was the common "laity" that went everywhere preaching, because they saw it as their task, not the task of the few apostles. A crisis had much to do with the explosive expansion of the church in that age.¹

These believers caught the vision that it was their responsibility to win their neighbors, and that the task of winning the lost belonged to them-- that is a proof that the mobilization was effective.

According to Metzger, the Great Commission can only be fulfilled meaningfully in proportion to the radicalness of our experience with Jesus. If Jesus is truly Lord of our lives, then our commitment to evangelism will be substantial, but if He is not, then evangelism will present us with little excitement. People talk persuasively only of things they have experienced (Acts 4:20). The three factors that motivate us are God's command to make disciples, our experience of His love that speaks from within, and the desperate need of others.²

Obedience and following the command means nothing unless one has truly experienced conversion of heart. It is an inward experience of Jesus in the life of the believer that matters. "No sooner is one converted than there is born within him a desire to make known to others what a precious friend he has found in Jesus. The saving and the

¹Ibid., 25.

²Will Metzger, *Tell the Truth* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1982), 113, 114.

sanctifying truth cannot be shut in his heart."¹

It is therefore vitally important to prioritize our efforts on the power of new-birth experience. One can never be silent after going through this experience. There is power when Jesus has taken possession of an individual's life.

According to Cooper, all the baptized members are called to recognize their own dignity and the dignity of others, since all are created in the image and likeness of God. And since these baptized members are people of God, they are called to participate in the ministry of the church as leaven in the world. They are sanctified by the gospel of Christ through their activity in society. The spiritual foundation of the community rests in the recognition of Christ's presence in the individual and in the community. This presence empowers all to share the responsibility for the mission of the church, fulfills their call as disciples of Christ, and generates communion in the church.²

McCloskey has compared the attempt to mobilize the church to the setting of a football game in which 22 men greatly in need of rest are cheered on by 80,000 greatly in need of exercise. Evangelism was never meant to be a spiritual spectator sport with only a certain few experts doing the work while the rest of the people cheer them on or go about other business. But there is a strong temptation to assign to the professionals the work that

¹White, *Desire of Ages*, 140.

²Norman P. Cooper, *Collaborative Ministry* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1993), 46.

rightly belongs to us all.¹

When a few individuals in a church are doing the task of evangelism, and are experiencing success, and others are busy congratulating them, the task of mobilization has not been effective. Total involvement is necessary for the mobilization to have been successful.

There is absolutely no hope of winning this world to Christ through the efforts of professional missionaries and ministers only. It is far too big a job. The accomplishment of the mission of the church can only be guaranteed through the participation of all members at all levels.²

The challenge is too much, population growth is against us, and the work is too broad and wide. For sure we need all the forces within the church to be mobilized for the task. And "as rays of the sun penetrate to the remotest corners of the globe, so God designs that the light of the gospel shall extend to every soul upon the earth. If the church of Christ were fulfilling the purpose of our Lord, light would be shed upon all that sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death."³

White tells us that "the work of God in this earth can never be finished until men and women comprising our membership rally to the work and unite their efforts with those

¹McCloskey, 78.

²George E. Knowles, *How to Help Your Church Grow* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1981), 93.

³White, *Christian Service*, 18.

of ministers and church officers."¹ This is the only hope for the world that is dying without the knowledge of the everlasting gospel.

She also emphasizes:

Wherever a church is established, all the members should engage actively in missionary work. They should visit every family in the neighborhood and know their spiritual condition. If professed Christians had engaged in this work from the time when the names were first placed on the church books, there would have not now been such widespread unbelief, such depths of iniquity, such unparalleled wickedness as is seen in the world at the present. *If every church member had sought to enlighten others, thousands upon thousands would today stand with God's commandment-keeping people.*²

This underscores an important dimension of mobilization: responsibility. God's people must gain an urgency for the salvation of other people.

There are those in the congregation who are diffident about meeting people for Christ, because they feel weak, timid, theologically unlearned, and uneducated. These can also be encouraged to be effective.

According to Metzger, our weaknesses can become the means through which God works in evangelism. Both the Old and New Testaments describe how God's ministry was carried out by very ordinary people. God met them in their weakness. Jeremiah was young and fearful (Jer 1:4-9), and Paul had to learn that his weakness was a plus factor (2 Cor 12:9-10). Recognizing one's own weakness has a way of unleashing God's power.³

¹Ibid.

²Ellen G. White, *Welfare Ministry* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1952), 71, 72.

³Metzger, 112.

Ellen White tells us:

The Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit rather than by the training of literary institutions. Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the words which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open. . . . By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have never heard words like these.¹

Fear is calmed and all timidity melted once people realize that they are not called to be alone. God goes before us in all our encounters with unbelievers. Even the New Testament evangelists are frequently described as bold (Acts 4:13, 29; 14:3; Eph 6:19, 20; 1 Thess 5:22). However boldness in prayer preceded boldness in witnessing.²

Pastors as Equippers in Evangelism

If the members are going to do the work of evangelism, they must be trained in the work of evangelism. That is why it is absolutely essential that in every church, regardless of size, there must be an ongoing training program to equip saints who are willing to do the work of evangelism.

The Scriptures tell us that "He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph 4:11, 12).

"To equip the saints for the work of the ministry." That is the key. According to

¹Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1950), 606.

²Metzger, 112.

Moorehead, every pastor's task is one of equipping, training, coaching, leading. Theirs is not the job of doing all the tasks, but equipping others to do them as trainers and trainees, working side by side.¹

However, it is necessary for the pastors to become convinced that the task of equipping lay people for the ministry is God's call and priority for their ministry. They see what happens when lay people get a taste of God touching another through them. Pastors must be sincere in this priority because only then will they be able to convince the congregation that they are not seeking to dodge their responsibilities but to provide better care in the long run. Pastors must lead their congregation to give and receive ministry from one another. They model this by receiving ministry from the laity: their prayers, care, counsel, correction, and encouragement.²

Today there is a need of a renewed collaboration and a common vision for all in the church, the pastor and the laity. They must together discover what they can be.³ All who are truly interested in the affairs of the kingdom of God must make a renewed study of the New Testament concept of evangelism and make remedial steps. Pastors who desire to follow the early church tradition will make every attempt to develop a pastoring and evangelizing ministry, and consider themselves as "equippers," those who have been

¹Moorehead, 37.

²Craig A. Dossman, *From House to House* (Lincoln, NE: Baby Boomers Ministries Resource Center, 1994), 49.

³Dooan, 36.

set aside to train others to be winners of souls for Christ.

Moreover, plans, skills, and tools are necessary for effective evangelism. Where there is no plan, goals remain unachieved. But plans alone will not be the answer either. There is need for skills as well. This is where the task of equipping comes in. The Greek word *Katartismos* means to equip, train, or furnish with the necessities. It also means to prepare intellectually and experientially. Early in the New Testament church the apostles equipped (*Katartismos*) the believers to do the work of the ministry of the word (Acts 6:1-4; Eph 4:11, 12).¹

The role of pastors in relationship to the congregation is that of the "equipping" of the saints for the work of ministry." The word "equipping," according to Powell, is the fisherman's term. It means "to mend a net" -- "to make it fit for use." "When you fish with a net, there is always a danger of snagging it on something and tearing holes in it. A torn net will not function properly. The tear allows the fish to escape. So a fisherman's net must occasionally be mended to make it fit for action."²

This is the role of pastors. By teaching, preaching, training, and by example, they are to equip church members for God's service. Pastors are to ready Christians for action and to make them useful in the Kingdom's service. "It is not the pastor's job to meet every

¹Rand, 28.

²Paul W. Powell, *The Nuts and Bolts of Church Growth* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1982), 78.

need of their congregations. It is their job to see that every need is met."¹

Therefore, if a congregation takes the New Testament model of ministry seriously, one can no longer speak of a congregation and the minister, but rather of a ministering congregation.²

According to Dossman:

Christianity in its beginning was a lay movement. Taking fishermen from their boats and nets. Jesus made them fishers of men. He dared to believe that ordinary people could become extraordinary servants of God. He would build His church upon believers like Peter. From among the common people He would call disciples who in turn He would send to the nations.³

The best help that ministers can give the members of our churches is not the sermons they preach to them week after week, but planning work for them. They must give both old and new members something to do for others, and instruct all how to work. That is the only way the church fulfills its mandate as the light of the world.⁴

We have also been challenged that those who stand as leaders in the church of God are to realize that the Saviour's commission was given to all who believe in His name.

"God will send forth into His vineyard many who have not been dedicated to the ministry

¹Ibid.

²Elmer L. Towns, John N. Vaughan, and David J. Seifert. *The Complete Book of Church Growth* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1982), 204.

³Dossman, 43.

⁴Ellen G. White. *Testimonies for the Church*, 9 vols. (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 6:436.

by the laying of hands."¹ Therefore, Christ intends that His ministers shall be educators of the church in gospel work. "They are to teach the people how to seek and to save the lost."² And it is encouraging to know that "many would be willing to work if they were taught how to begin. They need to be instructed and encouraged."³

Elton Trueblood confirms that the greatest, simple weakness of the contemporary Christian church is that millions of supposed members, including local leaders and pastors, are not really actively involved at all, and, what is even worse, do not think it is strange that they are not. There is no real chance of victory in a campaign if 90 percent of the soldiers are untrained and uninvolved. But that is exactly where we stand now.⁴

Ellen White's use of this image is evocative:

The strength of the army is measured largely by the efficiency of the men in the ranks. A wise general instructs his officers to train every soldier for active service. He seeks to develop the highest efficiency on the part of all. If he were to depend on his officers alone he could never expect to conduct a successful campaign. He counts on loyal and untiring service from every man in his army. The responsibility rests largely upon the men in the ranks. . . . Those who have the spiritual oversight of the church should devise ways and means by which an opportunity may be given to every member of the church to act some part in God's work.⁵

Therefore, Jesus our general counts on every pastor to train every soldier for active

¹White, *Acts of the Apostles*. 110.

²White, *Desire of Ages*, 825.

³White, *Christian Service*. 59.

⁴Elton Trueblood, *The Best of Elton Trueblood: An Anthology* (Nashville, TN: Impact Books, 1979).

⁵White, *Gospel Workers*. 351.

service. And the battle will finally be won. However, effective mobilization and motivation will only be achieved as pastors and church members are spiritually motivated.¹

One of the dangers of equipping ministry is that the majority of pastors believe in evangelism, talk evangelism, and preach evangelism, but do not practice evangelism as they should. The harvest is dead ripe and ready to be harvested, while the harvesters are sitting in the storehouse, wondering why it does not come in. Harvest can be gathered as soon as the harvesters go into the field after it.² However, without the enthusiastic involvement of the senior pastor and the key leaders of the congregation, any planning process regarding evangelism is doomed to failure.³

It is also important to emphasize that the pastors' ministry of equipping people does not limit itself to taking tapes of their sermons to shut-ins, delivering food, clothing, and financial aid to the needy, teaching Sabbath School classes, or helping them minister to the business and financial affairs of the church. It means to equip men and women in such a manner that they become effective in winning another person to Christ, and then take that person from the time of his conversion and help him become a solid, dedicated,

¹Samuel D. Faircloth, *Church Planting for Reproduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991), 86.

²Roy Fish and J. E. Conant, *Every Member Evangelism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 35.

³Robert E. Logan, *Beyond Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Fleming H. Revell, 1996), 182.

committed, fruitful, mature disciple who could in time repeat that process in the life of another.¹ This outreach component is a must.

Summary

The greatest want of the time we live in is the want of a shared evangelistic ministry in which church members and ministers would unite their endeavors. There is no indication in Scripture that the gift of evangelism was given only to those who were set apart by the laying of hands as apostles and pastors.²

Ellen G. White verifies this by telling us that

The ministers and church members are to unite as one person in laboring for the up-building and prosperity of the church. . . . The minister's work is the lay member's work as well. Heart should be bound to heart. Let all press forward, shoulder to shoulder. . . . All should be laborers together with God, and then the minister can feel that he has helpers in whom it is safe to trust. The minister can hasten this desirable end by showing that he has confidence in the workers by setting them to work.³

Since every true Christian is a witness of Jesus, whether he or she has the gift of evangelism or not, every Christian needs to be prepared to share his or her faith with unbelievers and lead them to Christ.⁴ Unless the pastor supports this work of equipping the

¹LeRoy Eims, *The Lost Art of Disciple Making* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 18.

²Miled Modad, "Development and Implementing a Training Program in Public Evangelism, for Lay Members of the Hispanic Seventh-day Adventist Churches in the Wisconsin Conference" (D.Min. Dissertation, Andrews University, 1989), 30.

³E. G. White, "The Duties of the Ministers and the People." *Review and Herald*, July 9, 1885, 270.

⁴Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts* (Glendale, CA: Regal Books, 1979), 175.

church, the program will probably run aground.

However, if the church members of any given congregation will be effective in sharing their faith, the pastors must be a living example in doing the same. It is almost impossible to set the congregation on fire for evangelism if the leader is busy doing other things. The pastors should be known as spiritual leaders who give much of their time to visitation and personal witnessing. They should make at least five visits every day a priority item on their schedule. They should spend at least fifteen hours every week in visitation and witnessing. Only when the church members know their pastor as a dedicated visitor and soul winner will they seek to emulate his or her example.¹

¹Larry L. Lewis, *Organize to Evangelize* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1988), 21.

CHAPTER 3

MOBILIZING AND EQUIPPING THE LAITY FOR EVANGELISM: THE CHALLENGE OF THE PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

Christ and the Apostles: Models in Evangelism

Evangelism can never be done effectively without looking back to see how it was done by the One who gave us the marching orders for the task, and also the way it was done by those He personally instructed. Jesus, with the apostolic church, is our example in evangelism.

A survey of the Gospels reveals a pattern in Jesus' ministry. On the one hand, He is busy with His ministry, of teaching the apostles, healing the sick and raising the dead, associating with those who need Him, and preaching the gospel. On the other hand, He readily disengages from both the throngs and the full group of His apostles, in order to spend time in prayerful association with God. The structure of this chapter centers around these activities as components of a model for successful ministry.

Jesus Was Led by the Holy Spirit

All the Gospels give the account of the baptism of Jesus and are careful to note that the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove at that event (Matt 3:16, 17; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:21, 22; John 1:31-34). It is the Synoptic Gospels that state that from

the Jordan River this same Spirit *led* Him to the wilderness where He was tempted by the devil (Matt 4:1; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1, 2). It is clear that the evangelists find it important to note that their Lord was both endorsed (at baptism) and led by the Holy Spirit before the inception of His ministry.

This authorization by the Holy Spirit finds a direct parallel in the commission He gave to His disciples before His ascension. On at least two occasions He instructs them directly to stay in Jerusalem until they are filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:47-49; Acts 1:8). The importance of the Holy Spirit in His mission and theirs is unmistakable.

Jesus Had a Message to Impart

Jesus was a preacher par excellence. One of His best-known discourses is the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:1-7:29). Volumes have been written to expound this profound message. Yet its simplicity strikes the reader of the presentation itself. It is no wonder that the evangelists so unanimously agree that Jesus' audience heard Him gladly (Matt 7:28, 29; Mark 12:37).

