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ABSTRACT

**THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A CREATIVE
APPROACH IN TRAINING HISPANICS FOR EVANGELISM
IN THE OREGON CONFERENCE**

by

Ramon J. Canals

Adviser: Douglas Kilcher

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A CREATIVE
APPROACH IN TRAINING HISPANICS FOR EVANGELISM IN THE
OREGON CONFERENCE

Name of researcher: Ramón J. Canals

Name and degree of faculty adviser: Douglas Kilcher, D.Min.

Date completed: April 1998

Problem

The rapid growth of Hispanics in the Oregon Conference of Seventh-day Adventists represents a challenge for evangelistic outreach. This project was to determine how a conference-sponsored lay evangelism school could enhance Hispanic lay participation in evangelism.

Method

Research was conducted to understand the role of lay people in evangelism, followed by the establishment of a school of evangelism for training Hispanic lay people in

the Oregon Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Fifty-two lay evangelists graduated from the school.

Results

The Hispanic lay people who participated in the training program believe that their spiritual lives have been enhanced. They also indicated that they have been impacted positively towards evangelism. In addition, the high degree of efficiency, inspiration, and motivation for outreach demonstrated by the participants suggests that the objective of the program was satisfactorily achieved. Moreover, the students were unanimous in expressing their eagerness to implement the training they have received in their respective communities.

Conclusions

The Great Commission of Jesus to make disciples makes it necessary for the church to train lay people for evangelism. Establishing a lay evangelism training school is one way through which people of any language or ethnic background can be motivated, trained, and equipped to fulfill Christ's mandate. In addition, church leaders should take appropriate steps to understand the role of lay people in evangelism. The concept of the priesthood of all believers should be revisited, restudied, and revived. Moreover, the church must be intentional in its commitment to evangelize the world through the agents God has chosen, namely, every believer in Christ. Finally, pastors and evangelists should realize that they have been called to train the believers for the work of the ministry.

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

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APPROACH IN TRAINING HISPANICS FOR EVANGELISM
IN THE OREGON CONFERENCE

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Ministry

by

Ramón J. Canals

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APPROVAL BY THE COMMITTEE:

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to provide a theological understanding of the role of the laity in evangelism and to establish a lay evangelism training school that will inspire, motivate, and train lay leaders of the Hispanic churches of the Oregon Conference for evangelistic outreach.

Justification for the Project

First, the project was motivated by my own personal desire to serve God. When I was baptized in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1974, I was told by my pastor that when one is baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church, one is born as a missionary. I took those words very seriously. I wanted to be a missionary. I wanted to share my faith with others out of love for Jesus, but did not know how to do it effectively. I was also expected to give Bible studies, participate in evangelism, win souls, and be a church leader; yet my local church did not have a program for training its members how to carry out those ministries. The pastor promised to teach me, but did not find the time to train me. Older and more experienced members wanted to help, but lacked the abilities to teach me. I was frustrated—wanting to serve yet lacking the skills to be an effective soul winner.

Second, this project was justified by my own theological understanding of the role of the pastor in evangelism. After I became a pastor, I was committed to teach my congregation how to serve the Lord. That is when the idea of establishing a lay training Bible school first came about.

Third, during conversations that took place in 1995 with members and pastors of the Oregon Conference, the need for this type of training opportunity became apparent.

Fourth, my investigation of current literature shows great need for the preparation of lay people for evangelism, and recent studies confirm the effectiveness of lay people in evangelism.

Fifth, this project was supported by the Seventh-day Adventist Church's theological understanding of the mission to preach the gospel to the whole world (Matt 28:19-20). As Adventists we believe in the biblical concept of the priesthood of all believers (Ex 19:5-6; 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6). Every member is expected to be a witness for Jesus to declare his goodness and mercy. The apostle Paul also teaches (Eph 4:12) that God's people must be prepared as ministers to serve God. Our theology, therefore, ensures that a constant and systematic training of lay people is not only a valid biblical mandate but also, and more important, the expressed will of God for the body of Christ.

Sixth, the rapid Hispanic population growth that the state of Oregon has experienced during the last decade is a challenge for Hispanic evangelism. The Hispanic population of Oregon has increased 71 percent from 1980 to 1990 according to the Oregon Employment Department.¹ This growing trend in the Hispanic population of

¹U.S. Bureau of Census (Washington, DC: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993), 16.

Oregon has contributed to the growth of the Hispanic membership of the Oregon Conference and represents a tremendous opportunity for evangelism.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation presents the theological foundation for the role of lay people in evangelism, provides current Christian understanding of the need for training men and women for evangelism, and describes the program and process for the establishment of a lay training school for the Hispanic churches of the Oregon Conference. It is organized in five chapters in addition to the appendixes and the bibliography.

