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What Is in the Name?

A name sticks with us from birth until death, at least for most of us, and although we often have no control over it, our names can define us. Since 1880, there are more than five million historical references to popular names. Most names have a traditional meaning. What does your name mean?

In Acts 4:12, Peter stated “There is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.” This is a statement that came after the miracle performed in Acts 3:6 where Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” I can imagine some of the same people had heard Peter denying the Master, but now he was a true disciple. To understand what a disciple is, it is imperative to know who the Master is.

It is remarkable, even in traditional Christian cultures, the ignorance some have regarding the person of Jesus. Research conducted by YouGov revealed some amazing statistics about religions in the UK. For 20% of the British children, Jesus is a soccer player (Aragao 2014). A thousand British children were interviewed with most of them having no idea about who Jesus Christ is. Not only that, according to the results, less than half affirmed Jesus was the Son of God. The study showed that 25% of them believe that the shepherds found the baby with the assistance of Google maps (Webb 2014).

What does Christ mean to his people? In Acts 4:10, Peter stated that Jesus Christ is the Messiah. He is the Lamb to redeem them, a Brother to love them, a Friend to stick by them, a Shield to defend them, a Tower to secure them, and a Fountain to cleanse them. He is Bread to sustain them, Wisdom to guide them, a Rose to revive, a Star to direct them, and a Sun to shine on them. In Christ there is rest for the weary, food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty; grace for the needy, and salvation for the lost. We are washed in his blood, saved by his grace, clothed in his righteousness, and crowned with his glory.

Discipleship in the Era of Social Media

Being a disciple is to be a follower of Jesus Christ, and to follow him we need to understand who he is, and even more important, we need to find out who he is for us personally. The discipleship process is a personal experience. One cannot read a book or attend a workshop on discipleship and become a disciple. It does not work like that. "Knowing God does not come through a program, a study, or a method. Knowing God comes through a relationship with the Person. This is an intimate love relationship with God. Through this relationship, God reveals himself, his purposes, and his ways, and he invites you to join him where he is already at work" (Blackaby and King 1994:2). After accepting Jesus Christ's invitation to follow him, a journey begins that will take a person to eternal life. "This is the eternal life: that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent" (John 17:3). People can know Jesus if they allow him to be involved in their daily life.

Here we have something of a definition of eternal life. Really to know God means more than knowing the way to life. It is life. In this world we are familiar with the truth that it is a blessing and as inspiration to know certain people. Much more is it the case when we know God. To know him transforms us and introduces us to a different quality of living. (Morris 1995:637)

Malcom Gladwell describes the concept of channel capacity. "Channel capacity is simply our brain's capacity to process information. . . . We can only handle so much information at once. Once we pass a certain boundary, we become overwhelmed" (in Rice 2009:105). Considering the amount of information available through the web and the volume of contacts and messages coming from social media, "we eventually cross a certain emotional line and become overloaded. The intellectual experience of this is called *information overload*" (Rice 2009:105).

In response to this information overload the church, in the last two decades, has often emphasized relational evangelism. It is "characterized more by [an] emphasis on sharing one's faith than on teaching a system of doctrines. Friendship will be the primary tool for bringing men and women to Christ and into the church. Fellowship at a personal level will be more important than large personalities or organizations" (Sahlin 1990:21).

The starting point of this process is being with the Master and being transformed by him. Only after personally knowing and relating to Christ

can God's person be equipped and become a witness for him. It is also true that in being equipped, people become able to equip others. "He ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach" (Mark 3:14). "He closely connected His disciples' state of being to their state of doing" (Samaan 2005:12).

How does this affect interpersonal relationships? "How will we make sure that the technologies we employ to serve people don't actually prevent us from connecting with and loving real human beings? . . . I think we only grow to maturity when we learn to love at point-blank range, where the messy aspects of relationship can't be avoided" (McMillan 2013). Therefore, friendship evangelism is not just a strategy; it is a way of living. Friendship is grounded on three things: talking, listening, and doing things together (Paulien 2003:12-15).

Spending time with people and developing close personal relationships is imperative. "To be someone's best friend," says Gladwell, "requires a minimum amount of time. More than that, though, it takes emotional energy. Caring about someone deeply is exhausting. At a certain point, at somewhere between 10 to 15 people, we begin to overload" (in Rice 2009:105). Fortunately, not everyone listed as a "friend" in our social media is a close friend. It would be impossible to keep up with thousands of personal relationships.