The people He preached to were starvelings who had been famished under the stranglehold of religion-as-usual. They had been told so many things that yielded no palpable results in real life—the mere "traditions of men." Now Jesus kept His audiences transfixed by teaching with authority truth that transformed lives. He could assure anyone in doubt any day that "salvation has come to this house." At long last there was a Teacher who taught people the way to God, a way devoid of forms and formularies. He was one who preached a kingdom accessible to the *am-ha-aretz*—the commonest among the

common.

Jesus Was Compassionate Toward People

But Jesus was not just laden with a message. He was the most compassionate person in human history. This was not incidental to His other work, important as that work was. Compassion sat at the core of His ministry. Even the declaration of His mission shows this. He quotes two statements from Isaiah which appear in Luke 4:18, 19: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, and set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

He delivered on this pledge, for He healed the sick, fed the hungry, comforted the bereaved, freed the captives, and raised the dead. While communicating the gospel message, Jesus demonstrated His care for the needs of the people, whether they were physical, intellectual, emotional, social, or spiritual needs. He communicated the good news of the kingdom through both word and deed.¹ According to Dossman,

Nobody was too high. Nobody was too low. Nobody was too liberal or conservative. Nobody was ever of the wrong sex, age or nationality to become the focus of Jesus' time and attention. Jesus had bread for the hungry, water for the thirsty, sight for the blind, hearing for the deaf, sanity for the crazy, healing for the sick, friendship for the lonely, salvation for the sinner, and much, much more.²

Hunter indicates that the compassionate ministry to people's needs was at the heart of

92. ¹William J. McKay, *Me, an Evangelist* (St Louis, MO: Stephen Ministries, 1992),

²Dossman, *From House to House*, 15.

Jesus Christ. He came "not to be served but to serve" (Matt 20:28) and He calls His church to do likewise. He dramatized this lifestyle by washing His disciples' feet, and together they healed the deaf and the blind, liberated the oppressed and the possessed, empowered the lame persons to "rise and walk," cared for the poor, and cleansed lepers. "The world's only world-wide network of programmatic compassion began quite early in the history of the Christian movement."¹

Coleman tells us that when people watched Jesus, they learned what evangelism was all about. He led them to recognize the need inherent in all classes of people, and the best methods of approaching them. They observed how He drew people to Himself, how He won their confidence and inspired their faith, how He opened to them the way of salvation and called them to a decision. "His method was so real and practical that it just came naturally."²

Yet nowhere does Jesus' compassion shine more clearly than it does when He hangs on the cross. Rightly do the apostles recognize that He died there "for us." It is while He writhes in pain that He offers forgiveness to those who slay Him, secures the future of His grieving mother, and guarantees the place of a hardened criminal in paradise. He is selfless all the way to the end, for "service" is etched on His every sinew.

It was this unfeigned compassion that influenced Jesus' method. Ellen White

¹George G. Hunter, *To Spread the Power* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1987), 131.

²Robert Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Spire, 1994), 74, 75.

summarizes His method by indicating that "Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Savior mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me.'"¹ Again she comments:

There is need of coming close to the people by personal effort. If less time were given to sermonizing, and more time were spent in personal ministry, greater results would be seen. The poor are to be relieved, the sick cared for, the sorrowing and the bereaved comforted, the ignorant instructed and the inexperienced counseled. We are to weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those that rejoice. Accompanied by the power of persuasion, the power of prayer, and the power of the love of God, this work will not, cannot be, without fruit.²

Jesus Sought Helpers

Jesus recruited people deliberately. All the Gospels include instances when He intentionally called individuals to come and follow Him. They were not only companions in times when He might have felt alone in the world. They were called especially to be, like Him, fishers of men (Matt 4:18-22; Luke 5:1-11; 27; John 1:42-50).

Jesus Taught His Helpers

Jesus did not only spend much of His time laboring for souls, but was also "constantly seeking others who could minister. He spent much of His time equipping them to minister effectively."³

¹White, *Ministry of Healing*, 143.

²Ibid., 144.

³Knowles, 50.

The Scriptures have made it very clear that Jesus made extensive use of learner activity and self-discovery in the calling of the Twelve. Instead of telling Andrew and the other disciples where He lived, He invited them to "come and see" (John 1:39). His call of "follow Me" was not only an invitation to association, but was also a call to meaningful activity. Activity and self-discovery were involved when He beckoned Simon, "Push the boat out further to the deep water, and you and your partners let your nets down for the catch" (Luke 5:4, TEV). "It is very obvious that Jesus' relationships with the twelve were never sterile or stagnant but dynamic, moving, changing. He led the disciples into experiences where they would learn for themselves."¹

Christ's Methods of Effective Training

There are at least six most basic training principles which Christ applied during His life and ministry.

First of all, there is *Selection*. He selected and called twelve men, "whom He also named as apostles" (Luke 6:13). He invited them also to become students in training when He said, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt 4:19). He looked for those with potential for the work they were to do, for humble, teachable people.²

Moorehead affirms this method saying, "Be selective. Recruit by name. Invite

¹John Hendrix and Lloyd Householder, *The Equipping of Disciples* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1977), 23.

²Moorehead, 37.

handpicked people to an explanation meeting where the whole training is explained."¹

The second principle is *Association*. It is significant to learn how Jesus spent time with His disciples. He appointed the disciples "that they might be with Him" (Mark 3:14). Even after the resurrection, people discovered the effect of this association on the disciples and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus (Acts 4:13).²

The third method is *Impartation*. This is the instructional phase of training where content is given. "Jesus clearly communicated with His disciples the principles He wished them to be acquainted with. This was an on-going process."³ This is what Youssef calls "teaching precepts"—offering principles and knowledge.⁴ This principle is what most of us consider as training. However, this, left alone, is not enough to equip anybody for meaningful service.

A fourth method of training is *Demonstration*. According to Stout, Christ's method was not just theoretical training. He taught by example. "He shared the principles and then demonstrated them by His own example."⁵ The best example of demonstration was when He was teaching the lesson of humility at the Last Supper. He washed the disciples' feet and then said to them, "I have given you an example that you also should do

¹Ibid.

²Stout, 118, 119.

³Ibid., 119.

⁴Michael Youssef, *The Leadership Style of Jesus* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1986), 165.

⁵Stout, 119.

as I have done to you" (John 13:15).

Christ also believed in *Delegation*. He shared responsibilities with those He was training such that finally when the time came He "sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing" (Luke 9:21). "He asked them to apply and to practice what He had been sharing with them in a real life situation. They were given responsibility."¹

True education must be action-oriented if learning is to take place. According to Hendrix and Householder. "It has long been recognized that learning takes place through the active involvement of the learner. The philosophy, 'you sit still while I instill' has no place in sound educational practice. The key to learning is what the student does, not what the teacher does."²

However, to have people become involved with you, you must first become involved with them. Just as Jesus came into the world and became involved with His people, and in His involvement with the disciples. He trained them. "The principle is this: where there is no involvement, there is no real training. In order to meet the needs of the person whom we are training, we have to know that person and be involved with him."³

The final method of training is *Supervision*. This is the ongoing management of the trainees. Christ saw that there was a necessity of continuing guidance, organization,

¹Ibid., 120.

²Hendrix and Householder, 23.

³Eims, 88.

and leadership.¹ After the trainees have done the assignment, and come back to give the report of what they have accomplished, they need encouragement and affirmation from the instructor, and even correction when they did not do so well.

The Apostolic Church as a Model in Evangelism

According to Barker, Jesus had poured His life into twelve disciples, expecting that they would change the world. He chose them and promised that their love for one another would make an impact, causing others to believe in Him (John 17:21-26). Finally Jesus turned His work over to them. They were to declare His kingdom in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and "to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).² Comiskey adds that "the heart of the early church was the home-cell movement. The Holy Spirit, working through the cell-based church, ignited an explosion we are experiencing anew today."³

The New Testament tells us: "So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart" (Acts 2:46). "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ" (Acts 5:42). "So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily" (Acts 16:5). The apostolic church, therefore, experienced the thrill of the throngs and the intimacy of the few. That is

¹Stout, 121.

²Steve Barker, *Good Things Come in Small Groups* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 18.

³Joel Comiskey, *Reap the Harvest* (Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 1999), 83.

why many Christians are so excited about the cell-church system because it has a strong biblical base.¹

When we picture the logic behind the explosive growth of the early church, we can see that as thousands were being added into the kingdom, the new converts were watching as the apostles were beaten, threatened, and hauled off to jail for their testimony for Christ (Acts 4:17; 5:18, 40). They observed as the apostles preached the gospel at every opportunity. They were there as the apostles responded with joy to the persecution they were forced to endure. They listened carefully as the apostles diligently taught the things of the Lord (Acts 5:42). It had an effect on the lives of these growing disciples. The training they received from the apostles sank in. They were like tape recorders with the recording mechanism turned on. Soon they would begin to play it back to the world.

Immediately after the death of Stephen, a tremendous persecution came against the believers at Jerusalem. "And all, except the apostles, were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria" (Acts 8:1). Why weren't the apostles scattered? Probably because they had been granted religious asylum by Gamaliel, who had declared, "Leave these men alone! Let them go!" (Acts 5:38, 39). The religious leaders had agreed to this, but there was no asylum and protection for the ordinary believers. So they fled, but not in panic. "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). They did this because they had been raised in an atmosphere of witnessing. They assumed that it was the normal thing to do. It was all they knew of Christianity. They had

¹Ibid.

been taught it and had been given examples.¹

Here we see the evidence that the converts of the apostles were so well trained in the task of evangelism that when persecution caused them to scatter from Jerusalem, these lay members "went everywhere preaching the word."²

The Apostolic Church Had a Message for the World

A quick survey of the book of Acts shows the natural commitment that the New Testament had to evangelism. Steadman indicates that the early church utilized two approaches in witnessing to the world: proclamation (*kerygma*) of the good news, and fellowship (*koinonia*) with the believers. The pagans could reject the proclamation as just another idea or philosophy, but they could not easily ignore the results of Christian fellowship, and genuine love and sympathy.³

To these two Hunter adds *diakonia* when he writes: "By *kerygma* the Christian faith is taught. By *koinonia* the Christian faith is caught. By *diakonia* the Christian faith is bought."⁴ That is truly why there is every evidence to believe that the early church probably attracted as many people through the power of its service and fellowship, the

¹Eims, 42-44.

²General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. *Witnessing for Christ Manual* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1981), 23.

³Ray Stedman, *Body Life* (Glendale, CA.: Regal Books, 1976), 108, 109.

⁴Hunter, 138.

service and fellowship open to anyone, as it did through its oral proclamation.¹

Yet Paul underlines proclamation in its own right. He described his own ministry as he stood on the shore at Miletus and spoke to the elders from the church in Ephesus, "How I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house. . . . I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:20, 27). And he says, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Cor 4:16; Phil 3:17). Paul may sound arrogant: "Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me, put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you" (Phil 4:9). But this is a statement of moral and practical authority, backed by indubitably excellent performance. He believes that where God has led him, others can follow safely.²

The Ministry of Paul

Paul's ministry was focused on evangelism and training others. He always took along several individuals—among whom we can name John Mark, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy--when he went on his missionary trips. He also mentored Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:2, 26), who themselves disciplined Apollos (Acts 18:24-28).

The role of the Spirit in Paul's ministry

Studying the life of Paul, we learn that one of his secrets of success in evangelism

¹Ibid., 137.

²Robert Thornton Henderson, *A Door of Hope* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1998), 133.

was that he was very much a goal-oriented person as he was led by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was not hindered by Paul's goals. He was able to speak to Paul precisely because they had specific goals to talk about. A careful reading of Acts 16 should be sufficient to convince one of this. According to vs 6, the Spirit told Paul not to speak in Phrygia and Galatia, though it was his goal to strengthen the churches in those areas. It was Paul's goal to go to Bithynia, but the Spirit said "no" to his goal. The Spirit gave Paul a vision, and in it a new direction: Macedonia.¹

The philosophy behind Paul's ministry

Paul was not only a goal-directed evangelist, but a person who had the mind of a winner as his philosophy of success. In 1 Cor 9:24-27, he says:

Do you not know that those who run a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we, for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

Chaney and Lewis bring three ideas from this passage to help the reader advance toward the mentality of a winner:

1. Develop a Winning Attitude: Paul here tells us that even though only one contestant used to win in each event of the Olympic games, yet, "run in such a way that you may obtain it." In other words, "think win!" Reject the idea of failure and defeat. One need not win in every situation. But one can still run the race like he or she expects to

¹Norman Shawchuck and Lloyd M. Perry, *Revitalizing the Twentieth-Century Church* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1982), 42, 43.

finish in the winner's circle. Finishing is success.

2. Determine Specific Goals. The RSV translates vs. 26 brilliantly. "Well, I do not run aimlessly." That is the key. Paul was never goalless: he was always goal-oriented. He knew who he was and what God expected of him.

3. Discover the Value of Discipline. Only those who have made the discovery of the value of discipline ever really succeed. To be what you are and accomplish what you were sent to do demands that you come under the authority of the risen Savior. That submission is discipline. Paul made that discovery. "I buffet my body and make it my slave" (vs. 27, NASB).¹

Many churches lack Paul's self-control. They are program-focused and event-focused. They do many good projects and activities. However, there is a need for an intentional evangelistic mind-set to reach every lost and unchurched person in the area for Christ. Our churches need to be "mentalized" for evangelism.²

Ideals for the Church in Today's World

In every age the church is confronted with the challenge of presenting an old message in a new form. This task involves communicating this message truthfully, convincingly, and yet in a way that is relevant and appealing to the current age. Implied here is that the church should grasp the core of the message in order to remain true to its identity and function and yet have a positive impact and be fruitful in a dynamic world.

¹Chaney and Lewis, 39, 40.

²Robinson, 2.

The essentials that the church needs to keep in place relate to the purity of the message it propounds, the room the church gives to the Holy Spirit in all its operations, and the attitude it holds toward the thing God holds most dear in His heart—humanity. These cardinal considerations determine and color all praxis. The gospel can only be imparted in its own terms. These include a consciousness of its divine origin, its mediation by the Holy Spirit through the sanctified life, and its urgency, given God's commitment to saving all who die without a knowledge of His goodness and love.

These considerations imply the manner in which the gospel should be delivered. Among other things, it must be attractively packaged, so that people do not reject it because of the shoddiness with which it is presented. Nothing the church does should prejudice the world against God. Below follows a brief discussion of ways the church can use to ensure that the gospel is not rejected prejudicially because it has been misrepresented by those who claim to have been touched by it.

The Role of the Holy Spirit in the Church

As long as the church considers the Holy Spirit as a nonessential and appeals to Him only as an afterthought, His blessing will not be fully unleashed. As has been shown above, the Holy Spirit endorsed and authorized Jesus to go about "doing good" in the world (Acts 10:38). He was also indispensable for the proclamation of the gospel throughout the world of the apostles. It will not be different today. Since the work of God is spiritual and not of this world, it requires the mediation of the Holy Spirit to make it effective on the hearts of seeking, but otherwise rebellious, human beings.