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the dissertation. It describes the purpose, the justification, the organization, and the limitations of the project.

Chapter 2 discusses the theological foundations for the role of lay people in evangelism. Biblical material and the writings of Ellen G. White are explored. The means by which God wants to bring people back to him are analyzed in the following order: (1) God's universal plan of evangelism, (2) the teachings of Jesus and the role the laity in evangelism as presented in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, (3) the importance of the last words of Jesus to his disciples which are known as "the great commission," and (4) the concept of laos in the Bible and in the writings of the reformers. Chapter 2 also deals with the role of women in evangelism and, finally, Ellen G. White and the role of lay people in evangelism.

Chapter 3 presents a review of current literature on lay evangelism. First, the mission of Jesus as a perfect model for the mission of the church is discussed. Second,

current literature seems to indicate the need for a lay training school of evangelism. Third, research also indicates that lay people want to be trained and feel unprepared to witness. Fourth, the need for a church or conference-wide training program that is both intentional and systematic is discussed. Finally it presents the mission of Jesus as a model for the pastor and the members.

Chapter 4 describes the design, evaluation, and implementation of the lay training program. The first part describes how the program was designed. The second part describes the implementation of the program, and the last part deals with the evaluation of the program.

Chapter 5 covers the conclusions, implications, and recommendations, for the future.

Limitations of the Project

The project of establishing a school of evangelism for Hispanic lay people was designed from the perspective of its possible implementation for the Hispanic churches of the Oregon Conference. It makes no pretension of being a pattern for other Conferences. Moreover, this training program does not purport to be applicable to all Hispanics in U.S.A., though some principles may apply.

The first limitation is the unpredictability of the ultimate outcome of a teaching-coaching method. A second limitation is the inability to provide the students with support, witnessing opportunities, and coaching within their own churches.

Definitions

The following terms are defined as used in this dissertation:

Witnessing: A process through words and actions by which a Christian communicates his or her experience with Christ.

Evangelism: The means by which the gospel is proclaimed and people are persuaded to become followers of Christ.

Evangelist: A person who has the gift and the opportunity to present the gospel of Jesus Christ through private and public proclamation and to persuade them to become fully devoted disciples of Jesus Christ.

Laity: Those who belong to the community of faith, members of the redeemed people of God.

Oregon Conference of Seventh-day Adventists: The administrative body of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination located in Clackamas, Oregon, responsible for the territory of Alaska, Montana, Idaho, Southern Washington, and Oregon.

CHAPTER II

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE ROLE OF
LAY PEOPLE IN EVANGELISM

The Purpose of Evangelism

Since the fall of man and his subsequent expulsion from the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:23),¹ God has been trying to restore the relationship between humans and their Creator which was broken because of sin (Isa 59:2). This soteriological activity is presented in the Bible as evangelism, which literally means to bring good news.² Evangelism is the good news that the relationship between men and God is being restored. Evangelism is to bring or to announce the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ.³ The plan for the salvation of the human race was set in motion at the creation of the world (Eph 1:4). The promise of victory was made in Gen 3:15, "And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." This declaration is recognized by many theologians as the *proto evangelion*, the

¹The texts quoted in this dissertation are taken from the New International Version unless otherwise indicated.

²U. Becker, "Gospel," The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. Assn., 1976), 2:107.

³Ibid.

first good news of salvation, the promise that the seed of the woman would defeat the serpent.¹ God would send one man, Jesus Christ, to save many (John 3:16). However, before Jesus Christ came into the world as the Savior of those who believe in him, God proclaimed salvation to the world through people, always trying to restore the broken relationship. This is the essence of evangelism.

God's Universal Plan of Evangelism Through People

God has not chosen angels to proclaim his salvation, but people. People have always played a very important role in the salvation of other people. Before destruction struck the earth with the flood, God chose Enoch to tell people about him.² He also chose Noah and his family to be saved and to bring salvation to others.³ The Bible presents God's evangelistic plan since the beginning of sin as a universal effort to save men from their own alienation and to bring them into an intimate relationship with God.

God's evangelistic plan has always been universal. God has designed a cosmic plan by which every person on the planet would have the opportunity to hear the good news and to accept his plan of salvation. The means by which all people are to know God and to learn about his goodness is through other people. God has always used people to reach his goal of saving people and proclaiming his message. People are God's chosen agencies to communicate his truth. He uses the principle of multiplication from a few to

¹C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, The Pentateuch, Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1986), 101.

²Jude 14.