Gladwell illustrated this fact when he talked about the famous "Dunbar Number." . . . If you belong to a group of five people, you have to keep track of ten separate relationships: your relationships with the four others in your circle and the six other two-way relationships between the others. That's what it means to know everyone in the circle. You have to understand the personal dynamics of the group, juggle different personalities, ties, keep people happy, manage the demands on your own time and attention and so on. If you belong to a group of twenty people, however, there are now 190 two-way relationships to keep track of 19 involving yourself and 171 involving the rest of the group. That's a fivefold increase in the size of the group, but a twenty-fold increase in the amount of information processing needed to know the other members of the group. Even a relatively small increase in the size of a group, in other words, creates a significant additional social and intellectual burden. (Rice 2009:106-107)

The more social circles increase, the more socially and intellectually burdensome they become. "Of course, Dunbar's research is now more than fifteen years old. It took place well before Facebook was a gleam in Mark Zuckerberg's eye. How does his theory hold up today? . . . Sites like MySpace and Facebook could 'in principle' allow users to push past the limit. It's perfectly possible that the technology will increase our memory

capacity” (Rice 2009:107, 108). It is easy to observe that the more contacts one has, the more superficial the relationships become. Trying to keep ties to hundreds of people will put in detriment the closest ones. Konnikova (2014) reports the effect of social media over Dunbar’s number stating, “The more our virtual friends replace our face-to-face ones, in fact, the more our Dunbar number may shrink.”

Kallenberg applies this to discipleship. “Technology is shaping our discipleship in ways we do not easily recognize” (2011:4). The cry for relevance in ministry leaders as it relates to technology in ministry has theological and biblical support. “The goal of sharing your faith with another person isn’t simply to broadcast information; it’s to be a channel that aids the Holy Spirit in His work of transformation” (Birdsong and Heim 2012: Loc 573).

Human beings have a great need for fellowship. When God created Adam, he said, “It is not good for the man to be alone.” Human beings still have the same need for relationships. It is “recognition of the fact that most people come to Christ and into the church through the ministry of Christian friends or relatives” (Birdsong and Heim 2012: Loc 50). In spite of the great number of advantages modern life offers, people still have the same deep longing for meaningful relationships.

Jesus used the words “follow me” that became the principle of most social media technology. Discipleship is a process related to the concept of following. Jesus repeated several times, “follow me.” The Gospel Commission in Matt 28:19 to make disciples has implications in the physical world and in the online world. The development of new technology such as social media, mobile technology, and internet streaming have removed the boundaries of the physical world and have provided online communities spanning continents. Describing this new reality, Wellington (2016) says that “technology provides a powerful opportunity to engage in witnessing and evangelism within our local context and our global community which when shared through these mediums will germinate in the hearts of those searching for the good news.”

The church today has become a complex structure, whereas discipleship is often seen as just an act of joining the church. It seems that the discipleship model of Jesus was just the opposite. Jesus “called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it” (Mark 8: 34-35). This teaching was so important that it is one of the few teachings of Jesus repeated four times in the gospels (Matt 10:38; 16:24; Mark 8:34; Luke 9:23). Today, many churches have inverted the model. Doing church is so complex and discipleship

has become synonymous with membership. To be a member in good and regular standing, one does not have to do anything. Just promise to abide by a set of principles and you are considered a member in good and regular standing.

Secular and postmodern people are not attracted to superficial religious practices. Paulien points out that

secular people today have an urgent need for genuine relationships. They long for real relationships with real people who care enough to be honest as well as loyal. People today live noisy and distracted lives. They rush here and there, and relationships tend to be increasingly superficial. Committed Christians who are willing to enter into sensitive and authentic relationships with a selected number of secular people will find open arms waiting. As society becomes increasingly high-tech, the need for genuine relationships will increase. There will be a corresponding need for the caring touch, not so much physical as emotional and social. (1993:130)

Evangelism or Discipleship: Which One Is More Important?

Each church needs to be able to answer two questions: Is there a plan for making disciples? and Does this plan work? Holding an evangelistic series is much easier than developing genuine disciples. You can lead someone to Christ in five minutes, but it takes years to disciple the person. In reality, discipleship is a life-long process, for a follower of Jesus should never stop growing in their relationship with Christ. Two questions that need to be asked are: Is discipleship a follow-up program after the evangelism? Or, is evangelism part of the lifetime process of someone becoming a follower of Jesus?