The Centrality of Jesus and the Kerygma

The apostles went through amazing difficulties, yet they endured these with a more breath-taking fortitude. The reason why is not difficult to determine. Jesus' life and work was a wonder that superseded everything else in their past lives. They were witnesses to a revolutionary experience. They had seen Jesus and had found in Him a salvation they could not trade for anything in the world. Peter confessed Jesus "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt 16:16). Paul saw Him as the Messiah who was to come (Acts 13:23-41). John the evangelist saw Him as the Word of God enfleshed, dwelling among us to make known His Father to the world (John 1:1-14; 1 John 1:1-5).

As a result, the apostolic church considered the task of evangelism a very serious business. The members had a message to preach because they had met the Man who issued the message. There was a Savior behind the good news. Lewis indicates that

before Pentecost the disciples agonized (Acts 1:14) and organized (v. 23). After the fire fell, they advertized (Acts 2:6) and evangelized (Acts 2:14-36, 40). If these early apostles felt the need to plan and promote, as well as pray, can you do otherwise? You are to pray as if everything depended on God; and you are to labor as though everything depended on you.¹

The church today needs a similar awareness of the role of Jesus as the sole Savior of the world. Unless He is kept at front and center, the church may do many things the world will admire, but the true mission of the church as such will not be fulfilled. The mission of the church, in this sense, is not concepts but a Person and the efficacy of what He has done, is doing, and is soon going to consummate in this world.

¹Lewis, 87.

People talk about the things that really matter to them. They will talk in mundane settings like home, school, the shop, at the bench, and over the phone and the internet. When Jesus has become the reason for praise, thanksgiving, and adoration, it shows in the behavior and the conversation.

When the gospel has taken a grip on the church today, it is a small step before the people seek to obey the Great Commission. The words of Jesus are no longer an imposition from above. They just solicit a grateful and natural response to One who has done so much. One we cannot turn down.

The Role of On-the-Job Training

Even good news can be told badly, in fact so badly that it can even escape the attention of those who are intended to hear it. Knowing that this is the case, many convicted Christians have resigned the telling of Jesus' story to experts. They will happily pay a minister or some other functionary of the church to tell the good news for them, because they have not been taught how to tell it themselves. In this regard, Ellen White issues an indicting challenge to the leaders of the church when she writes:

Many would be willing to work if they were taught how to begin. They need to be instructed and encouraged. Every church should be a training school for Christian witness. . . . There should not only be teaching, but actual work under experienced instructors. Let the teachers lead the way in working among the people, and others, uniting with them, will learn from their example. One example is worth more than many precepts.¹

Douglas Kilcher concurs, stating that in the typical congregation, between 30 and

¹White, *Ministry of Healing*, 149.

65 percent of the members are willing to serve as workers and leaders of ministries if they know they are needed. "If they are challenged with responsibility that matches their interest and ability, if they are given meaningful assignments with training, if their efforts are appreciated, they will arise to the occasion."¹

According to Rand, the pastor's role must be that of an equipper rather than one who does all the work of the ministry. Instead of being the person who ministers to all, the pastor should try to train others to minister to all. To do this effectively requires the pastor to lead in a particular area of ministry with a lay person observing. Second, the lay person leads in that area with the pastor observing. Then the lay person continues the ministry as a leader with another lay person observing in order to learn also. This is the essence of disciple-making pastors equipping believers to win and equip others. This is 2 Tim 2:2 in practice.²

As we have shown above, the church does not need to spend time puzzling over the necessity of this principle, because Jesus and His apostles have demonstrated its merit through the New Testament. What perhaps needs attention is how people could be taught to meet the specific needs of their areas of operation.

While offering classes for training is helpful, it has been discovered by a few congregations that one-to-one "teacher and disciple" training plans are especially effective when they are carefully supervised by pastoral leaders. If we stay in the classroom,

¹Holmes and Kilcher, 99, 100.

²Rand, 29.

however, most of us will probably not really learn to do evangelism. We need to learn by doing. "We can read books about swimming, learn to lecture about swimming, and discuss swimming endlessly, but, unless we actually get into the water, we will not really learn how to swim. We are learning by doing."¹

Would-be evangelists, like proteges in any field, need a good model from whom to learn. They need to be with an experienced person as he or she practices the art of sharing the gospel effectively person to person. There is no more helpful way to learn than to watch others whose example shows us in real-life ways.² The elements involved in Jesus' approach to training are still generally applicable to training others for ministry today.

Recruiting an essential. Henderson's advice is sound, especially because it starts the process of training at the very right place.

Gather a small number of willing persons to spend a significant time with you. Let them get close and get to know the real you. Let them ask questions and raise objections. Teach them the gospel of the kingdom. Show them how it is lived. Be a model for them. Then coach them and send them out to disciple others. Call them back and refine them. Each disciple can in turn disciple others until the whole world is disciplined.³

The accent here is on selecting those the pastor wants to work with.

Demonstration is indispensable. According to Lewis, the best training available is on the job. This involves assigning an assistant to an outstanding in-service worker. This

¹Floyd G. Bartel, *A New Look at Church Growth* (Newton, KA: Faith and Life Press, 1979), 141.

²Bartel, 140.

³Henderson, 133.

"learning by doing" is a basic principle in quality education, which provides not only the best training but also an additional worker in service.¹

This kind of on-the-job training brings about spiritual multiplication. In fact, Delos Miles appeals that, in order to achieve a faster spiritual multiplication, trained soul-winners are encouraged to always take with them two trainees. He says, "It is more important to train someone to lead another to Christ than it is to lead one to Christ."²

Home-Cell Groups and Adapting to Social Reality

The New Testament church did what was practical in their circumstances. They had a message and were enthusiastic about it. Now they needed a means of disseminating it. It is interesting that they saw no dichotomy between message and method. The message was so important that they had to find a way to help it reach other people.

One unique social structure they adapted for their needs was the family. They saw themselves as members of a large family. They called each other brothers and sisters. But more than that, they ate and lived together. Indeed, extended families were a common feature in Jewish life, but this new family unit was significant because the members of the "Way" considered themselves blood relatives due to the fact that the blood of Jesus had been shed for them. This was contextualization in practice. And it was done for the sake of making Jesus known to others. Christian A. Schwarz did research in 1,000 churches in

¹Lewis, 47.

²Delos Miles, *Church Growth a Mighty River* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1981), 19, 20.

thirty-two countries that corroborates this idea. He concluded that small groups invariably led to explosive growth.¹

Today the church preaches the love of God largely in context where people have reason to feel lonely, unwanted, and depersonalized.² In such a world, it is essential to bring nurture in meaningful ways that bring comfort and companionship to those in need of it. This is why small-group fellowships are vital—and successful—in our era. When people feel displaced and generally uncared for, it is reassuring when they can count on steadfast and personal regard from people who love them without ulterior motivation.

Needless to say, if these home-cell groups keep on task they will not be used only to minister to the needs of the members themselves. If the members are constantly engaged in learning the Word, praying for each other, and seeking the expansion of the kingdom of God, they will never lose the sense of wonder and gratitude as they mine out the wealth of God's love portrayed in His Word. In addition, they will find ways of speaking intelligibly to those they seek to reach.

Summary

In this chapter the methods used in the work of Jesus and that of the apostolic church have been examined in an effort to determine how the church today may do the

¹Christian A. Schwarz, *Natural Church Development* (Carol Stream, IL: Church Smart Resources, 1996), 32.

²Cf. Miguel Angel Cerna, *The Power of Small Groups in the Church* (Newbury Park, CA: El Camino Publishing, 1991), 23.

work of bringing the world to a knowledge of Jesus Christ. The major ingredients to this method include the centrality of the kerygma, the essential role of the Holy Spirit, and the place of training in the whole process of Jesus and His disciples' outreach. These components are necessary for successful mission. The next chapter focuses on my proposed strategy for evangelizing Tanzania.

CHAPTER 4

A STRATEGY TOWARD PARTICIPATION AND PENETRATION IN EVANGELIZING TANZANIA

The focus of this chapter is to set out the components of the strategy I intend to employ in the mobilization and the equipping of lay evangelists in Tanzania. These components comprise (1) small-group prayer fellowships, (2) spontaneous evangelism, (3) planned systematic evangelism, (4) *oikos* evangelism, (5) evangelism through healing the sick and meeting personal needs, (6) public proclamation evangelism, (7) and church planting.

Subsequent to the exposition on the method itself, I present several considerations that must receive attention if the strategy is to succeed. These considerations include (1) the demand for a spiritual awakening, (2) cultural relevancy, (3) the identification of receptivity, (4) ways and methods of approach, (5) goal setting, (6) leading people to decision-making, and (7) on-the-job training.

However, in order to facilitate the reader's grasp of the setting for which this strategy is intended, I first present a brief sketch of the evangelistic needs of Tanzania in light of the republic's demographics.

Tanzania

Location and Position

The United Republic of Tanzania, the thirteenth largest country of Africa, consists of Tanganyika on the mainland and the nearby islands of Zanzibar and Pemba in the Indian Ocean. Tanzania lies on the east coast of Africa, bordered by eight countries, namely, Uganda and Kenya to the north, Rwanda, Burundi, and the Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire) to the west, and Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique to the south, as well as by the Indian Ocean to the east.

People and Culture

The present population of Tanzania is about 32 million, divided into nearly 120 language groups. Kiswahili is the commonly spoken language as well as the main language of communication in books and other media. Through the charismatic leadership of Julius Nyerere, the first president following independence in 1961, Tanzania became a relatively unified and national-conscious society. In this sense, ethnic diversity in Tanzania does not mean ethnic fracture.

In terms of religion, Tanzania's population is roughly one-third Christian, one-third Muslim, and one-third traditional. There are some areas where certain religions have tended to be concentrated. Zanzibar, for example, is predominantly Muslim while Northeast Tanzania is largely Christian. Although Muslims have tended to predominate in the urban areas in the past, this is now changing.

Tanzania is officially a secular state. Its history of religious tolerance has been challenged in the late twentieth century with the rise of fundamentalism among Christians and Muslims alike.¹

A Historical Background of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tanzania

It was in November 1903 that A. C. Enns and Johannes Ahlers, two German missionaries, arrived in South Pare mountains in Tanzania (it was then called German East Africa). There they founded the first two mission stations—Giti and Kihurio—among the Wapare, who were still unreached by Christianity.

In 1905 E. Kotz also arrived and was assigned to be in charge of Kihurio mission station. He studied the local languages, Kiswahili and Kipare, and by 1913 he had translated the New Testament into Kipare.²

The early missionaries had various techniques of winning converts. Some missionaries applied corporal punishment to students who did not attend church. On Sabbath afternoon, those same missionaries walked around and beat those people found working on Sabbath. Other missionaries forced chiefs to redirect irrigation waters during the Sabbath so that people would not be able to irrigate their farms on that day.

¹Kwame A. Appiah and Henry L. Gates, eds., *Africana: The Encyclopedia of the African and African-American Experience* (New York, NY: Basic Civitas Books, 1999), 1826.

²Daniel Heinz, "Origin and Growth of Seventh-day Adventists in North America and Europe and their Outreach in Africa." in *The Development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Eastern Africa*, ed. by K. B. Elineema (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Dar es Salaam University Press, 1995), 35-36.

A departure from brutal evangelistic strategies gave way to some forms of bribery. For example, clothing was given to those in need with the condition that they had to attend church. Others were promised bride wealth (dowry) by the missionaries, especially those who were too poor to pay it themselves.

Another positive approach of evangelism was done on Fridays. Pupils, church employees, and converts were encouraged to invite their parents and other relatives to attend church the next day. Sometimes on Friday, pioneer missionary Enns hoisted a white flag from a mountain top to signify that the next day was the day to go to church. Moreover, Enns rode on a donkey around the countryside inviting people to meetings. Besides that, the Adventist medical and educational endeavors were used as avenues to teach people the Bible.

When the mission began there was strong resistance from the Africans, who valued their traditional life with its local dances, initiation rites, drinking, smoking, and polygamy. The Africans had also their traditional religions, in which they paid homage to various religious symbols. As a result, the missionaries turned to young children who were in the Adventist schools as well as to the few who agreed to attend their religious meetings. Sometimes it took years to gain their first converts. The first six candidates were baptized at Kihurio on April 4, 1908, five years after the arrival of the missionaries. However, the missionaries' success in converting chiefs Reuben Shazia, of Suji, and Daudi Sekimang'a, of Mamba, led to an increase in Adventist membership in those territories.

The motivation for conversion was also diverse. A number of converts joined the

church with the hope of attaining some material benefits, such as education, better housing, or equipment. Some were baptized in order to be accepted into the Adventist schools.¹

Growth has been exponential. Between 1908 and 1950 the membership grew from six members to 5,318. In the next twenty years that followed, the membership soared from this last figure to 23,810 in 1970.²

Since the 1950s, the Seventh-day Adventists in Tanzania have ceased to be a rural church, and have spread rapidly into the cities and towns all over the country. In 1987, the membership was 75,585 while by 1999 the membership grew to 214,638.³ an average of more than 10 percent increase per annum.

Although the Seventh-day Adventist membership in Tanzania is already more than 200,000, the church is faced with three major challenges:

1) There are too few pastors. With more than 2,500 churches and companies, we only have about 250 pastors, with an average of 10 churches each. This makes it almost impossible for the pastor to do evangelism. He is busy with the administration of the churches under his care.

¹K. B. Elineema, "Development of the Adventist Church in Tanzania," in *The Development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Eastern Africa*, ed. K. B. Elineema, (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania: Dar es Salaam University Press, 1995), 44-59.

²The statistics for the 17 years between 1970 and 1987 follow the same trend. At the end of this period, some 51,765 members had been added to the SDA church in Tanzania.

³*Seventh-day Adventist Year Book 2000* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000), 75.

2) The population is against us. With a population of more than 32,000,000 people, we just wonder how and when shall we reach these with the message of the gospel committed to us.

3. Many unreached communities and villages have no Adventist presence or very few members. Almost the entire central and southern regions of the country are unreached, with less than 25 percent of all the Adventists. See Table 1.

INCREASE OF MEMBERSHIP BETWEEN 1987 AND 1999

TABLE 1

Year	Membership	Churches
1987	75,585	367
1988	83,400	407
1989	96,920	433
1990	113,847	495
1991	122,704	563
1992	117,530	608
1993	139,550	669
1994	154,115	711
1995	171,402	770
1996	181,418	816
1997	184,522	878
1998	197,995	921
1999	214,638	994

On the basis of these challenges, there is a need of a strategy in which different approaches will be developed towards total participation of all our church members for total penetration of the gospel to all in our generation. This calls for an approach which is intentionally mission-focused, beyond maintenance, a methodology that leads to saturation of every community with the gospel.

In this context, saturation means reaching everybody, anywhere, anytime for Christ. No church can be said to have fulfilled the Great Commission until every person in its community has heard the gospel. All may not have received Jesus, but at least they have all been evangelized.¹ To reach everybody, everywhere, with the claims of the gospel, we must now turn to a simultaneous chain of events aimed at establishing an aggressive program of evangelism. McGavran asserts that "the church will achieve living contacts of involvement with the surrounding community as it undertakes continuous and costly Spirit-directed finding of the lost."²

Church-growth specialists have identified four types of evangelism. E-O evangelism, E-1 evangelism, E-2 evangelism, and E-3 evangelism.³ E-O evangelism is the evangelizing of nominal members—people who are in the church, but have never experienced the personal assurance of salvation. There are millions of Christians who need to be won to Christ and we should be careful not to take anyone's salvation for

¹Lewis, 93.