³Gen 6:8-9; 7:1.

many. God chooses an individual, a family, or a small group of people, blesses them, and expects them to multiply themselves and to be a blessing to others. He used this principle with Adam (Gen 1:28); with Noah (Gen 6:9, 7:1, 9:1); with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Gen 12:2-3; 28:13-14); he used with the people of Israel (Exod 19:3-6), with Jesus (Gal 3:29); with the twelve disciples (Matt 28:19-20; Acts 1:8); with Paul (Acts 9:15-16); and finally with the Church (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:5-6). None of the people mentioned above were paid clergy, not even Jesus. He was a lay person, as opposed to the priests and high priests of his day. All these people were common, ordinary people, lay people chosen with a purpose—a missionary people with a purpose, an evangelistic purpose to reach many with the good news of salvation in Christ.

The Call of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

The principle of calling a few to reach the many is demonstrated in God's call to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. According to the book of Genesis, God had a missionary purpose in mind when he called Abraham. He was called to be a blessing to every person on earth. "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Gen 12:2-3).

The promise made to Abraham was repeated to his son Isaac (Gen 26:3-4) and grandson Jacob (Gen 28:13-14). Beginning with Abraham, each successive son of the promise was to be a blessing to the nations. They were to be the mediators of life and

salvation to all the people of the earth. C. von Orellis, referring to the phrase "all the nations of the earth will be blessed," states:

The apostle Paul would later point to this phrase and declare that it was the same "gospel" he preached. Simply put, the good news was "in [the promised seed] all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Gal 3:8). Thus the embryo of God's good news could be reduced to the linchpin word "blessing." The one who was blessed was now himself to effect blessing of universal proportions. In contrast to the nations who sought a "name" for themselves, God made Abraham a great name so that he might be the means of blessing all the nations.¹

All the nations of the earth who receive the blessings of Abraham should receive them the same way that the patriarch received his blessings, by faith (Gal 3:6-9). Not only were they to be recipients of blessings, but they were also to be distributors of blessings. von Orellis sums up the connection between Abraham and the faith of nations in this way:

How Abraham himself, in virtue of his special relation to God, was a mediator of blessing to those about him, is shown in Gen. xx:7; that his people in the same way were to convey the divine blessing, the dispensation of God's grace to the whole world, see in Isa. xix.24; Zech. viii.13. In the present passage the import of the brief saying is expounded in [Gen. 12:3], according to which God's relation to men depends on their attitude to Abraham (cf. xx.7) and the Lord will deal well with those who wish well to him and do homage to the divine grace revealing itself in him; and on the other hand, will make him feel His displeasure who despises and scorns one whom God has blessed. The singular number here is significant. It can only be single hardened sinners who so misunderstand one who is a source of blessing to all about him, as to condemn and hate him, and in him his God. The world, as a whole, will not withhold homage, and will therefore enjoy the benefit of this source of blessing. The latter is implied in the final words [of 12:3] which puts the crown on the promise. . . . But whether the subjective act of homage or the objective act of divine blessing

¹C. von Orellis, cited in Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Toward an Old Testament Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 91.

lies in the niphal ["be blessed"], exegetes are not agreed. That one involves the other follows, however, from the preceding words.¹

All the promises made to Abraham were fulfilled in Jesus, the seed of Abraham (Gal 3:16). However, for the promises of blessings to all nations through Jesus to be fulfilled, there had to be a constant and repetitive multiplication of Jesus' disciples on earth.

The Teachings of Jesus and the Role of the Laity in Evangelism

The proclamation of the gospel to the whole world was one of Jesus' priority from the beginning of his ministry to the end. From his baptism to his ascension to heaven, Jesus' chief preoccupation was twofold: First, to seek and to save the lost, and second, to teach others how to seek and save the lost. His main goal was to evangelize and to teach people how to evangelize (Luke 19:10).

At the very beginning of his ministry, Jesus told his disciples: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt 4:19). At the very end of his earthly ministry, he said: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matt 28:19).

Following his baptism Jesus Christ began the process of calling people and making them into fully devoted disciples. Matt 4:19 says, "Come follow me and I will make you

¹Ibid., 92.

fishers of men.” The fact that the calling of disciples by Jesus is found in the beginning of each of the four Gospels and right after his baptism shows the importance Jesus gave to the making of disciples. The Scriptures also teach that the Gospels present the proclamation of the good news of salvation through the disciples at the end of each Gospel, and thus making the Great Commission the most important of Jesus’ commands (Matt 28:16-20; Luke 24:46-49; Mark 16:15-18; John 20:21).

In Matt 24:14 Jesus says, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” Here Jesus asserts that the gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. Jesus did not say who was going to be doing the preaching, but he left no doubt as to what was going to be preached, where it was going to be preached, and how it was going to be preached.