Disciple-making requires long-term relationships and deep commitment. I interact with a few people who are trying to make a difference by doing something unusual and extraordinary. I personally meet with them at least once a year in person and very often on FaceTime twice a month. However, discipleship requires more than casual interactions. It requires a personal relationship built on regular time spent together. Discipleship is better done in small groups; however, it can take many forms since there is no cookie-cutter approach. The important thing is to help people grow in their faith on their spiritual journey as followers of Jesus.

The longer I pastor, the more I find myself in the middle of the evangelism vs. discipleship debate. Billy Graham believed that “evangelism must be our continual priority, and discipleship must be our goal” (in Atkinson 2012). The Great Commission was not “Go and make converts,” but rather “Go and make disciples.” There is no single right answer to the question

asked earlier. They are both important. To be a follower of Jesus means that you, too, are called to be a missionary. Going on a mission is not an optional extra—an upgrade for the mature disciple. The greatest barrier to disciple making is the idea that you can be an Adventist without being a disciple. You can sit in church forever and never become a disciple of Jesus—a wide-spread problem in modern-day Christianity. “So the next time someone asks you if you’re an evangelism or discipleship guy (or gal), answer, ‘Both!’ and be proud of it” (Atkinson 2012).

The Great Commission is our mission. Our call is to make disciples. The disciple’s goal is to make new disciples. This is the process of discipleship, where the spiritual formation is enhanced by a personal relationship. This course of action is more effective in groups. Small groups can promote diversity by recognizing people’s differences. This can strengthen the group, providing “an environment in which people can learn and grow as they work and share together” (Hesselbein, Goldsmith, and Beckhard 1996:246). The disciple is an equipper whose heart has been wonderfully and meticulously shaped by God as a magnificent piece of work, a real masterpiece. “As water reflects a face, so a man’s heart reflects the man” (Prov 27:19).

The mission of the church is to announce salvation through Jesus Christ, because “there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). The testimony of the disciples was so powerful, that the people “realized that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13). In order to fulfill the goal of witnessing for Jesus, the primary function of local churches is to train their members as ministers, in order to reach out to the world and invite people to become new disciples for Jesus. “Every church should be a training school for Christian workers” (White 2002:59).

I have heard over and over again that everyone should be an evangelist. In reality, the biblical model involves a two-fold approach to evangelism. First, there is the responsibility to identify, equip, and mobilize gifted evangelists (with gifted evangelistic leaders taking the primary responsibility). Second, it is important to inspire all believers to live lives that would cause others to want to know more about the God they serve. “If all believers are leading the kind of lives that evoke questions from their friends, then opportunities for faith sharing abound and chances for the gifted evangelists to boldly proclaim are increased” (Frost 2016:5).

Jesus challenges his followers to go and make disciples. “God requires His people to shine as lights in the world. It is not merely the ministers who are required to do this, but every disciple of Christ” (White 1948:122). The Great Commission has been given to every disciple of Christ (Nichol 1980:5:557). In accepting Christ, we accepted this commission. “The

Savior's commission to the disciples included all the 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. . . . The gospel is to be presented, not as a lifeless theory, but as a living force to change the life. God desires that the receivers of His grace shall be witnesses to its power" (White 1940:822-826).

Being a witness is not an option, how a person witnesses is. Witnessing is something that you have no choice over. Christians too often have focused on "witnessing" instead of being witnesses (Sahlin 2003:3). Ellen G. White also states, "Every true follower of Christ has a work to do. God has given to every man his work" (White 1962:232). As the apostles were waiting for Christ's return, they "went forth with courage and hope, to do their Master's work with fidelity. They knew that the most acceptable way of waiting for Christ was to work for him. It was theirs to direct others to the coming Lord, and to teach them to wait patiently for his appearing. This work was given to every disciple of Christ" (White 1969:263).

The greatest barrier to being Christ's disciple is the tendency to remain in the default system (Willard 2013). This is the idea that one can be a church member without being a disciple, being an Adventist without being a disciple, that witnessing is just an option. To be a Christian is to be baptized, to become a member of a community of believers, and to continue the life-long process of becoming a witnessing disciple of Jesus Christ.

Equipping Disciples

For a long time, it has been understood and emphasized that the pastoral role in the context of Eph 4 is to equip the saints for their ministry (pastor/teacher gift). George Knight (2010) points out that "in Paul's discussion of spiritual gifts—when he noted that 'some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers' (Eph. 4:11, RSV)—he used a Greek construction that indicates the office of pastor and teacher was held by the same person." According to Kidder (2009), "around the 1970s and 1980s, a new understanding started to emerge. Many book authors and pastors of megachurches started to see the role of the pastor as a chief executive officer (CEO/leader), who casts a vision and rallies and motivates people to carry on the new vision in a changed and healthy environment."