²McGavran, *Effective Evangelism*, 309.

³Paul R. Orjala, *Get Ready to Grow* (Kansas City, MO: Beach Hill Press, 1978), 71.

granted. This status makes it imperative for gospel communicators to do their work with a sense of urgency and a consciousness for clarity. It also means that they should proffer an opportunity for their hearers to make a decision for Christ whenever preaching is done.

E-1 evangelism is evangelizing of people who share many things with us in terms of identity and status. The only barrier to be crossed is the barrier of faith. This is where total mobilization of church members is required, for everyone can be involved to reach everyone around them. Different methods of approach should be employed for total involvement and also for the people to hear the gospel and to make their choice, for or against it.

E-2 evangelism indicates that there are two barriers to be crossed, the barrier of faith and the barrier of culture though speaking the same language. This is predominant in Tanzania. There are 120 tribal groups, some of which have their own tribal religions and cultures quite different from the rest of the tribes. These need special methods of approach in our attempt to communicate the gospel to them. An intentional group of lay preachers and pastors are to specialize for reaching these people. These should learn the local languages and the cultural behavior of the people as well as their religious beliefs. Then Christ's method alone will draw people to be attracted to the gospel.

E-3 evangelism is related to people with an even greater cultural contrast, often with language barriers as well. The SDA members in Tanzania need to be prepared not only to evangelize their own people, but to think globally. Soon, within a few years, if the methods suggested in this strategy are effectively applied, the whole population will be reached, and many will be required to cross the borders to evangelize the neighboring

countries.

Strategies Toward Participation and Penetration

Small-Group Prayer Fellowships

A small group of eight to twelve people meeting together informally in homes is the most effective structure for the communication of the gospel. Methodologically speaking, the small group offers the best hope for the discovery of spiritual gifts and for renewal within the church.¹ Yet small-group fellowships are useless if they are not focused on evangelism. We are told that Paul Yonggi Cho challenges each of his home Bible study groups to set a goal of adding four new people per year. When each group reaches fifteen, it divides. Each new group seeks to add another four. It is far from surprising that the church Yonggi pastors is the largest and fastest-growing church in the world.²

Comiskey gives a description of Cho's Yoiddo Full Gospel Church. It has approximately 24 districts, organized geographically, which serve as nerve centers for the church. Each district has paid staff who are available to counsel, encourage, or just be a friend to those in their district. Each district has 12 to 23 sub-districts, and each sub-district contains 10 to 15 sections. Each section contains 5 to 15 home cell groups. Each

¹Howard A. Snyder, *The Problem of Wineskins* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 139.

²Paul Yonggi Cho, *Successful Home Cell Groups* (South Plainfield, NJ: Bridge Publishing Press, 1981), 82, 83.

cell has approximately 5 to 10 households.¹ And Cho emphasizes that "there is only one way that home cell group system will be successful in a church. if that system is to be used as a tool of evangelism."²

This method of evangelism was the basis of success during the early church, and it seems it will be at the end of time. Even Ellen White says. "The formation of small companies as a basis of Christian effort has been presented to me by One who cannot err. If there is a large number in a church, let the members be formed into small companies, to work not only for the church members, but for unbelievers."³ With this information we can, with no apology, appeal to every pastor that when we marry the Jesus of the three angels' messages with the concept of small-group fellowships, we will finish the work.

Spontaneous Evangelism

This is the kind of evangelism that calls the involvement of every believer in their daily affairs and takes place through the "networks" or relationships of believers with unbelievers.

Jesus used this method when He evangelized the Samaritan woman (John 4). Weary from His travels, He rested at Jacob's well. There He met this Samaritan woman who had come to draw water. Jesus took advantage of the opportunity, and she, together with her entire village, was converted.

¹Comiskey, 41.

²Cho, 107.

³White, *Testimonies for the Church*. 7:21. 22.

Spontaneous evangelism has been the method the church has used in Africa for many years. Most of those who became Christians did not have any education. They did not know how to read or write. They talked often about their faith and what it meant to them, thus drawing many they associated with to Christ and the church.

The best example is that which was told by Max Warren. When he visited one of the churches in Nigeria, he asked one of the members how the gospel first came to their area. He was told that two Christian market women had gossiped about Christ to their customers and contacts. Their spontaneous evangelism had created a hunger for Christian instruction, and eventually led to many conversions and planting of a church.

Commenting on this incident, he says: "To a far greater extent than is commonly realized, Africa has been evangelized by gossiping the gospel. . . . We could well seek to redeem the meaning of 'gossip'. It has proved one of the great methods of Christian witness."¹

I recommend the "gossiping of the gospel" as one of the best methods of evangelism. I have used this approach in my ministry for the past few years. Even in my city evangelistic crusades, I stopped the printing of handbills, and announced to all our church members in different cities that every member will be my handbills. They were to go and gossip to twenty people about what was happening in the city. In Dar es Salaam, the capital city of Tanzania, where we have only 10,000 members, I conducted this kind of crusade in June/July 1998. Opening day the attendance was 3,000. By the end of the week it grew to 10,000. The end of the fourth week it doubled to 20,000. The end of the

¹Max Warren, *I Believe in the Great Commission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), 66.

third week we had 50,000. The end of the fourth week the attendance rose to 100,000. When we were closing the fifth week it was over 150,000. Since there were no handbills and members were specifically challenged and trusted to be the handbills, they took it seriously, and gossiped their meetings seriously. The results were phenomenal. It surely works.

We tried it again in Nairobi, Kenya, January/February 1999. Our membership in Nairobi was 16,000. The opening day attendance was about 20,000. The attendance kept growing and by the closing day of the fifth week we had more than 200,000 in attendance. No handbills. The lay members were the handbills. They just went about gossiping their meetings to the relatives, neighbors, friends, and to all with whom they came in contact. That city has never been the same again.

According to Pointer, "When believers express their love and faith in committed relationships with unbelievers, and if they were taught how to tell the story of their Christian experience in a simple manner in their daily lives, the results would be phenomenal."¹ What they need is more training, and to be motivated and mobilized to cultivate an intentional evangelistic mind-set. Only the pastor, motivated by the Holy Spirit, can motivate others to do likewise.

Planned Systematic Evangelism

Jesus is our example. He was a proponent of spontaneous evangelism as well as planned and systematic evangelism. He sent out the Twelve two by two on missionary

¹Roy Pointer, *How Do Churches Grow?* (London: Marc Europe, 1987), 93.

journeys in Galilee and Judea. He also sent the 70 others into every town and village (Luke 9:1-10; 10:1-20). This is planned evangelism.

If we hope to reach all in our community for Christ, we are not to rely on "spontaneous evangelism" alone. We must make planned and well-organized effort. A hit-or-miss method is sure to defeat us. There is a possibility of confusion and failure if we go without a definite program. Any businessman would experience failure if he tried to run a business without a method. The Lord has not only told us to go, but He has also told us how to go.

The Lord systematically divided the world field into four districts and commanded the disciples to bear the message simultaneously to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). In so doing, He gave us a definite program by which every lesser field, down to the smallest, is to be systematized for the work of witnessing. We are to divide the territory in which we are located into such districts as will enable us systematically to cover the whole field with the gospel.¹

Systematic evangelism involves individuals or groups who make new contacts and break fresh ground. It uses planned missions, events, and services to discover new and responsive people (Luke 9:1-6; 10:1-20; Acts 8:5-8; 10:1-48).

When Christ gave the church its evangelistic mandate, the geographical and cultural scope of the task was included. The disciples were to evangelize all peoples everywhere—the whole world (Matt 28:18-20; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8).

Systematic evangelism was mentioned—beginning in Jerusalem. The world was their

¹Fish and Conant, 23.

parish.¹

The 1976 Annual Council of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists voted the following:

To adopt a plan for assigning each church member a specific missionary territory. . . .
 To request Conference/Mission officers to list this plan on the agenda of executive committees and workers meetings for discussion and implementation.
 . . . Conference shall lay definite plans with every church, company, Sabbath School and institution to reach every home within its territory with the three angels' messages.²

This action has not been rescinded, and will not be, because it rests on the foundation of the Savior's commission to His followers. Since it has never been rescinded, and never will be, we stand guilty because we have not seriously considered it and we have taken no action. Something ought to be done about it, and we can do it in Tanzania.

It is recommended that when dealing with territorial assignment, sometimes circumstances make it desirable to give each family two territories, one close to where they live and another distant territory that might be regarded as the family's outpost mission. Such a procedure becomes necessary in districts that cover a wide area including towns and rural sections with no resident membership. "Families can be encouraged to drive into their territories, park the car, and just go for a walk. Say hello to people you meet on the sidewalk or working in their yards. Pray silently as you walk and realize these

¹Pointer, 93.

²General Conference of SDA, 134.

homes are in your territory. These people are your responsibility."¹

This type of evangelism will work well with our small-group prayer fellowships. Assigning a missionary territory to each group is what keeps the group stronger. Here is precisely where too many group organizations fail. They have no mission. A group of believers without a mission will not last long. Bible study, prayer, and evangelism are the ingredients for successful Christian life. This is true of a church, an individual, or small group. Too many groups are based on fellowship alone. Too many groups are based on Bible study alone. There are even a few groups based on mission alone. However, healthy groups need all three ingredients or eventually they will die.²

From my own experience, there are two other possible approaches through which systematic and territorial assignment evangelism can effectively be implemented. First, the pastor having developed the burden for total penetration and total participation decides to spend six months visiting every member of his congregation and praying and talking with them at home. He takes advantage of this pastoral visitation program in assigning families and individuals, and assuring them of his support and prayers. This is very effective.

Second, when the pastor announces for the training program for the lay members, he makes it a matter of emphasis that those who are attending should consider being assigned mission territories. Those who come for the seminar become self-supporting

¹Ibid., 26, 27.

²Cerna, 43.

missionaries. It is this kind of consecration and dedication that Anderson calls "minding God's business."¹

***Oikos* Evangelism**

This network evangelism is alternatively called friendship evangelism, incarnational evangelism, caring evangelism, relational evangelism, or *oikos* evangelism. *Oikos* is a Greek word translated "household" and is used frequently throughout the new Testament (Acts 11:14; 16:15, 31; John 4:53).²

Friendship evangelism is the process of relating to people in such a way that through the deeds and words they experience the love of Christ, become fully incorporated members of His church, and become participants in enlarging His kingdom. This friendship evangelism involves a series of intentional steps. We identify people in our relational world: family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and others whom we want to bring to Christ and to church. We care for those who become particularly receptive, pay attention to their needs, and try to respond to those needs in appropriate ways. We try to build friendships because people need friends. When the time is ripe, these easily respond to the invitation to Christ and the church.³

Tambunan tells us that there are three categories that make communication of the

¹Ray S. Anderson, *Minding God's Business* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1986), 3.

²Logan, 101.

³Kenneth Eriks, *Reach Out and Receive* (New York, NY: Reformed Church Press, 1988), 24.

gospel effective. First, there is the matter of being; second the matter of doing; and third, the matter of telling. It takes all of these working together in harmony if evangelism is to be complete and powerful.¹ Jim Peterson calls it the witness of our lives, the witness of the body, and the verbal witness.² Caring ministry happens when the godly, caring lives of the people of God touch the lost. It involves Christians in caring and ministering to the lost people so that the door is opened to present the gospel and lead them to Christ. Most of our churches are doing ministry, but it is usually directed internally to the membership rather than ministering to the lost in the community.³

Experience has indicated that the most urgent felt need of most people is affection, not religion.⁴ The majority of those who attend our church services and make up their minds to join the church and be baptized, who attend our evangelistic meetings, and respond to the altar calls are those who have had positive contacts with our members and were attracted to them. Arn and McGavran tell us that "research has indicated that between 75% and 90% of people who surrendered to Christ and joined the church claim to have responded because a friend or relative invited them."⁵ As fallible as Christians may

¹Tambunan, 36.

²Jim Peterson, *Evangelism as a Lifestyle* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1980), 106-111.

³Robinson, 169.

⁴Arthur McPhee, *Friendship Evangelism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 56.

⁵Charles Arn, Donald McGavran, and Win Arn, *Growth: A New Version for the Sunday School* (Pasadena, CA: Church Growth Press, 1980), 75, 76.

be, people still can see God's supernatural love in their lives, and are drawn to Jesus as a result.¹

Our introducing lost souls to Christ needs to begin with "meeting people at the point of need." In other words, effective plans for communicating the gospel must recognize the unique ways that hearers perceive and personally relate to the good news to their lives and needs.² As Robinson says, the church is to minister to people at the point of their need (Matt 25:35-45).³ He further asserts:

Caring ministry opens the door for evangelism. Often, in order to reach through the deepest need, we must begin by meeting the surface need. By providing shoes for children's feet, food for the table, counseling to help with life's problems, an opening is provided to reach through the deeper need of the spiritual life. However, if the church only provides shoes, clothes, and counsel, and does not lead people to Christ, it is no different from welfare agencies and social clubs.⁴

Another aspect of *oikos* evangelism is evangelism by attraction. This focuses on the congregation and the lived life of faith. It occurs when believers are so changed that they live the kind of life that becomes a visual aid to the non-members, and the unchurched are attracted to winsome Christians and the Christian community. They experience God's care through His love incarnated in His people. This prepares them to hear the word of proclamation when it is spoken. Evangelism by attraction is the focus of

¹Logan, 101.

²Arn and Arn, 87.

³Robinson, 155.

⁴Ibid.

Acts 2:42-47.¹ These disciples lived and they loved one another and the world around was attracted to their community of faith and to their resurrected Savior.

I was conducting an evangelistic crusade in Cantenur, Moldova, in Eastern Europe, April/May 1998. One of our pastors who lived about 120 miles away from the city of Cantenur was friends with a couple, who were highly educated Communists. They had become good neighbors and good friends. One day the pastor spoke to them about this evangelist who had come from the Seventh-day Adventist Seminary at Andrews University and invited them to come and listen to this evangelist. They drove up just in time to witness the end of my last sermon. The following day I was leaving for Michigan. Out of their enthusiasm, they all decided to spend the night in Cantenur in order to find time with the evangelist. I began telling them about Jesus at 9 o'clock that evening. Three hours later, the wife made a decision to become a Christian. And two hours later, the husband also made a decision. It was 2 o'clock in the morning when all the pastors present and lay members celebrated the conversion of this couple, on our knees, with tears. The very same pastor who escorted this couple to the evangelist baptized them a few hours later on Sunday morning before our departure. The following year, when my wife and I returned to Moldova for another crusade, this couple drove again to Kishinev, the capital, to meet us. They are growing stronger in the Lord, sharing their faith, winning souls. There is power in this evangelism by attraction. It will work anywhere.

¹Eriks, 1.