The Gospels and the Role of the Laity in Evangelism

The Gospel of Matthew introduces the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus with him preaching the arrival of the Kingdom of God (Matt 4:17). Preaching the arrival of the Kingdom was on Jesus’ priority list. However, the proclamation of the coming of the Kingdom could not be completed without the calling and the training of lay evangelists who would carry over the task of preaching the gospel to the whole world. Jesus is the greatest fisherman who has ever lived and he calls his disciples with a promise: “Follow me and I will make you fishers of men” (Matt 4:19). Jesus spent three and a half years recruiting, teaching, and training his disciples how to be fishers of men. He taught theory

and practice; he did on-the-job training (Matt 4:23). Jesus sent out his twelve disciples with the following instructions: "Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. As you go preach this message: The Kingdom of heaven is near" (Matt 10:6-7). Following this command is a series of instructions regarding what they were going to expect as they endeavored to fulfill the injunction of carrying the gospel to the lost sheep of Israel.

Through several parables in Matthew, Jesus taught his disciples not only how to evangelize but also how to make evangelists (Matt 13:1-30; 13:31-32; 13:44-50; 18:10-14; 25:14-30). Finally, after Jesus' resurrection, he gave his disciples his final all-encompassing command to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:19). With this command Jesus created a self-perpetuating, living organism that will never run out of human resources. The making of disciples or lay evangelists was a priority for Jesus as presented in the book of Matthew, and it so should be with Jesus' church today.

In the book of Mark, Jesus began his ministry much in the same way as he did in the book of Matthew, by calling his first disciples with the promise of making them "fishers of men" (Mark 1:17). It is noteworthy, however, that Jesus took upon himself the role of a master-teacher: he says "I will make you." The mission of Jesus was to make fishers who will catch men instead of fish. It is also important to note that the men he called were willing to submit themselves to the Master and be made into fishers of men, for according to Mark, "at once they left their nets and followed Him" (Mark 1:18). Jesus sent his disciples two by two after teaching them and giving them authority to preach and to heal (Mark 6:1-12). The disciples of Christ, according to the book of Mark, went out doing the same work that their master did: they preached (evangelized), drove out

demons, anointed the people, and healed the sick (Mark 6:12-13). Before Jesus' ascension to heaven he commanded his disciples, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15). A disciple of Jesus, whether male or female, would be called today a lay person, and that lay person is called by God with the purpose of being sent out into the world to do the same work the Master did, namely, to teach, preach, heal, and train others to do the same.

In the Gospel according to Luke, Jesus began his ministry by the lake of Galilee, calling his disciples and promising them that instead of fish they will be catching men (Luke 5:10). The Gospel of Luke presents the calling of the twelve disciples and subsequently sending them to evangelize, preach, and heal (Luke 9:1-6). Not only the twelve disciples were sent to evangelize two by two, but the Seventy who were also sent by Jesus to do the same work of preaching, teaching, and healing (Luke 10:1). Moreover, the mission of these seventy disciples was to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. Therefore, the role of the laity in the Gospel of Luke is very clearly defined. In the last chapter of Luke, Jesus reminds his disciples what he had already told them, that the gospel was going to be preached in the whole world, and that they were going to be witnesses. However, they were to stay in Jerusalem until they were clothed with the power from on high (Luke 24:47-49).

In the Gospel according to John, Jesus called his disciples to follow him (John 1:43) and, at the end, instead of using the familiar metaphor of fishers of men, he uses the imagery of a pastor feeding his sheep. He told Peter, "Feed my sheep," and also "Take care of my sheep" (John 21:15-17). Peter was an ordinary person. He was a lay person,

who never went to the seminary. He probably did not even have a high-school diploma. Nevertheless, Jesus instructed him to take care of his sheep. The Great Commission in the Gospel of John is found in John 20:21-23: "Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' And with that he breathed on them and said, 'receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.'"

The Importance of the Great Commission

The last words of Jesus to his disciples after his resurrection were the most important words he thought they should hear. His last words were a commandment, a mandate to mission, an injunction to do the same kind of work he came to this earth to do, namely to make disciples. Jesus told them: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matt 28:18-20). This command is based on Jesus' authority in heaven and on earth. He achieved victory over the powers of evil and defeated the devil on the cross. It seems that it was important for the disciples of Jesus to know that he had all authority in heaven and on earth. Why does Jesus boast of his authority? Do not his disciples know that he has authority? Why does he precede his command with the assurances that all authority has been given to him? He demonstrated through his ministry that he had authority (Matt 7:29; 10:1, 7-8; 11:27; 22:43-44; 24:35:35). But it seems that after his resurrection he had

more authority than he had before. D. A. Carson puts it this way: "It is not Jesus' authority per se that becomes more absolute. Rather, the spheres in which he now exercises absolute authority are enlarged to include all heaven and earth, i.e., the universe."¹

After his resurrection, Jesus was going to continue his work of redemption in heaven, but the most important work on earth was to evangelize the nations. But how was he going to evangelize the nations? Jesus chose his twelve disciples to whom he had dedicated over three years of training to continue the work he started. However, they were not to feel alone as they endeavored to make disciples. Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven with one major purpose: to prepare his people to evangelize the nations. How did he do this? He chose twelve men and as he prepared to leave them after three years, he commissioned them to continue the work that he started. In addition, knowing it would be a lonely work, he promised: "Surely I am with you always" (Matt 28:20).