However, I want to highlight another way of understanding Eph 4 that is aligned with both the biblical and original Adventist view that ministers should be hired to be equippers and church planters, and not hired because they are good performers. Allen Hirsch describes the fivefold test for spiritual gifts according to Eph 4 (Apostolic, Prophetic, Evangelist, Shepherd, and Teacher—APEST).

Ministry vocation is a mixture of personal identity, God's calling, the Spirit's gifting, and community discernment. We only really know ourselves and our ministry impact in relation to others. . . . Every person functions in unique ways. It is remarkable when a group allows each member to function out of their natural capacities, thus contributing to the overall movement, direction, and wisdom of a team. (Hirsch 2016)

Ephesians 4:12 is one of the most important Bible texts on the topic of equipping. The NIV states that spiritual gifts are given "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built." In the previous verses, Paul describes the incarnation and ascension of Jesus as the assurance of the divine gift to humans in order to give them the ability to accomplish this important task. Some of the gifts are mentioned in order to exemplify how the saints can be "perfected" for Christian service. The word "prepare" (NIV) or "perfecting" (KJV) is the translation of *katartismos*. It is also translated as "equipping," meaning "a perfectly adjusted adaptation; complete qualification for a specific purpose" (Moulton 1991:220). This word was used by Paul to describe his desire that the brethren be "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor 1:10).

Jesus used this word to mean the disciple "that is perfect shall be as his master" (Luke 6:40). The verb *katartizo* appears in Matt 4:21 to describe the early disciples' activity as fishermen, mending the nets. In Gal 6:1 it is used to express the restoration of those overtaken in a fault. The gifts were for the purpose of 'mending' the saints and uniting them (Nichol 1980:6:1023). This is the work Jesus wants to do in us: to repair, to restore, and to prepare us for a specific purpose. As Paul stated, his prayer was "for your perfection" (2 Cor 13:9), a complete adjustment, and completeness of character. "The edification of believers is another mission or function of the church. God, explains Paul, gave to the church apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors (Eph 4:11) for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry (vv. 12, 13)" (Dederen 2000:549). Therefore, equipping believers can be understood as the primary goal in the ministry of making disciples.

The work of equipping is an intimate cooperation between God and believers in ministry. To give empowerment for the task, the Spirit added special gifts to individual believers (Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:4-11, 27-31; Eph 4:11). "These charismata, or gifts of grace, are not to be confused with the Christian virtues described as the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22, 23). They are apportioned by the Spirit to whom and as He wills (1 Cor 12:11). . . . They are intended to strengthen the believers in their faith and to enable them to perform their ministry in the church or among unbelievers" (Dederen 2000:552).

The work of the ministries or services includes “all types of ministry and serving within the church. The officers of the church are not to lord it over the flock but are to consider themselves servants. This is the immediate purpose of the gift” (Nichol 1980:6:1023). As a result, the church is to be built up numerically and in character. Spiritual gifts are given to help each believer find their place in the body of Christ. God gives his people spiritual ministry gifts to equip them for witnessing in the community and ministering within the church.

The followers of Jesus today are to seek these gifts just as earnestly as the Corinthians sought for them at Paul’s urging (1 Corinthians 14:1). These gifts, under the ministry of the Holy Spirit, will (1) equip church members for the work of ministry including winning people to Jesus, (2) build up the body of Christ, (3) lead into the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, (4) develop spiritual maturity in Jesus, and (5) sustain spiritual growth toward the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13). (Rice 2000:637)

The Holy Spirit, who works in and through the believers, not only gives gifts, but also imparts the power to carry out ministry. Considering that God controls all these gifts, they must function in perfect harmony with his overall plan for the finishing of his work on earth. We can be sure that “all who surrender to Christ and become members of His church on earth, no matter what their nationality or social or economic status or intellectual attainments, have the assurance that the Holy Spirit will equip them with the ability to perform their Christian duties with a high degree of effectiveness” (Nichol 1980:6:772).

In one of his speeches, Martin Luther King Jr. once said that “if a man has not discovered something that he will die for, he isn’t fit to live” (N.d.). Jesus Christ came to this world with a mission, “to search and to save the lost.” He sacrificed himself for us and died on the cross; his disciples follow his example by living and serving selflessly.