Evangelism through Healing the Sick and Meeting Personal Needs

Consistent with the spirit of the gospel, ministry to the sick and other needy people must accompany our invitations to salvation. The Gospels recount numerous healing miracles that the Lord performed while on earth. His apostles did the same. They showed compassion toward suffering people. Evangelism by attraction also involves believers in presenting the gospel to people who are attracted through the mighty works of God in their midst. In Acts 3, the lame man at the Beautiful Gate was healed and was leaping and praising God in the temple. A great crowd was attracted. Peter took advantage of the occasion and preached the gospel to them. Acts 4:4, NKJV, notes: "However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of men came to be about five thousand."

This kind of evangelism by attraction through the mighty works of God in our midst is sometimes called "power encounter" where God's mighty acts become incontrovertible in favor of the gospel and the risen Christ, who dwells and manifests His presence dynamically in the lives of His people. This is where the superiority of Christianity is demonstrated against non-Christian religions and secularism. According to Robinson, "The attraction technique can legitimately be used by churches today to attract people who would not be open to come to regular services of the church."¹

In September/October 1999, I was conducting an evangelistic crusade in Harare, Zimbabwe. The non-Christians in the city got the information that we conduct special

¹Robinson, 170.

prayers of deliverance twice every week on Saturdays and Wednesdays, and that our God has no partiality. Miracles will happen for all who believe. Thousands came. A young lady who had a serious incurable disease was among them. She was completely healed. The following day she came back and when the altar call was made, she was among the hundreds who made a decision for Christ. Her life has never been the same again.

I was conducting another crusade in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, June/July 1998. One lady who had demons for years lived in the southern part of Tanzania, more than 300 miles away from Dar es Salaam. She heard the radio announcing our meetings and she traveled by train to Dar es Salaam to attend these meetings. The night she attended she was among 14 people who were demon-possessed and all were delivered that day. All made their decisions for Christ, and all were baptized. All over the world people are suffering, and they need the real power of God demonstrated in their lives to stir up the spiritual senses. Even in the United States, people are suffering.

In December 1998 I was conducting an evangelistic crusade in Arlington, Texas, and every Wednesday and Saturday we had prayers of deliverance. One Saturday evening prayer session, we had with us one medical doctor who, together with his family, drove from Dallas to attend our meetings. He had been looking for a job for six years without success. The entire family lived on the small income of his working wife. He had been jobless for all these years. He needed deliverance. So he joined our prayer session. The following Monday morning I received a phone call from him. He had gone back to one of the major hospitals in Dallas where he had sent his application much earlier. He met the director of the hospital happily waiting with a letter of employment ready for him. His joy

was beyond description. He was leaping and jumping with God. His relationship with God has never been the same since then.

Ellen White tells us:

Christ feels the woes of every sufferer. When evil spirits rend our human frame. Christ feels the curse. When fever is burning up the life current, He feels the agony. And He is just as willing to heal the sick now as when He was personally on earth. Christ's servants are His representatives, the channels of His working. He desires through them to exercise His healing power.¹

There is, however, a danger in the event-attraction technique. It is possible for a church to go too far in depending on these events to reach people. Churches may, in the name of special events, resort to sensationalism, depending on superficial and even unworthy and worldly activities, to attract crowds. Event attraction must be kept in balance in the church's ministry. Then it provides a dynamic to the church's life that helps to reach people for Christ. It can be a meaningful part of a church's total evangelistic thrust.²

Public Proclamation Evangelism

This is the preaching and teaching of the gospel publicly that majors on appeals to the lost to accept Christ and follow Him in baptism and committed living. Biblical models include the powerful preaching and teaching of the apostles and laity. Peter in Acts 2,

¹White, *The Desire of Ages*. 823, 824.

²Robinson, 170, 171.

Stephen in Acts. 7, and Paul in Acts 22 are examples.¹

The apostle Paul used the combination of personal and public evangelism as an evangelist in Ephesus. This combination of public and house-to-house evangelism is called by Dale E. Galloway the "20/20 vision" because it is found in Acts 20:20.² And Galloway has so effectively combined the two methods, using his small groups and with his grant celebrations, until his program has been labeled "the most effective cell ministry in America."³ This method of evangelism publicizes events and programs that will appeal to the needs of the unreached people of the church community using signs, posters, newspapers, radio, and television. These evangelistic crusades should be conducted periodically to draw our "seekers" from the community.⁴

According to Velazquez, there is a correlation between small-group meetings and public evangelism as it is conducted in the book of the Acts of the Apostles. The pattern is shown in the record of the daily church activities that took place in the temple and in the homes (2:46). In Acts chapter 5 the high priest declared to the disciples that "You have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine" (vs. 28). The same chapter presents an organized strategy to cover the city with both personal and public evangelism. "Daily in the temple

¹Timothy Beougher and Alvin Reid, *Evangelism for a Changing World* (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1995), 127.

²Dale E. Galloway, *20/20 Vision: How to Create a Successful Church* (Portland, OR: Scott Publishing Company, 1986), 38.

³Elmer L. Towns, *An Inside Look at 10 of Today's Most Innovative Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1990), 78-88.

⁴Robinson, 165.

and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ" (vs. 42).¹

Tanzania is officially a secular state with maximum religious tolerance.² The popular method of religious proclamation in both Muslim and Christian religions has been public proclamation. And yet, the SDAs have not fully taken advantage of this opportunity. Already the religious tolerance in Tanzania has been challenged in the late twentieth century with the rise of fundamentalism among Christians and Muslims alike.³ It is time for every pastor and church leader to arise to the occasion.

Experience has indicated that the lay members are ready and willing to cooperate if the pastors will lead the way. Recent evangelistic crusades have had great success in bringing people to Christ as a result of lay involvement and training during the crusades.

In September 1994, I had a training evangelistic crusade in Musoma, Tanzania, and I had a team of 450 lay members working with me. I was conducting two-hour training sessions three times a week, had public meetings every night and I was together with my lay preachers spending at least two hours everyday in homes. By the end of that crusade we had baptized 1,703 precious souls. That had never been experienced. What made the difference? The lay involvement. I had stopped the printing of handbills. They

¹David Velazquez, "A Strategy for Lay Involvement in Urban Evangelism and Geographical Advance in the Territory of the North Mexican Union of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Mexico" (D.Min. dissertation, Andrews University, 1992), 154, 155.

²Mewesiga Baregu, "Tanzania," *Encyclopedia of Africa South of the Sahara*. John Middleton, ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1997), 4:215.

³Ibid.

advertized, they invited, they brought their relatives, friends, and neighbors. No one was baptized who did not have a friend or two among the active members of the church. It was the lay members' crusade. They took ownership of the crusade, and the results were beyond the expectation of everybody.

However, effective public evangelism requires a motivated pastor to totally mobilize the church members to lay strategies to evangelize their territory. Preparation for the crusade is not complete until the members have contacted their existing friends and relations and created new ones with the campaign in view. It is the church members who compose prayer teams, do person-to-person evangelism, and invite relatives, friends, and other contacts; the evangelist comes just to do the reaping of what the members have done. Crusade evangelism is effective where lay members have saturated the area with the gospel and met the needs of the people for Christ.¹

According to Crawford, there are three elements which bring effectiveness to the public proclamation evangelism. First, lost people must be present to be affected by proclamation. Jesus went out where the people were and proclaimed the good news. Today we must go where they are or attract them to our meetings. Second, the gospel must be clearly and understandably presented. Third, an invitation must be extended. The invitation or appeal should be marked by urgency, clarity, integrity, and compassion.²

¹Peter C. Wagner, *Your Church Can Grow* (Glendale, CA: Regal Books, 1976), 138, 139.

²Dan Crawford, *Before Revival Comes* (Fort Worth, TX: Scripta Publishing, 1996), 97.

The historical background of the apostolic church gives us a lot of encouragement. They were only 120 in the Upper Room. But within a few years, they saturated the world of their day with the gospel. Tanzania has over 200,000, with more than 250 pastors. Enabled by the Holy Spirit and armed with an informed use of the Word of God, these people comprise a basic resource that could revolutionize the country for Christ.

Church Planting

This discussion thus far has covered five key approaches towards total participation of every church member and total penetration with the final warning to the inhabitants of the towns and villages of Tanzania. In view of the Master's call for more reapers and the priority of reaping the great harvest, we begin to think of unreached people groups in their territory for which a new church plant will be needed.¹ Pastors need to be freed to evangelize and plant churches and cease to hover over churches. Churches need to learn how to care for themselves and become less pastor dependent.² Burrill suggests that "church planters must move aggressively forward as they plant new churches but they must move forward on their knees. A church on its knees is a church on the threshold of receiving power."³

Intentional strategy for church planting is one of the approaches that has not been

¹Russell Burrill, *Rekindling a Lost Passion* (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research Center, 1999), 25.

²White, *Evangelism*, 381, 382,

³Burrill, *Rekindling a Lost Passion*, 178.

adequately implemented. Yet wherever it has been tried, it has worked well. In 1997 a young energetic pastor, recently graduated from college, was assigned as a pastor for Hedaru, one of the towns of Tanzania, where there was only one big church with about 1,000 members. He had been converted to the idea of church multiplication and church planting. He met with all his church elders and other key leaders of the church, and with much prayer and wisdom convinced them to break the church into six different locations in the city. They did so. Today we have six congregations in the city. They are growing, have permanent church buildings, and all of them are doing well in evangelism.

In 1995 we conducted a crusade in Tanga, the third largest city in Tanzania. There we had only three churches. After the crusade was over, we decided to start six new congregations. Now we have nine organized churches in the city, and all are thriving, growing, and evangelizing. Multiplying of the churches is a powerful method of evangelism and church growth.

Experience has also shown that our members, when encouraged and assigned, are willing to venture by faith to move to unentered territories to plant churches. The problem has mainly been with lack of people who would motivate them. People are willing to move to the unreached communities as self-supporting missionaries, literature evangelists, farmers, and business men. Some churches are willing to sponsor a few of their home missionaries and even provide a stipend for them. Some of the members are willing to support someone as a missionary. What is needed is more leaders who will take this business seriously, mobilize, train, and send.

Throughout her ministry, Ellen White counseled the church to develop a church-

planting strategy that would place Adventism in every city and village. She said:

New churches must be established, new congregations organized. At this time there should be representatives in every city and in the remote parts of the earth. In all countries and cities the gospel is to be proclaimed. . . . Churches are to be organized and plans laid for work to be done by members of the newly organized churches. Place after place is to be visited, church after church is to be raised up.¹

Evangelism is multifaceted and all its aspects are important for effective total participation of church members and total penetration, to go out to declare the final message to the dying world. We have covered these six major approaches in this strategy, small-group prayer fellowships, spontaneous evangelism, planned systematic evangelism, *oikos* evangelism, public proclamation, and church planting. These are all biblical approaches, and they can work anywhere in the world. Wherever we have failed, the reason might be that we have emphasized a certain method to the exclusion of another. These methods are important, and trying them prayerfully and in the spirit of Christ they will finish the work. There are still other strategies and approaches that might work effectively elsewhere. However, I have purposely chosen these for they seem to fit best in our attempt for total involvement of lay members and total penetration. Many of these approaches I have used and tested with very successful results, and so I can strongly recommend them to pastors and evangelists in Tanzania.

Pragmatic Considerations for Effective Implementation

Now that we have the strategy and the simple approaches for total mobilization of

¹White, *Testimonies to the Church*, 6:24.

lay members, and total penetration for evangelism, there is a necessity of practical considerations for successful implementation. When these prerequisites are seriously taken into account, we may expect greater success.

Demand for Spiritual Awakening

The most essential element the pastor ought to seriously consider is that one cannot mobilize a sick church to evangelize. Robinson tells us that "a holistic and comprehensive evangelistic strategy must include three components: First, exalt the Savior. Secondly, equip the saints. Thirdly, evangelize the sinner."¹

We must remember that it takes the supernatural power of God in a miracle every time a person is converted. To realize an evangelism explosion and rapid church growth, we must be the people God can use. We can be prepared for the fantastic growth experienced on the day of Pentecost by prayer, obedience to God's word, commitment to Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit.²

In order to effectively evangelize the sinner, it is not programs we lack. What we lack is power! The Lord has already given us our program, and it is nothing short of an insult to Him to attempt another. Our responsibility is to follow Him and His program. The reason for our failure is that we are not following the Lord's program. We are not possessed by the power from on high. We are not willing to be rightly related to His

¹Robinson, 198.

²Orjala, 16.

cross, and this is the reason we are not possessed by power from on high.¹

Could it be that much of our witnessing activities are unproductive and ineffective because we depend too much on technique and strategy? "We must look at Jesus and the quality of life He calls us to, as a model for how to reach out to others."² It must be kept in mind that the gospel of the broken heart demands the ministry of bleeding hearts. As soon as the congregation ceases to bleed, it ceases to bless. We can never heal the needs we do not feel.³ We are too organized already. What we need is more agonizing as we keep ourselves organized. If we do not stay close to the Lord in prayer and feeding on the Word of God, we will soon give up in discouragement in our attempts to soul-winning.

Like ancient Israel, we are journeying to the Promised Land. Like them, we are confronted with a seemingly impossible obstacle between where we are and our entrance into the heavenly kingdom (Josh 1:2; 3:1, 5). For us, it is the obstacle of an unfinished task. The character of Christ has not yet been perfectly reproduced in our lives, and also, we have not yet carried the message of good news to everyone, everywhere.⁴ These two need to be re-emphasized before our members.

The only cry of John Wesley needs to be our cry: "Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not a straw whether they

¹Fish and Conant, 74.

²Rebecca Pippert, *Out of the Saltshaker* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 13.

³George Sweeting, *How to Witness Successfully* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1978), 83.

⁴Knowles, 38.

are clergymen or laymen, such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven on earth."¹ This kind of spiritual revival is what will make a difference as we attempt to revive the church to do evangelism. Without it, all our attempts will end up in failure.

Cultural Relevance Approach

Basically, contextualization seeks to translate the absolutes of the Scriptures so that they take into account changing language and differing ideas among cultures. The idea is not to change the gospel, but to enable it to speak with relevance to the needs of people with whom we are working. This, therefore, calls for absolute condemnation of certain aspect of the culture and separation from them. The Scriptures simply will not tolerate certain things. Light has no fellowship with darkness (2 Cor 6:14). The task in evangelism is to communicate the gospel to all people in terms meaningful to their cultural identity and existential conditions.

The problem in contextualization as popularly understood is that one can all too easily drift into unwarranted and God-displeasing syncretism—accommodation to the cultural values of a people that results in a mixture of biblical truth and ethnic religion. This ought to be avoided.²

Effective evangelism should seek to be culturally relevant, and this is what we

¹Wesley L. Duewell, *Ablaze for God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1989), 107.

²Faircloth, 159-165.

desire to happen in Tanzania. We must take into consideration the people and how best we can touch their lives. That is to say that although the culturally relevant church will not change the basic message of Scripture, it will package that message in a way that is meaningful to the people it is trying to reach.¹ However, Burrill is cautious:

What the church needs to guard against as it seeks to make its message culturally relevant is the tendency to adapt to the culture simply because it works. Our reason for being culturally relevant must stem from mission consciousness. Fulfilling the Great Commission "to the nations" demands an international church which is culturally attuned. . . . Cultural sensitivity is only meaningful in the context of the mission of Christ as outlined in the Great Commission.²

But, how do we go about indigenizing a church's ministry, evangelism, and worship to fit a people's culture in the context of the Great Commission? This is indeed a crucial question, because the culture of other people provides the medium through which God incarnationally reveals Himself to them. Our evangelistic mission's effectiveness depends on this.