¹D.A. Carson, Matthew, The Expositor's Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 8:594.

Teachings From the Great Commission: Go and Make Disciples

The last words of Jesus in the Great Commission are a mandate to all believers of all ages, past, present, and future. The command is "Go, and make disciples." It is imperative, not an option; it is a command. Jesus is saying, I have the authority to send you. Because of my authority, go and fulfill my mission. The disciples were not just to go, they had a goal to reach, and that goal was to prepare people who were followers of the Jesus. This was God's plan for fulfilling the promises made to Abraham.

The disciples of Christ were recruited and trained to execute the desires of the great master. The great desire of Jesus was to train disciples that could make disciples of others until the gospel reached every nation on earth. What Jesus was doing here was creating a self-perpetuating organism that would continue to reproduce itself. The intent of Jesus was that one disciple would make another disciple. He was establishing the principle of multiplication, in which one disciple could give birth and develop other disciples who in turn would do the same thing. But what does it mean to make a disciple? The word disciple comes from the Greek mathetes, which means a learner. So a disciple is one who is constantly learning from the master.¹ Carson on this point adds:

To disciple a person to Christ is to bring him into the relation of pupil to teacher, 'taking his yoke' of authoritative instruction (11:29), accepting what he says as true because he says it, and submitting to his requirements as right because he makes them (Broadus). Disciples are those who hear, understand, and obey Jesus' teaching (12:46-50). The injunction is given at least to the Eleven, but to the Eleven in their own role as disciples (v. 16). Therefore they are paradigms for all disciples. Plausibly the

¹R. T. France, Matthew, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1961), 1:277.

command is given to a larger gathering of disciples (see on vv. 10, 16-17). Either way it is building on all Jesus' disciples to make others what they themselves are—disciples of Jesus Christ.¹

Baptize Them

The method of making disciples was included in baptism. Just like circumcision was the covenant sign God gave Abraham,² in the same manner water baptism in the name of the three Persons of the Godhead was to be a sign of discipleship. Carson points out that the NT can scarcely conceive of a disciple who is not baptized or instructed. Indeed, the force of this command is to make Jesus' disciples responsible for making disciples of others, a task characterized by baptism and instruction.³

Teach Them to Obey Everything I Have Commanded You

The fourth part of the command is the key to the understanding of the Great Commission. Note that Jesus told his disciples to go make disciples and to baptize them. Now, in the last part of this commandment he says: "Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."⁴ The key phrase then is, "everything I have commanded you." The question is, does this "everything" include the commandment "go, make disciples and baptize them"? It certainly does. The disciples of Jesus were to go make disciples and to baptize. They understood this commandment clearly. But they also understood that the

¹Carson, 596.

²Gen 17:10-11.

³Ibid., 597.

⁴Matt 28:20.

disciples whom they made were to be taught everything Jesus commanded, including the commandment to make disciples. Therefore, being a disciple of Jesus means to accept him as a personal Savior and Lord, and to take up his/her cross and follow him. This "following" means baptism, living as a disciple in a congregation, and obeying Jesus' command to evangelize.

The Concept of Laos in the Bible

The word laity is a Latin word derived from the Greek word laos. Laos in the Bible means the people of God. This word is always used in the New Testament to refer to the people of God. There is no dichotomy between clergy and laity. In the Septuagint the word is also used primarily to refer to all the people of God in contrast to the pagan nations. According to Gottfried Oosterwal, there are three elements that stand out in the biblical use of the word laos.

First, the Bible uses the word much more frequently than any other classical work written in Greek. This is a clear indication of the significance Bible writers attached to it.¹ Second, in contrast to other Greek literature, Scripture uses the word laos almost exclusively in its singular form. In Scripture laos is an indivisible unit. The laity is a corporal unit.

Third, laos means *a special people* clearly distinguished from other people by their origin, special loyalties, task, language, behavior, principles, and goals. These features are

¹Goffried Oosterwal, Mission Possible (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1972), 19.

very significant because the laos are the special people of God; moreover, they are the chosen ones, the people set apart by God. Laos, therefore, means God's own people.