I often hear church pastors and lay evangelists say, “We are planning to have evangelism in the summer.” Phrases like that trouble me a lot. If the primary purpose of the Christian church is to help lost people become committed disciples of Jesus Christ and the main goal of the Great Commission is to make disciples, how can any church dedicate just a part of the year for the activity that is supposed to be its main pursuit? If they mean by that expression holding evangelistic meetings for reaping the spiritual harvest, then perhaps it makes more sense, for there is no theological or pragmatic reason for differentiating between public and personal evangelism in such an arbitrary way.

If the primary task of the church is to make disciples, then among the

many strategies that are out there, church planting has been considered the best evangelistic methodology and small group ministries the most effective tool for disciple making. The apostle Paul gives the theological foundation for disciple making in small groups through the message written to the early church (Rom 12; 1 Cor 12). He presents fellowship as a vital part of Jesus' ministry, and small groups as the very place where the community among the disciples should take place. Therefore, small groups should not be a program but the foundation for the ministries of the church.

Other than Jesus, Paul is the only one who had more influence on the formation of the Christian church. He planted the majority of churches in Asia and wrote most of the New Testament. Following Jesus' instructions to go two by two, he began his missionary journeys along with other disciples. "Paul and his company did not seek simply to disciple individuals but continually sought to reach the *oikos* of those they evangelized" (Nichol 1980:5:606).

Jesus challenged his disciples to review their own discipleship process. For more than three years of learning and sharing, their activities had been restricted just to the Jewish people (Matt 10:5, 6). Later, Jesus challenged them to undertake a greater work. In Mark 16:15, Jesus told his disciples to "go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation." This was in reference to the words of Isa 61:1-3. Their goal was to make disciples regardless of ethnicity or nationality, and to invite people everywhere to become Christ's followers.

Disciple Making and Mission

When Jesus issued his striking order for world-wide ministry, his disciples looked back on their own discipling process that took more than three years of learning and sharing. However, their discipling process had been restricted to a single people group, the Jews (Matt 10:5, 6). Now Jesus challenged them to go into the entire world and preach the good news of salvation to all peoples. They were to go out of their way, approach people regardless of ethnicity, nationality, or faith, and invite them to become Jesus' followers.

Even though the Christian church is God's idea "the current church culture in North America is on life support. It is living off the work, money, and energy of previous generations from a previous world order" (McNeal 2004:1). The church was "organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world" (White 1911:9). Wherever God is at work there is organization and structure. People who want to be part of God's plan but not part of an organization do not understand how God

works. "System and order are manifest in all works of God throughout the universe" (White 1994:26).

God is deeply committed to the success of his church organization, in spite of its imperfections. As Ellen White states, "I testify to my brethren and sisters that the church of Christ, enfeebled and defective as it may be, is the only object on earth on which He bestows His supreme regard. . . . He comes personally by His Holy Spirit into the midst of His church" (White 1994:15). "The first disciples went forth preaching the word. They revealed Christ in their lives. And the Lord worked with them. . . . the Holy Spirit was poured out, and thousands were converted in a day. . . . So it may be now. Instead of man's speculations, let the word of God be preached. Let Christians put away their dissensions, and give themselves to God for the saving of the lost. Let them in faith ask for the blessing, and it will come" (White 1940:827).

By definition, the disciples became "fishers of men" (Matt 4:19). "The world is to be evangelized, not by men invested with ecclesiastical dignities and with parti-colored garments, but by men who have experienced the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and who are visibly endued with the power of wisdom, and love, and zeal" (Bruce 1963:523). The perpetual multiplying of disciples reflects Christ's strategy for reaching the most remote parts of the earth (Acts 1:8).

The Great Commission with its emphasis on mission is rooted in the authority of the risen Christ, who commands his followers to make disciples, to baptize disciples, and to continue to teach disciples among all the nations. The whole concept of equipping is based on the reason why spiritual gifts are given. According to Acts 4:12, special abilities are given for the purpose of allowing God's people to be equipped to do better work for him. The result is personal growth and the growth of the church in strength and maturity.

The equipping process involves both natural and supernatural aspects. God is the source, Jesus is the reason, and the Holy Spirit is the vehicle through which spiritual gifts are given in order to equip the saints for the work of ministry (Eph 4). The natural way to perform ministry is as follows: imperfect human beings empowered by spiritual gifts reach out to other imperfect human beings and minister to them.