Hunter suggests at least six guidelines to help us be culturally relevant in our approach. First, to acquire a genuine sensitivity to cultural factors and to people of other cultures is to win half of the battle. This will require a willingness to take some risks without sinning against God.

Second, consciously work to identify with the people, to understand and empathize with their customs, their feelings, their felt needs, their mental map of the world. Enter into some genuine friendships and spend leisure time with these friends.

¹Burrill, *Radical Disciples*, 55.

²Ibid., 58, 59.

Third, the use of their language is usually essential, preferably their dialect or even their "heart language."

Fourth, use a style of clothing and worship setting with which the subculture can resonate. There are people within any target population who can tell you what fits them and what does not, what they like and what they do not, what is within their comfort zone and what is not, what they can respond to and what they cannot.

Fifth, employ appropriate responses, the kind of pulpit evangelistic invitations that fit, and gather harvests in. To discover the best methods observe things that God is already using to bless other people.

Sixth, recruit and develop indigenous leaders. It frequently matters what people make up the church's leadership.¹

Ellen White tells us that "we . . . must learn to adapt our labors to the conditions of the people—to meet men where they are. While the claims of the law of God are to be presented to the world, we should never forget that love, the love of Christ—is the only power that can soften the heart and lead to obedience."²

It is not the purpose of this strategy to specify different methods of reaching every specific tribe or segment of the population. However, it is intended to bring about an awareness to our pastors, evangelists, and lay preachers that as they go about evangelizing, they all should take into consideration the cultural relevancy in evangelism. We must vary

¹Hunter, 179-172.

²White, *Evangelism*, 484, 485.

our methods of approach according to the situation and cultural context in each territory we enter. According to Ellen White,

Church organization . . . is not to prescribe the exact way in which we should work. . . . There must be no fixed rules. Our work is a progressive work, and there must be room left for methods to be improved upon. Some of the methods used in this work will be different from methods used in the past, but let no one, because of this, block the way by criticism. There is to be no unkind criticism, no pulling to pieces of another's work.¹

Again she says:

As fields after fields are entered, new methods and new plans will spring from new circumstances. New thoughts will come with new workers who give themselves to the work. As they seek the Lord for help, He will communicate with them. They will receive plans devised by the Lord Himself.²

How to Identify Receptivity

Many lay preachers and pastors have failed, become discouraged, and even given up the work of evangelism because no one has ever shared with them the importance of identifying receptivity in evangelism. In evangelizing our generation, priority should be given to those who are most receptive to the gospel. We should put our greatest resources where they will provide the largest harvest now.³ McGavran calls this "winning the winnable while they are winnable."⁴ Miles tells us that while top priority is to be given to

¹White, "Enacted Scenes," MS 145. Research Center, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

²Ibid.

³Miles, 90.

⁴Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 256.

evangelism, within that priority foremost attention is to be given to winning the winnable.

"Gospel acceptors are to have priority over gospel rejectors."¹

But how do we identify receptive people? Mylander shares with us three major signs of discovering people who are receptive to the gospel. First of all is the increase of membership in neighboring congregations. If others are growing, that is a sign of hope for your congregation.

Second, receptivity appears whenever people are in transition. Those who make major changes in life—residence, occupation, marriage, first baby, for example—--are open to new ideas. Many will want to commit their lives to Christ.²

Third, God is preparing people wherever people are under tension, those going through crisis. Every soul-winner knows that human extremity is God's opportunity. People who are hurting, those who are going through economic pressures, personal crisis,³

¹Miles, 90, 91.

²Charles Mylander, *Secrets for Growth* (San Francisco, CA: Harper and Row, 1979), 116. Regarding people experiencing transition, Olsen observes that "virtually all the new members, describing the circumstances under which they first began thinking of joining, talk about circumstances that involve some major change in their personal situation—marriage, geographical move, vocational change, illness, death, birth of children, going away from home to college or service." See Charles M. Olsen, *The Base Church* (Atlanta, GA: Forum House Publishers, 1973), 140, 141.

³With reference to personal crises, in the last few years I have recognized that one of the factors that enhances receptivity is ill health. With the current AIDS pandemic sweeping through Africa, this realization has helped me bring thousands of precious souls to Christ and His church. Almost every person you meet in the street is either sick or has a family member who is sick, has lost a close relative during the last six months. When our members have been well trained on how to approach hurting people with the message of hope, and invite these people to hear the gospel, the response is positive. Their minds are ready to hear and respond.

family frustrations, disappointed hopes—for these, God, prayer, and the good news of Christ come alive in a new way. Take advantage.¹

Research indicates that most people converted to Christ did so after a long conversion process, not as a result of a sudden encounter, and many also said they were converted after important milestones in their lives such as the birth of a baby or the death of a loved one. There are periods in life when people are more open to the gospel than at any other time.² Therefore the heralds of the gospel should be sensitive to times of heightened spiritual receptivity and take advantage of those opportunities. Their eyes must be open to discover these opportunities.

McCloskey gives us his own personal experience on how to meet this class:

I always pray for two things. . . . First, that God would lead me to people who are ready to decide, so that I might help them to enter His kingdom. Secondly, that God would grant me the wisdom to determine where my listeners are in the decision-making process, so that I might speak to their point of need with relevancy and gospel authority.³

According to Bleecker, we are surrounded by willing and ready pre-Christians. A pre-Christian is one who seems to be open to spiritual things and has never rejected Jesus Christ as Lord. The only sad thing is they do not know that they are ready, and we have conditioned ourselves to believe they are not. We have made ourselves content to leave our pre-Christian friends and relatives in an unsaved, uninformed state until they are

¹Mylander, 117.

²David Owens, *Sharing Christ When You Feel You Can't* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997), 107.

³McCloskey, 226.

forever lost. It is estimated that one fourth of the people we meet would come to Christ if someone would just explain the gospel to them.¹

People are hungry for God's Word like I have never seen before. When the Word of God is presented simply, clearly, and with authority and enthusiasm, people will desire to hear it, and churches will grow. However, we too often make witnessing, the sharing of our faith, more difficult than it needs to be. We need to stop panicking, putting pressure on ourselves, thinking we must lead some person to Christ.² Instead we should relax and let the Holy Spirit work naturally and spontaneously through us. What we need is daily to be in an attitude of praying, asking, "To whom do You want me to be a light? To whom do You want me to be a witness? Lord, use me today to lead someone to be saved. Lead me to someone who is receptive to the gospel and use me today as Your tool of salvation." Then you can rest and leave the results up to the Lord.

One of the reasons why there is pressure and anxiety is that we are laboring and witnessing from a wrong motivation. This particular motivation that I am referring to has its origin in trying to meet the expectations of higher organizations. The pastor's anxiety and pressure are modeled and cued to the members, who in turn are influenced subconsciously in their witnessing approach. Our motivation must have its root in Jesus, who called us to be winners of souls, and when that happens, there will be success.

Too often I have made two opposite mistakes in my attempt to know when to share

¹Walter S. Bleecker, *Leading a Person to Christ* (San Bernadino, CA: Here's Life Press, 1990), 16.

²*Ibid.*, 15.

my faith and talk about Jesus. Sometimes I have tried to witness too quickly, talking about God before I had listened enough, built trust, and whispered a prayer, and have ended up in failure. The opposite mistake I have often made is worrying so much about moving too fast that I did not talk about Jesus even when people were practically crying out for me to speak. According to Ellen White, "Many are on the verge of the kingdom of God waiting to be gathered in."¹

But where can we find receptive people? The best place to find them is to go where they are. We cannot wait for people to come to us. When we study the life of Jesus, we see Him spending more time in the market place and homes than He ever did in the synagogues. Jesus went where the people were.²

Effective Ways of Reaching People

Some of the best members of the church have a burning desire to share their faith, but find it difficult getting started. Eims shares with us three practical suggestions.

1. Make Friends: Develop friendship with non-Christians. Some Christians hardly know their neighbor well enough to talk about more than the weather. Invite acquaintances for refreshments in your home. Have friends among the unbelievers, even smokers, and let them feel at ease in your presence. If non-Christians enjoy being around you, that indicates they will like the company of the Lord Jesus Christ—if we are representing Him. Take note of how Jesus dealt with them. "Then drew near unto Him all

¹White, *Evangelism*, 292.

²Owens, 21.

the publicans and sinners for to hear Him. And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, 'This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them'" (Luke 15:1, 2).

2. Ask Questions: The second suggestion for creating opportunities is, learn to ask questions that will lead to spiritual discussion. Here are some of the possible questions:

- a. Do you think heaven is a perfect place?
- b. How close have you come to a perfect life?
- c. If God lets you go to heaven as you are, what will happen to heaven's perfect record?
- d. Do you see hope in the Bible verse 2 Cor 5:17?
- e. If you die and go up to the pearly gates and knock, and the Lord answers and says, "Why should I let you into my heavens?" what would you tell Him?
- f. So you have an interest in religious things?
- g. Have you ever considered becoming a real Christian?
- h. If someone were to ask you what a real Christian is, what would you tell him?
- i. Do you know God personally or are you still on the way?

3. Be Sensitive to Open Doors: A third way to develop witnessing opportunities is to be sensitive to open doors. Witnessing can be compared to climbing a mountain. Some mountains can be climbed easily; there are paths directly to peaks. Other mountains are extremely difficult to scale. Persistence will uncover a route that leads to the peak, until the summit is conquered. A similar concept is operative in witnessing. It requires wisdom

and courage to discover open doors to take advantage of them.¹

Eims emphasizes friendship as the key factor in evangelism. He says: "When you encounter a co-worker you would like to win to Christ, focus first on winning his friendship. Ask about his interests. As you show interest in his hobbies or pastimes, he likely will become interested in the important things in your life. . . . Friendship takes time, but this is true Christian love in action."²

In like manner, Paul Little recommends eight practical principles on how to give away your faith, methods which Christ used when He had an encounter with the Samaritan woman.

1. Contact Others Socially: We must have social contact with unbelievers. Our Lord sat down at the well in the town of Sychar in Samaria, a place where He would have face-to-face contact with non-Christians. He was in the middle of traffic, so to speak. He even accepted their urging, spent two days with them, met the woman's friends and acquaintances, slept in their bed, ate their food, and possibly talked to them far into the night.

2. Establish Common Ground: Establish common ground as a bridge for communication. You notice, when the Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?" He began by making a request. Sometimes friendship starts when your neighbors need help or advice. And friendship must be a two-way street

¹Eims, 41-51.

²Ibid., 43.

of mutual give and take. Jesus was also skillful in asking effective questions, which we would do well to learn.

3. Arouse Interest: How did Jesus so perfectly arouse the woman's interest and turn the conversation to a spiritual message? (John 4:10-15). It is fascinating to see this woman's curiosity kindled and begin to burn as Jesus drew her along. His treatment of her certainly contributed to the very positive response she had to Him and His message of truth. He mentioned thirst, and she responded immediately.

4. Get the Ball Rolling: The question is, how do we get the ball rolling? Jesus did it by making a cryptic statement that precipitated a question from the Samaritan woman. His statement related to her primary needs, and at the same time suggested His ability and willingness to meet those needs (4:10-11). Asking practical questions kept the ball rolling, helped to carry on the conversation.

5. Don't Go Too Far: Give people as much of the message as they are ready to receive. Despite the woman's obvious interest and curiosity, Jesus did not give her the whole story at once. Gradually, as she was ready for more, He revealed more about Himself. Then, when her curiosity had reached its zenith (vs.26), He identified Himself as the long-awaited Messiah. Go slowly and let the Spirit lead.

6. Don't Condemn: Jesus did not condemn the woman. As she answered the question about her husband, her sin itself condemned her. Even to a woman caught in adultery, He said to her pointedly, "Neither do I condemn you. . . . Go now and leave your life of sin" (John 8:11). We sometimes have a mistaken idea that if we do not condemn a certain attitude or deed, we will be condoning it. But this was not our Lord's way.

7. Stick with the Main Issue: Jesus did not allow secondary questions to sidetrack Him from the main issue (John 4:20-26). The woman was asking where she should worship, on Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem. Her question was probably valid, but Jesus refused to be sidetracked. Focus on salvation.

8. Confront the Person Directly: In declaring to the Samaritan woman that He was the Messiah, Jesus came to a crucial point in His message to her. "I who speak to you, am He." Likewise, effective ambassadors must know how to invite decision about a message they are communicating, bringing the non-believers to a direct confrontation with the Lord Jesus Christ, so that they realize their personal responsibility to decide for Him.¹

Another simple and effective approach that I have personally used with great success in my house-to-house and personal evangelism is the FORT—Family, Occupation, Religion, and Testimony—approach.² In a friendly manner, the soul-winner begins with topics of special interest, until the issues of religion and personal testimony spontaneously come into the conversation. We are to keep in mind that "warmth and friendliness are especially important during the early part of a visit. Your aim is to make your host or hostess relaxed and at ease in your presence. This is a time for winning friendship and gaining confidence."³

Another way of approaching people for Christ is just accepting the challenge to

¹Little, 50-70.

²General Conference of SDA, 44.

³Ibid.

become "an instrument of change"¹ among the members of your congregation. When this decision has been made after prayerful consideration, things begin to happen.

Criswald develops the idea that God is not so much as looking for people with superior talents and gifts as He is looking for availability and usability. The key to usability is not so much "ability" as it is "availability." It was true when Christ was on earth; it remains true today. He uses only those who are available to be used.² This is why Powell says that "if God's people would just show up, our churches would fill up, and the world would sit up and take notice."³ God is looking for people who will be available to be used as instruments to save the lost.

There is yet another way that can be used to touch lives, the spirit of humility. This involves a believer who recognizes his/her nothingness and helplessness. You feel that you are not gifted for anything and you come to an awareness that unless God comes to help you, you are unable to bring anybody to salvation. It is this kind of attitude that makes one give God all the glory for the success. In the words of Ellen White: "The humblest worker, moved by the Holy Spirit, will touch invisible chords, whose vibrations will ring to the ends of the earth and make melody through eternal ages."⁴ Again she says, "If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one thousand conversions to the truth where now there is only

¹Rand, 189.

²Criswald, *The Winning Church*, 85.

³Powell, 3.

⁴White, *The Desire of Ages*, 823.

one."¹

Goal Setting in Evangelism

One of the pastors who has been very effective in leading the churches he has pastored to accomplish great goals was asked to tell the secret of his effective leadership. His reply was: "I try to dream big dreams, and believe they can be achieved."²

Commenting on Robert Schuller's well-known philosophy of "possibility thinking," Peter Wagner tells us that "if your dream is from God, then you need only to exercise this miracle-working power, and you can reach the seemingly unattainable goal."³ Jesus tried to get this same idea over to His disciples when He said, "If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you" (Matt 17:20).