A correct understanding of laos is important for understanding the origin and nature of the laity. In addition, a correct understanding of the biblical meaning of laity clarifies the role of the laity. "It should be stressed, though, that this election by God is never exclusive. On the contrary, God chooses the laos, his people, to be a blessing to all other people in the world."¹

Oosterwal asserts that the success of God's call to revival and reformation will depend to a large extent on how seriously the Church embraces the biblical role of the laity, how vigorously it stimulates the lay consciousness of God's people, and how well it equips the laity for full participation in God's mission to the world.²

It might be that what the laity in the United States need today is a revival of praying, fasting, preaching, and sharing personal testimonies with the intent of reaching and saving the lost. This revival might produce a living and dynamic personal relationship with the Savior Jesus Christ.

This revival cannot and will not be achieved until the biblical concept of the priesthood of the believers and the role of the laity are understood by paid ministers and unpaid ministers. In fact, a great revival should come as a result of the correct understanding of God's will regarding the ministry of the laity. L. O. Richards and G. R. Martin comment:

¹Ibid., 108.

²Ibid.

Each of the people of God is called to ministry. No clergy-laity distinction exists in the mind of God. Every believer is a part of the laos. Everyone is to find personal significance in understanding what it means to be one of God's called out people. Everyone is to shake off the shackles clamped on by past and present distortion. Everyone is to find freedom to be who he is through affirming that identity that is shared by all the people of God.¹

The Role of the Laity in the Old Testament

The word laos is found more than 2,000 times in the Greek translation of the Old Testament. This is very significant, but more significant is the fact that it always refers to the chosen people of God. "And the Lord has declared this day that you are his people, his treasured possession as he promised, and that you are to keep all his commands. He has declared that he will set you in praise, fame and honor and that you will be a people holy to the Lord your God, as he promised" (Deut 26:18-19).

Moses urged the people of Israel to recognize that they are the special people of God. In the Old Testament the Levites were the priestly cast among the people of Israel. All the people were called the people of God, including the priest.

Everyone who accepted and kept his covenant was called a priest (Deut 7:6; Exod 19:5-6). "Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be a very treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites" (Exod 19:5-6).

¹Lawrence O. Richards and Gilbert R. Martin, Lay Ministry: Empowering the People of God (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 17.

After Moses spoke these words, all the people responded together, "We will do everything the Lord has said" (Exod 19:8). According to this text, all the people who accepted the words of the covenant were chosen to be a "kingdom of priests" and a holy nation. Richards and Martin observe:

The identity of Israel is most clearly expressed, and the meaning of being God's people most clearly seen in the Old Testament covenant. At the time of Abraham's call God gave him certain promises and confirmed them with an oath (b'rith "covenant"). Throughout the Old Testament this covenant was reaffirmed, and at times its provisions further unveiled. This covenant was unlike most human contracts in that a b'rith contract between people was conditional on the performance of both parties. The Biblical covenants, however, are covenants of promise: They are God's covenant promises which will be carried out, whether or not a particular generation of his people carries out its obligations.¹

The Role of the Laity in the New Testament

Richards and Martin assert that in the New Testament the Hebrew 'am becomes the Greek laos, in the special sense of a called-out covenant people. God has taken individuals who believe in Jesus, both Jew and Gentile, and called them apart from the ethnoi (the nations) to make them a laos (people) for himself (Acts 15:14).² Commenting on 1 Pet 2:9, Oosterwal says:

In 1 Peter 2:9 the Bible says, "You are a chosen race, a kingdom of priests, a dedicated nation, a people claimed by God for his own to proclaim the triumphs of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." Notice that the Greek word used for "a people claimed by God for his own to proclaim his triumphs" is Laos, which is the root of the English word laity. The New Testament uses this term over 140 times, and in the Greek translation of the Old Testament it occurs no less than 2,000 times.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

Laos is clearly a dominant theme in the Bible, and the one word most frequently used for God's people. But, notice also how differently the word laity is used in all the Scripture from the way we use it in the Church, and practice it.¹

Oosterwal points out that the word laity in Scripture is never plural but singular, and this indicates the laity is a collective unit, like the body, an indivisible and inseparable whole. The Bible in the Old and New Testaments makes it clear that God has chosen a group of people to be his own precious treasure. And this group of people was chosen with evangelistic purposes in mind.