Retention Problem or Faulty Discipleship

In recent years mainline Christian denominations in North America have lost one third of their membership. The total number of mainline Protestant adults has decreased by roughly five million from 2007 to 2014 (Lipka 2015). In the last fifty years, the Seventh-day Adventist Church

experienced a net loss of 39.25% of its baptized members, which represents over 13 million people. Research has shown that the people most likely to leave the church are recent converts and converts from public evangelism. Church leaders attribute the current situation to faulty discipleship. The foundational problem is superficial discipleship practices.

The “first sign of a culture at risk for ethical collapse, [is that] there is not just a focus on numbers and results but an unreasonable and unrealistic obsession with meeting quantitative goals” (Jennings 2006:17). It is true that numbers do matter. The shepherd knew exactly how many sheep he had and that is why he went after the one lost sheep when he noticed one was missing.

Christ’s method is still the best one. “Those who will study the manner of Christ’s teaching, and educate themselves to follow His way, will *attract and hold large numbers* now, as Christ held the people in His day” (White 1894, emphasis mine). Too often Adventists have been more concerned with attracting new members with not enough attention being paid to holding those baby Christians.

Culture Change for Mission

The Seventh-day Adventist Church will need to experience change in how it does evangelism, in how it disciplines new members, and in how it equips its members for outreach. Change is never easy, especially in congregations that have years of tradition in doing things in set ways. Adventist leaders will need to understand not only the Christian disciplines but also the sophisticated science of leading change and leading organizations.

The Adventist Church needs to think about the message it is sending out. Is it sending a consistent and clear message to its workers and members? What kind of culture results when mixed messages or inconsistent messages are sent?

Clear communication of the organization’s values is indispensable for preserving the culture of any organization. As Quint Studer (2007) repeated, “What you permit, you promote.” The behaviors permitted in an organization soon become part of its culture. Nearly every company has a history of failed change efforts. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is no different. But now more than ever, organizations like our church need to know how to initiate change. Kotter (2012) suggests a need for a dual operating system—the traditional hierarchy, which enables organizations to efficiently manage day-to-day operations and a new agile network that can seize opportunities and take advantage of new possibilities. In this new network, Kotter’s original eight steps become eight accelerators. Only

a few organizations do this now, but eventually, all organizations will need to adopt this system.

To deal with an increasingly fast-moving world, the church must also understand how management and leadership differ and appreciate the value of each. This, more than anything else, is fundamental to leading change (Kotter 2012:26). Management deals with day-to day operations of the church while leadership inspires participation in the mission of the church.

Leadership development will be indispensable for change to occur. I propose a spiritual leadership development program using the competencies of coaching. This approach has the goal to assist a person in reaching their full potential, and this can be achieved by equipping others. This alternative can be understood as a hybrid system profiting from the resources of a strong organization combined with organic unstoppable power (Brafman and Beckstrom 2006).

Coaching is another component of leadership development. Coaching means to come alongside people to help them grow, to help them to find out what God wants them to do (God's agenda), and to cooperate with the Holy Spirit to see that the agenda becomes a reality (success). Every journey requires a good map or a GPS. This coaching process consists of three basic phases: who a person is, how the person does things, and what the person does. The first step, who a person is, has the objective of developing spiritual qualities through personal devotion, journaling, prayer, Bible reading, fasting, spiritual retreats, and Sabbath rest. It includes daily renewal, weekly rest, and quarterly retreats.

The second phase is how the person does things and has to do with engagement skills. These skills are enhanced through workshops and coaching a person in things like listening, caring, and challenging the status quo. People demonstrate that they are listening when they are able to summarize and paraphrase what has been said. Asking powerful questions is another way to facilitate dialogue and openness. A caring attitude is demonstrated by showing empathy, finding ways to unpack emotions, and affirming small successes and celebrating them. Challenging is probably the most difficult aspect of the engagement skills. Being able to name the truth of the matter and confronting situations when necessary is vital to the process of coaching.

The third phase of this coaching process is about what the person does. This has to do with executive skills, vision casting, understanding currently realities, strategic planning, and implementation. The general purpose of coaching competencies can help people recognize their potential and identify the obstacles in their lives.

Conclusion

For a long time, some have suggested that the Lord will bless any outreach initiative although Adventists have also emphasized the need to follow Christ's method as the only one that "will give true success in reaching the people" (White 1942:143). However, White declares that "God has withheld His blessings because His people have not worked in harmony with His directions" (White 1948:18).

Jesus is the message. The Lord sent his messengers, and then he sent his Son. And Jesus said, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21) to make disciples. In the end it will not be about what we have done, but about who we know, who we follow, and whose disciple we are. Discipleship and disciple making need to become central to the culture of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

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