The quality of our relationship with God can easily be evaluated by the kind of goals we set for ourselves in evangelism. When God is our partner, we can afford to think and plan big. The only limitations on God's power are put there by our thinking small.⁴

What is the main reason most people set too small goals and think too small? One of the reasons is that many fear to fail reaching the high goals they set. Schuller's slogan

¹White, *Testimonies to the Church*, 9:189.

²Reginald M. McDonough, *Key to Effective Motivation* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1979), 129.

³C. Peter Wagner, *Your Church Can Grow* (Glendale, CA: Regal Books, 1976), 53.

⁴Byrne, 146.

is. "I would rather attempt something great and fail than attempt to do nothing and succeed."¹ Someone has rightly said, "The greatest power in the universe is the power of possibility thinking."²

I experienced the truthfulness of this philosophy from the beginning of the year 1999. I had set a goal to reach the top class of society with the gospel of salvation. I determined, in my attempt to evangelize the world, to also reach the "White Houses" of different countries, sharing the gospel story with presidents of different countries. Having developed the dream and having prayed about the dream, I began my evangelistic itinerary with the Nairobi, Kenya, Crusade. Amazingly, while I was in Nairobi, the President invited me to the State House to share what I had to share, and to pray for him. After the Nairobi Crusade, I flew to Blantyre, Malawi, for another crusade. Before the fourth week of the crusade, the news had already reached the State House. The President of Malawi invited me to the State House to pray for him. In one year I had the joy of visiting and kneeling in prayer with the presidents of two different countries.

Some people dream dreams, and their dreams and goals are powerful and productive. Yet they never share the dreams with anybody. Just to be able to dream dreams yourself is not sufficient. An effective leader must be able to help others become visionary. He or she must be able to communicate the joy of dreaming dreams and seeing visions. "The ability to verbalize his own dreams and to help others get their dreams in

¹Wagner, *Your Church Can Grow*, 53.

²Ibid.

concrete forms is an essential part of the climate of challenge."¹ Therefore the secret of success in setting higher goals and dreaming big in evangelism is when these goals and dreams are shared, and let others take ownership of them. This ensures success.

Other people also have big visions and set high goals. They even share their goals and visions, but do not work hard for the accomplishment of the goals. McDonough points out that "a vision without a task is only a dream; a task without a vision is boredom; but a task with a vision is the hope of the world."²

Leading People to Decision

Effective evangelism includes a carefully sequenced process that leads the non-believer through progressive decisions to the acceptance of the whole earth. Every Bible study and sermon should include an appeal. Doing so prepares the audience or the prospect for a future major decision. The principle of encouraging progressive decisions is valid both for personal and public evangelism.³

There are souls in every congregation who are hesitating almost persuaded to be wholly for God. The decision is being made for time and eternity; but it is too often the case that the minister has not the spirit and power of the message of truth in his own heart. Hence no direct appeals are made to those souls that are trembling in the balance. The

¹McDonough, 129.

²Ibid., 130.

³Carlos G. Martin, *Turning the World Upside Down* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2000), 64.

result is that impressions are not deepened upon the hearts of the convicted ones; and they leave the meeting, feeling less inclined to accept the service of Christ than when they came. They decide to wait for a more favorable opportunity; but it never comes. (See Acts 24:25.)¹

When people understand the truth they should be urged to decide to obey it. Paul confronted King Agrippa with a straight question, "Do you believe the prophets? I would that you do believe" (Acts 26:27). We are to bring people to the point of decision, showing them the importance of truth, that it is life or death. Notice how Ellen White puts it: "If words are not spoken at the right moment, calling for a decision from the weight of evidence already presented, the convicted ones pass on without identifying themselves with Christ, the golden opportunity passes, and they have not yielded, and they go farther and farther away from the truth."

It is vitally important for every pastor, evangelist, and lay preacher to realize that salvation is not optional. It is a serious business. People who listen to you must be made to know that there may never be another opportunity. It is Satan's deceptive schemes that introduce this illusory option. For example, Felix, before whom Paul witnessed so powerfully, espoused Satan's option. Besides, the preacher must realize his or her duty to stand between the dead and the living. Nothing must be left to chance. The appeal should be planned and executed with all scriptural authority. The Bible says, "Today is a day of salvation" (2 Cor 6:2). And also says, "Today, if you hear His voice, harden not your

¹White, *Evangelism*, 279, 280. Commenting on Acts 24:25, Ellen White states that, for Felix, that convenient time or season never came.

hearts" (Heb 3:7, 8).

The Savior's Great Commission and leading people to decision are very closely related. Avoiding persuasion is a luxury unavailable to the preacher. The preacher takes seriously the right of each individual to choose, and he desires that God's ways be a live option for every man. Without his persuasive effort, another might not be free to choose for Christ. He knows that no man is an island, and that to decide not to influence is to decide to let others' influence hold sway. The passive, silent Christian is, perhaps, more unethical than the other person.¹

There are three elements which bring effectiveness to the proclamation of the gospel. First, the lost people must be present to be affected by proclamation. Jesus went out where the people were and proclaimed the good news. Today we must go where they are, or attract them to our meetings. Second, the gospel must be clearly and understandably presented. Third, an effective invitation must be extended.² This is what Criswold calls Presence, Proclamation, and Persuasion.³ The invitation or appeal should be marked by urgency, clarity, integrity, and compassion. Every preacher must learn how to give an effective invitation. The invitation should be planned carefully and made an object of prayer, not something simply tacked on the end of the sermon. The congregation should always be informed of this appeal and invitation. They are aware of the appeal,

¹Elmer L. Towns, John N. Vaughn, and David J. Seifert, *The Complete Book of Church Growth* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1982), 263.

²Crawford, 97.

³Criswold, *The Winning Church*. 91.

and wait for it with eagerness.

A true and successful soul-winner must be an optimist, a possibility thinker, assuming that God would honor His word, resulting in firm decisions for Christ. You must expect decisions or else no decisions will be made. Every pastor and lay worker must realize that evangelism involves decisions. It is hardly a take-it-or-leave-it proposition. God charges His ambassadors with the responsibility of calling nonbelievers for a decision. We are to move, persuade, convince, beg, and beseech (Acts 17:1-4; 2 Cor 5:11; 20) to the end that men and women clearly and soberly face the question, "What will you do with Jesus Christ?" This is the most decisive question that can ever be put to a person, for his answer is the hinge on which his eternal destiny swings.¹

Evangelism never leaves people neutral. It compels them to take a position for or against Christ. Christ commissioned His church to invite and compel people to come in (Luke 14:16-24). There is an urgency in the motivation and tone of the announcer of the good news that arrests and attracts, draws and compels the listener. It is an encounter of men for decision, not only to listen, but consider.² Wesley Duewel has placed greater emphasis on the aspect of compelling. He has stated that to invite and persuade them to come is not enough. We must compel them.³

¹McCloskey, 52.

²Towns, Vaughan, and Seifert. 263.

³Duewel, 106. For a fuller treatment of this topic, see the section in the Appendix which deals with strategic steps on leading people to a decision.

On-the-Job Training Program

It has been estimated that only 3 to 4 percent of pastors make it a habit of taking their lay members with them when they go out to evangelize.¹ Every pastor, evangelist, and lay preacher must understand that the only solution of conquering the world for Christ is the multiplication of experienced winners of souls, and this is possible only by on-the-job training programs. Over a period of months the less experienced person is drawn into the presentation little by little, until finally the less experienced one is able to lead the entire conversation.² Inasmuch as the average person can no more learn to evangelize in a classroom as he can fly an airplane in the living room, the only solution we shall use in the implementation of this strategy is on-the-job training of our entire membership.

We have discussed earlier that it is more important to train a soul-winner than to win a soul. The Lord did not command us to go and make converts, but to go and make disciples. It is because winning a person to Christ is so important that training someone to win 10 or 100 or 1,000 people to Christ is much more important.³ One of the wonderful areas of this strategy is that these two tasks are combined, and people are trained to evangelize by observing as others are being evangelized. Therefore, one is not done to the exclusion of the other.

Scriptural multiplication will only take place when converts are turned into

¹D. James Kennedy, *Evangelism Explosion* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1983), 5.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

evangelists, disciples into disciplers. As Kennedy tells us, "95 per cent of converts never win anyone to Christ because they are not equipped to do so,"¹ it is therefore obvious that training a person to evangelize effectively will be more fruitful than merely winning someone to Christ. Lockerbie rightly says, "Success without a successor is failure," and adds, "The work would be farther ahead if each one were to teach one."²

But how can on-the-job training be done effectively in a church setting? It must be an intentional evangelistic training program with an objective of total mobilization of every member to reach the unreached for Christ. The program must begin with the pastor.

The visiting teams, therefore, should be made up of one pastor and two lay persons: The first team in the morning, the second set of lay persons in the afternoon, and the third in the evening, twice every week. The pastor trains these six trainees for four months, going out with each for two hours; and then another set of six for two other days. He spends four days a week for this intentional program of on-the-job training for evangelism—so training twelve active lay preachers for four months.

After sixteen weeks, each of these twelve trainees becomes a trainer. They select two church members each, to train them for 16 weeks, going out with them twice every week. As one can easily see, this results in a multiplication of workers. The work of the pastor becomes that of mobilizing, equipping, assigning, and supporting. When teams of two or three visit together, one person should lead out in the conversation. In his or her

¹Ibid.

²Jean Lockerbie, *By Ones and By Twos* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1983), 49.

mind, he or she will have a strategy for the visit, and the companions should prayerfully observe and speak only when they are addressed. It is vitally important that one member of the team be the spokesperson.¹

Emphasizing the importance of spiritual multiplication and reproduction in the intentional evangelistic strategy, Coleman says, "It did not matter how small the group was to start with, so long as they reproduced and taught their disciples to reproduce."² This is what will cause churches to grow numerically and the members to grow spiritually. Coleman verifies this, saying, "The criteria upon which a church should measure its success is not how many new names are added to the roll, nor how much the budget is increased, but rather, how many Christians are actively winning souls and training them to win multitudes."³

Summary

This chapter is the core of this dissertation in that it presents the strategy I propose to use to reach non-Christian people for Jesus in Tanzania. This strategy involves the use of small-group prayer fellowships to weld members together, spontaneous witnessing among acquaintances, friends, and relatives, systematic evangelism to gather in those who have been introduced to Jesus by their friends, family members, and acquaintances, a healing ministry to meet the needs of those who have to deal with health challenges,

¹General Conference of SDA. 45.

²Coleman, 106.

³Ibid., 110.

proclamation evangelism to provide witness to those who will respond to this approach, and church planting to make the presence of the church known in unreached neighborhoods.

These strategic approaches are destined to work as long as the church is spiritually revived, its message and lifestyle are culturally relevant, is observant enough to identify receptive individuals and groups, is attractive, has clear goals, and can lead people to make firm decisions.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This dissertation has been an attempt to develop a strategy of evangelism that, though specific to the needs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Tanzania, is broad-based enough to provide direction for those desirous of using a principled approach to facilitate evangelism in their fields of labor.

The salient elements in the discussion of this project have included its emphasis on the need for the church today to hark back to the practice of Jesus and the early church with regard to evangelism. Several points were highlighted. The most basic of these is the need for adequate theological grounding for any work of evangelism. The Christ event is this foundation of all evangelistic endeavor. It is the core of all kerygmatic activity.

The Holy Spirit, the Comforter that Jesus promised His apostles as their resident Lord to direct them in the work of proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, is the next important element we subjected to consideration. It is clear that Jesus worked with consciousness of this member of the Godhead and made the Spirit's descent at Pentecost a

condition to be met before His apostles undertook their task of preaching the gospel to the world.

It was also duly emphasized that the church continues in the world what Jesus did in all spheres of His interest with reference to mission as He practiced it. These include the following: His interest in all aspects of human life, including the otherwise mundane aspects like poverty, disease, and all manner of trouble; their spiritual well-being in view of a consciousness that this world will not last forever and therefore its people must seek to make peace with God, who alone can guarantee the after-life; a lifestyle of witness, predicated upon the understanding that all those who have espoused the person and the teaching of Jesus Christ are by that very fact obligated to announce to others that Jesus is Savior and Lord and bear testimony in word and in deed that He is in charge of their lives.

Conclusions

While the desire to announce the good news that has impacted the human life tends to be spontaneous, there is usually need to socialize people into the business of telling this news well to others. This task of socialization necessitates the work of educating those who are going to tell the good news to others. The educational facet of the church and its leadership has received special attention in this dissertation because in a world of specialization like ours there is a great temptation for many to leave the work of proclaiming the news of Jesus Christ to the "experts." But any attitude or practice that leads to relegating the task of evangelism to only a given group of people or sector of society works at cross-purposes with the plan of God regarding the propagation of the

gospel. Jesus assigned His mission to all who enjoyed the benefits of His work in proportion to what they had received.

One area I have intended to underline in this whole exercise is that the proclamation of the gospel is supposed to be intentional. It is not supposed to happen only when people feel disposed to engage in it. It is as important to the church as air is to breathing. So its absence does not just call the church to imperatives. Rightly, it calls it to diagnosis. The church as such does not lend itself to a maintenance structure or modus operandi. The church lives the good news, but the good news lives by its expansion. In the absence of that expansion, the church is a misnomer and a self-contradiction, like a fire that does not burn.

Small-group prayer fellowships, spontaneous evangelism, planned evangelism, *oikos* evangelism, public proclamation evangelism, and church planting have been offered as part of a strategy to evangelize Tanzania. These are approaches that have worked successfully in different parts of the world with varying degrees of success. They cover a vast spectrum in terms of manner of presentation and methodology. Yet the very variety they represent must serve to provide a tool for every Christian to utilize in the business of telling others about Jesus. Rather than be viewed as competing strategies, they are best perceived as complementary components of a well-rounded approach. As the Spirit directs, the individual, or any group of persons, will use some part of this array of avenues to the unreached world.

As indicated above, any method used in the service of preaching Jesus Christ is garb for the message. Its importance is restricted to its usefulness, usability, and user-

friendliness. This holds true for the strategy set forth in the pages above. It is something that has worked well for me. Yet I could not call it the consummate method, as convinced as I am of its adherence to the ideal in Scripture. In the final analysis, it is an approach that cannot claim to be as permanent as the kerygma, though it has served proclamation with sufficient distinction. This implies two things.

First, I will be indebted to anyone who elects to use this method and gives me feedback as to its real functional value. This will probably involve making refinements at various points. But when the method earns itself any merit, I will be grateful to know what that element of usefulness is that others find in the method. This request is based on the understanding that, like any other practitioner, the evangelist is constantly honing his methods to keep himself or herself at the cutting edge of his or her trade.

The second implication is closely related to the first. I intend to keep an open eye to new developments on the frontier of the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. While I shall carry out my mission with vigor in line with what has already worked for me, including the method expounded in the pages above, I shall in no wise cease to seek to improve my practice.

Recommendations

Over ten million Tanzanians adhere to Islam. It is my conviction that they need to be reached with the gospel of Christ. Yet due to limitations of time and space the strategy broached in this dissertation does not deal with how to evangelize Muslims. Consequently,

I would like to recommend the area of Muslim evangelism as a topic for urgent consideration in the future.

APPENDIX

PROPOSED TRAINING FOR LAY EVANGELISTS

(I use the following plan and content for my field schools of evangelism during the five-week evangelistic crusades I conduct.)