The Reformers and the Role of the Lay People

All the great reformers agreed that all who accept Jesus as their personal Savior and give their lives to him become a member of the body of Christ or the laos, people of God. The reformers did not see a separation between the clergy and the laity. They agreed that all the people of God are called priests. Calvin said:

Now we must speak briefly concerning the purpose and use of Christ's priestly office: As a pure and stainless mediator he is by his holiness to reconcile us to God. But God's righteous course bars our access to him, and God in his capacity as judge is angry toward us. Hence, an expiation must intervene in order that Christ as priest may obtain God's favor for us and appease his wrath. Thus Christ to perform this office had to come forward with a sacrifice. For under the law, also, the priest was forbidden to enter the sanctuary without blood (Heb 9:7), that believers might know, even though the priest as their advocate stood between them and God, that they could not propitiate God unless their sins were expiated (Lev 16:2-3). The apostle discusses this point at length in the letter to the Hebrews, from the seventh almost to the end of the tenth chapter. To sum up his argument: The priestly office belongs to Christ alone because by the sacrifice of his death he blotted out our guilt and made satisfaction for our

¹Gottfried Oosterwal, "The Role of the Laity," Focus: The Andrews University Magazine, July-August 1973, 3.

sins (Heb 9:22). God's solemn oath, of which he "will not repent," warns us what a weighty matter this is: "You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek" (Ps 110:4; Heb 5:6,7,15). . . . Now Christ plays the priestly role, not only to render the Father favorable and propitious toward us by an eternal law of reconciliation, but also to receive us as his companions in this great office (Rev 1:6). For we who are defiled in ourselves, yet are priests in Him, offer ourselves and our all to God, and freely enter the heavenly sanctuary that the sacrifice of prayers and praise that we bring may be acceptable and sweet-smelling before God. This is the meaning of Christ's statement: "For their sake I sanctify myself" (John 17:9).¹

Martin Luther, who was probably the greatest defender of the priesthood of all believers, said:

From all this it follows that there is really no difference between laymen and priests, princes and bishops, "spirituals" and temporals," as they call them, except that of office and work, but not of "state," for they are all the same state. . . . This is the teaching of St. Paul in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and of St. Peter in 1 Peter 2, as I have said above, viz., that we are all one body of Christ, the head, all members one of another. Christ has not two different bodies one "temporal," and the other spiritual." He is one head, and he has one body. For thus is written in 1 Peter 2, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a priestly kingdom." Therefore we are all priests, as many of us as are Christians. . . . The priesthood is nothing but a ministry, as we learn from 1 Corinthians 4, "Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God."²

Ulrich Zwingli echoes the writings of Calvin and Luther, affirming:

And they quoted 1 Peter 2: Regale Sacerdotium; a royal priesthood. And with the sword they now force Peter. What he meant was that the clergy can be temporal princess and wield secular authority. That is what the axe can do. But Peter's real meaning was that the Lord Jesus Christ has called all Christians to kingly honor and to the priesthood, so that they are all

¹John Calvin, Institute of the Christian Religion, vol. 2 (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1960), 501.

²Martin Luther, "An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility," The Works of Martin Luther (Philadelphia, PA: Muhlenberg Press, 1943), 12.

priests, offering spiritual gifts, that is, dedicating themselves wholly to God.¹

Results of the Lack of Understanding the Biblical Role of the Laity

History has shown that a lack of understanding and an obscuring of the biblical concept of the laity have always resulted in a lack of missionary activity and zeal. On the other hand, when the role of the laity is understood and brought to proper light, a new zeal for evangelism and mission takes possession of the Church.² Oosterwal said:

As soon as the Church lost its Biblical understanding of the laity, mission activities halted abruptly. The Church ceased, thereby, to be a Church, for God called his Church into existence for missionary purposes. With the rediscovery of the Biblical meaning of the laity, a new missionary awakening arose. This happened with the Reformation, the Pietistic lay movement, the missionary awakening in the nineteenth century, and the present missionary expansion in Africa and Latin America.³

Since the book Everyone a Minister by Oscar Feucht came out in 1974, many books and articles have been written regarding the priesthood of the believers and the role of laity in ministry.⁴ However, very little has been done to put the knowledge acquired into practice. A new lay revolution needs to be launched in the Church if the work of God is to be finished and the gospel preached throughout the whole world.

¹Ulrich Zwingli, Valiant for the Truth, ed. David Fuller (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 13.

²Oosterwal, Mission Possible, 106.

³Ibid., 107.

⁴Oscar E. Feucht, Everyone a Minister (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1974).

The Role of Lay Women in the New Testament

The New Testament teaches that in Jesus Christ "there is no Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female" (Gal 3:28). In Jesus we are all equal; Jesus broke the barriers that separated people from one another. He knocked down the wall of race, color, and gender, and made us one in him (Eph 2:11-19).

The Scriptures teach that Jesus called women as well as men to discipleship. He emancipated women by singling them out to receive his teachings, to share in his ministry, and to be witnesses to his resurrection (Luke 8:1-3; 10:38-41; Mark 15:40-41; John 20:17-18; Matt 28:1-10).