First Week

Sunday: 10 a.m. to 12 noon

Two-hour personal testimony of the instructor's history and theology of ministry

This is presented to inspire the participants and to encourage those who feel weak and incapable to get started. It could include how the presenter got started in doing evangelism, how it happened and the people who trained him or her, and the joy that has been the result. Another area to be included is how practice makes perfect. The more one intentionally attempts to meet people for Christ, the more one gains success.

One aspect must be emphasized here: that soulwinning is taught as well as caught. By staying long with those who do it, one catches it while learning it. One catches the zeal and learns the art of spending time on-the-job with on who does evangelism successfully.

Training includes an average of two hours of home visitation, three times a week: four hours of class, six hours of practical work (10 hours per week).

Discussion and Questions

Wednesday: 10 a.m. to 12 noon

Emphasis is laid on daily spiritual preparation, which entails at least two hours spent on

personal devotions. This is a necessity for the soulwinner. The rationale is that the preparation that the apostles went into before Pentecost is important today. Seven elements were evident

1. They went to the temple and spent time "continually praising and blessing God" (Luke 24:53).
2. "They humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief"¹ and the way they often grieved the heart of the Savior.
3. They prayed earnestly for fitness for the task of meeting people with the truth, and "that they will speak words that would melt sinners to lead them to Christ."² They might have prayed, "Lord, touch our lips, melt hearts, give us the fitness for the task before us."
4. They gave up their differences, "desire for supremacy, and they came close together in Christian fellowship"³ (Acts 5:42). At this time everyone was striving and desiring the success of a fellow believer and fellow worker. Self and selfishness were crucified.
5. "They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls."⁴ This was their supreme desire and top priority, and they directed their minds, actions, and efforts toward it.
6. "The ambition of every believer was to reveal the likeness of the Savior's character"⁵ in their lives, and to labor for the enlargement of His kingdom.
7. They were of "one accord," one heart and one soul (Acts 2:46; 4:32)

The result is now history. The Holy Spirit was poured out in large measure, the hearts of the believers were filled with love, and benevolence, so full, so deep, and so far reaching that

¹Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911), 36.

²Ibid., 37.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid., 48.

thousands were converted in a day, and the church beheld converts flocking from all directions.

Backsliders were reconverted.¹

Discussion and Questions

Second Week

Sunday: 10 a.m. to 12 noon

The qualifications of a successful soul-winner are discussed. It must be emphasized that there are those who are soul-winners who are successful and those who are not. These qualifications are cultivated through prayer and personal determination.

1. *Assurance of salvation.* Unless one has this assurance and joy, no way can he or she introduce others to this experience.

2. *Consecration and consistency.* Christ asks for unreserved and undivided service—heart, mind, soul, and strength. "There is no limit to the usefulness of one who. . . makes room for the working of the Holy Spirit upon his heart and lives a life wholly consecrated to God."²

3. *Knowledge of God's word.* Like Apollos (Acts 18:24-28), a soulwinner must cultivate time daily with God's Word (John 17:3).

4. *Affection and lovableness.* Love for God and for other people will win souls.

5. *Efficiency and creativity.* New methods must be invented for maximum efficiency. A soulwinner must keep learning.

6. *Compassion and empathy.* There is need to cultivate Christ's character of compassion for the poor, suffering, struggling souls, those who are tempted and discouraged.

7. *Humility.* Humility before God and kindness to the people in the community will bring one

¹Ibid., 46-48.

²White, *The Desire of Ages*, 250.

hundred to salvation where there is only one.¹

Discussion and Questions

Wednesday 10 a.m. to 12 noon

How To Start a Conversation and Make Friends

Since friendship is key to evangelism, these 50 key points are dynamic guidelines towards developing meaningful conversation and friendship

1. Be the first to say hello.
2. Introduce yourself to others.
3. Take risks. Don't anticipate rejection.
4. Display a sense of humor.
5. Be receptive to new ideas.
6. Make an extra effort to remember people's names.
7. Ask a person's name if you have forgotten it.
8. Show curiosity and interest in others.
9. Tell other people about the important events in your life.
10. Tell others about yourself, and what you like.
11. Show others that you are a good listener by restating their comments in another manner.
12. Communicate enthusiasm and excitement about things and life in general to those you meet.
13. Go out of your way to meet new people.
14. Accept a person's right to be an individual.
15. Let the natural you come out when talking to others.

¹White, *Testimonies to the Church*, 9: 189.

16. Be able to tell others what you do in a few short sentences.
17. Reintroduce yourself to someone who has forgotten your name.
18. Be able to tell others something interesting or challenging about what you do.
19. Beware of open and closed body language.
20. Use eye contact and smiling as your first contact with people.
21. Greet people you see regularly.
22. Seek common interests, goals, and experiences in the people you meet.
23. Make an effort to help people if you can.
24. Let others play the expert.
25. Be open to answering common ritual questions.

Discussion and Questions

Third Week

Sunday 10 a.m. to 12 noon

26. Get enthusiastic about other people's interests.
27. Balance the giving and receiving of information.
28. Be able to speak about a variety of topics and subjects.
29. Keep abreast of current events and the issues that affect all our lives.
30. Be open to other people's opinions and feelings.
31. Express your feelings, opinions, and emotions to others.
32. Use "I" and speak your feelings when you talk about personal things.
33. Don't use the word "you" when you mean "I."
34. Show others that you are enjoying your conversations with them.
35. Invite people to join you for dinner, social events, or other activities for companionship.

36. Keep in touch with friends and acquaintances.
37. Ask other people their opinions.
38. Look for the positive in those you meet.
39. Start and end your conversation with a person's name and a handshake or warm greeting.
40. Take time to be cordial with your neighbors and co-workers.
41. Let others know you want to get to know them better.
42. Ask others about things they have told you in previous conversations.
43. Listen carefully for free information.
44. Be tolerant of other people's beliefs if they differ from yours.
45. Change the topic of conversation when it has run its course.
46. Always search for another person's "hot button."
47. Compliment others about what they are wearing, doing, or saying.
48. Encourage others to talk with you by sending out receptivity signals.
49. Make an effort to see and talk to people you enjoy and have fun with.
50. When you tell a story, present the main points first, and then add the supporting details afterward.

Discussion and Questions.

Wednesday 10 a.m. to 12 noon

Pitfalls a Soulwinner Must Avoid

1. Avoid arguments or debate. Arguments, however logical, do not melt hard hearts for Christ. One can only win an argument to lose a friend.
2. Avoid criticizing or condemning other churches. One can present the truth without condemning or criticizing others.

3. Do not lend an ear to neighborhood gossip. All neighborhood gossip should always be met with a prayerful and tactful reply that silences the narrator.

4. Do not ask personal embarrassing questions. Think before you talk or ask questions.

Prayer for wisdom and tact is vitally important.

5. Avoid inflexibility. Adapt yourself to circumstances. Situations may even arise whereby it may be necessary to postpone the Bible study or appointment to suit circumstances. Be adaptable to situations.

6. Avoid conceit. Do not hesitate to acknowledge ignorance on your part. Be prepared to answer, "I do not know" when question arise which you are not prepared to answer. Just state frankly that you do not know the answer, but that you will look it up.

7. Avoid the sloppy look. Do not be careless as to personal appearance.

8. Avoid eating in the homes. While engaged in home-to-home evangelism, eating must be avoided. However, some other time can be arranged for a fellowship meal together with the family.

9. Do not be a loner. Always visit in the company of another person or two. Three is even better than two, with people of both genders. Never visit alone, or with someone who is not your spouse.

Discussion and Questions

Fourth Week

Sunday 10 a.m. to 12 noon

**Steps Toward Spiritual Reproduction and
Multiplication in Soulwinning through
On-the-Job Training**

On-the-job training should focus on spiritual reproduction. To accomplish this goal, the following program must be followed step by step.

1. The selection of the trainees must be done prayerfully. Every phase of the program must be born and bathed in prayer.
2. The leader should seek a deepening personal experience with the Lord because one cannot share with others an experience one does not possess.
3. Since soulwinning is the number one priority of the pastor, the witness training program should have his or her full support and cooperation.
4. The trainer selects two trainees for each weekly three-hour period he or she plans to devote to in-service training. If he or she has an evening, a morning, or an afternoon period, that time can be shared with six trainees. At least one in each pair of trainees should be a woman.
5. Trainees should be people who eventually will make good trainers. Young adults with a warm personality should have first consideration. If a husband and wife are selected, they should understand that they will be expected to work separately as trainers after the three-month training period. Otherwise the number participating in the witnessing program will not multiply.
6. It is usually necessary to arrange for at least two three-hour training session periods each week—one in the daytime (either 9:00 to 12:00 or 1:00 to 4:00) and one in the evening for the benefit of trainees who work days (7:00-10:00).

7. The three-hour on-the-job training periods are divided in this way: thirty minutes for instruction, an hour and one-half for visiting, and thirty minutes for reporting after visiting.
8. It is a great inspiration to the church to allow time on Sabbath morning for one or two brief, current soul-winning testimonies or experiences related by the members themselves. This is contagious.
9. At the conclusion of the three-month on-the-job training period, each trainee should prayerfully choose two recruits whom he or she will take for on-the-job training during the next three-month period. The trainee now becomes the trainer of a new set of trainees.

Discussion and Questions

Wednesday 10 a.m. to 12 noon

Leading People to Decision

Each Bible study must be climaxed with an appeal, calling for a response based on the truth just presented. The following suggested points of appeal may be considered.

1. **Show that this is a life and death matter.** Make it plain in your Bible study and in your appeal that the decision made will be for life or death. It is not a decision primarily to join a denomination or church. It is a decision for truth or error. It is a decision for Christ or the world. The result of the decision will be salvation or destruction. Relate your personal experience in deciding for Bible truth.
2. **Picture the love of God.** Emphasize the thought that Jesus loves the student as an individual. Christ died on the cross for him. He cares so much for him or her that if he or she were the only individual in the world to accept salvation, Christ would have died for him or her alone.

3. **Show the danger of delay.** The door of probation may soon be closed. Among the saddest words recorded in the Bible are those spoken by Jesus in Matthew 25:10, "and the door was shut."

4. **Emphasize the individual's decision to assure salvation.** How often you have heard a member of a family say, "I am going to wait for my husband—or wife—and then we will be baptized together." Read carefully Ezekiel 14, a most unusual chapter, for in four verses the identical thought with practically the same words is repeated four times (verses 14, 16, 18, and 20). Each verse emphasizes that even though one's parents have been Christians, that fact will not assure the children's salvation. The children must make their own decision for truth and right.

5. **Stress their influence on loved ones and friends.** Someone may say, "I have no influence. Nobody follows me." Remind that person that no man lives to himself or herself. Romans 14:7, and that each one of us exerts an influence for heaven or the world by what we do or say. In making decisions we must not think of ourselves alone. When we decide for the right, loved ones and friends that follow in our footsteps will be influenced toward salvation and heaven.

6. **Point out that there will be only two classes of people in the end.** There will be the saved and the unsaved. In our human thinking we classify humanity into many groups, such as "good neighbors," "moral people," "fine family," "very worldly," "families who do not associate," "bad folks." There is no intermediate class. None are "pretty good" or "not too bad." No one can straddle the issue or walk the fence. Each must be on one side or the other. Christ says in Matthew 12:30, "He that is not with me is against me."

7. **Emphasize that Christ is our example.** What He said we are to obey; what He did we are to do (1 Peter 2:21). The reason we observe the seventh-day Sabbath is that Christ was Sabbathkeeper. The reason we believe in tithing is that Christ taught it. We also follow Christ in

baptism. That which makes us Seventh-day Adventists is Christ's example and teaching.

8. **Assure of God's care and interest.** Remind the Bible student that if God cared for him or her even before he became obedient. God surely will not forsake him or her when he or she decides to obey. Most assuredly the Lord will keep His promises and bless in a special way those who obey Him explicitly.

9. **Emphasize the need for Christ's approval.** You crave the smile of His approbation on your life. His approval is given, not to those who know to do well and do not do it, but to those only who obey. Christ "became the author of eternal salvation unto them that obey Him" (Heb 5:9).

10. **Relate your own experiences.** Or you may tell of some Adventist friends. You may tell of your struggle in keeping the Sabbath, in making adjustments, in abandoning vices, in returning the tithe, in accepting this message. Emphasize how God led and blessed, even though tests came to you. Tell what God has done in your life and in your home. Tell about your spouse's experience, your children's. Never forget them in giving your own experience. Did you lose your job? Did your family disown you? Did friends turn against you? Did your former church associates ridicule you? What has God done for you since you made your decision to follow truth? Your testimony, or the testimony of God's guidance by a well-known church member, will do much to help others to decide to step over the line. God did not fail you, even though tests came.

11. **Vividly portray the triumph of truth.** Sometimes we hear the remarks about the small membership or the insignificance of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Impress upon the heart of the interested ones that Christ is on the side of truth: so were His disciples and the prophets, and so are heaven's hosts. Oftentimes in this world the side of right has been the side of the minority. During the flood only eight people were saved. Picture the glories of heaven and the

final scene on the sea of glass, when Christ will present crowns of victory and the great hosts of the saved will sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Eternal life is the reward for their right decision and for allowing Christ to live His life in them.

12. **Stress that it takes courage to be a Christian.** You cannot be a vacillating "jellyfish" and yet be a real Christian. It takes moral backbone. You must stand unflinchingly like Daniel. There is no other course. Knowing truth, we must decide to stand with Jesus who is Truth.

13. **Inquire, "Where are you planning to spend eternity?"** Point out that life is short at best. It has already been partly lived. We have no assurance of tomorrow. (See Proverbs 27:1).

Discussion and Decision

Fifth Week

Sunday 10 a.m. to 12 noon

Revision and Testimonies

Wednesday 10 a.m. to 12 noon

Revision and Testimonies

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VITA

Name: Herry Mhando

Date of Birth: December 15, 1947

Place of Birth: Hedaru, Kilimanjaro Region, Tanzania

Family: Married to former Esther Tumaini Enock; two daughters, Joyce and Ellen; two sons-in-law, Pastor Charles Mndambi and Amani Mtango; four grandchildren: Grace, Esther, Herry, and Geoffrey.

Education: Kirangare Primary School–1956 to 1959

Jitengeni Middle School–1960 to 1964

Jitengeni Secondary School–1965 to 1966

Tanga Government Secondary School–1967 to 1968

Spicer Memorial College–1979 to 1986

Andrews University Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary–1995 to 2000

Degrees Awarded:

Bachelor of Arts (Theology) 1983

Master of Arts (Theology) 1986

Doctor of Ministry 2000

Professional Experience:

Pastor, Temeke, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania–1974 to 1975

Pastor, Tukuyu, Tanzania–1976 to 1978

Conference Youth Director, North East Tanzania Conference–1986 to 1987

Church Ministries Director, North East Tanzania Conference–1987 to 1988

Conference Evangelist, North East Tanzania Conference-1989

Conference Executive Secretary, North East Tanzania Conference-1990

Union Ministerial Secretary and Union Evangelist, Tanzania Union-1991 to 1995