The Scriptures clearly teach that God chooses men and women to be his witnesses. Before Jesus' ascension to heaven he told his disciples to remain in Jerusalem until they receive the promise of the father (Luke 24:46-49). That promise was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit with the only purpose of worldwide evangelism, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). A careful study of the context of this text reveals:

1. Some women were part of the group of disciples who were waiting for the promise (Acts 1:12-14).
2. In his sermon, Peter points out that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was the fulfilling of Joel's prophecy, and that men as well as women had received the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:14-17; Joel 2:28-32).

3. Acts 2 also teaches that God calls both men and women to be his servants, and both are supposed to prophesy (Acts 2:18).

The work of the gospel ministry is a gift of the Holy Spirit and, like that of the prophet, is given without distinction of gender (Eph 4:11-12). The Holy Spirit continues his ministry, dwelling in every believer without regard to race, color, or gender (1 Cor 12:4-11; John 16:7-14).

The biblical evidence shows that women, as well as men, have been called to preach, teach, and evangelize (Acts 1:8; 18:26; 21:9; Matt 28:18-20; Phil 4:2-3; Col 4:15). In the New Testament church, the gospel ministers do not function as priest like those of the Old Testament, since every Christian believer is a priest (1 Pet 2:9). Even though women were victims of cultural prejudice in the first century, the New Testament clearly shows many examples of women in leadership positions, evangelizing and serving. For instance, many women were praying with the disciples just before Pentecost (Acts 1:14). The New Testament shows Priscilla teaching the Scriptures to Apollos (Acts 18:26). It is very interesting to note that Apollos was teaching and preaching from the Scriptures and he was an intelligent man, a learned man who "taught about Jesus accurately."¹ However, Priscilla and Aquila took him home and explained to him the way of God more adequately (Acts 18:24-26). Actually, Apollos was discipled by Priscilla and Aquilla, for right after he left their home he engaged in public debates, proving that Jesus was the Christ (Acts 18:28). In addition, the Bible points out that Phillip the evangelist had four daughters who prophesied (Acts 21:9); they were probably evangelist, like their father. In his personal

¹Acts 18:24-25.

greetings to the church in Rome, the apostle Paul mentioned several women who had prominent leadership roles in the church. Phoebe is mentioned by Paul as "a servant of the church in Cenchrea" (Rom 16:1); Priscilla and Aquila are mentioned together as "my fellow workers in Christ Jesus," Priscilla and Aquila had a church in their house (Rom 16:3). Paul also sends greetings to a woman named Mary, who he said "worked very hard for you."¹ Thyphena and Tryphosa deserved Paul's mention also because according to him they were "women who worked very hard in the Lord."² Persis was another woman who also worked very hard in the Lord (Rom 16:12). At least eleven of the thirty-five names mentioned by Paul were women, which shows the prominent role of women in the New Testament church.

The New Testament makes no gender distinction with regard to the gospel ministry. The command to evangelize goes to every person who becomes a follower of Jesus (Matt 28:18-20; Rev 14:6-7; Acts 1:8).

The Seventh-day Adventist Church believes in the priesthood of all the believers (1 Pet 2:9) and, therefore, accepts and encourages the ministry of women. Because women are part of God's master plan of evangelism, women should receive adequate training so that they can be ready to be witnesses of the Lord Jesus.

¹Rom 16:6.

²Rom 16:12.

Ellen G. White and the Role of Lay People in Evangelism

The role of lay people in evangelism has been set forth very clearly by Ellen G. White. She wrote much concerning the last command of Christ to his disciples and the role of laity in fulfilling that mandate. Referring to Jesus' last commission to his disciples, she said: "The Savior's commission to the disciples included all the believers. It includes all the believers in Christ to the end of time. . . . All who receive the life of Christ are ordained to work for the salvation of their fellow men."¹

White teaches that women as well as men should prepare themselves for the gospel ministry. She says,

All who desire an opportunity for true ministry, and who will give themselves unreservedly to God, will find in the canvassing work opportunities to speak upon many things pertaining to the future, immortal life. The experience thus gained will be of the greatest value to those who are fitting themselves for the ministry. It is the accompaniments of the Holy Spirit of God that prepares workers, both men and women, to become pastors to the flock of God.²

Like Jesus, Ellen G. White recognizes that women have the great potential to become true witnesses for God, and that with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and with adequate training and preparation they can have a tremendous impact on the world.

To be a disciple of Christ, according to White, means to accept the sacred calling of being witnesses in the name of Christ to all people. God makes no distinction between free or slave, rich or poor, old or young, men or woman. E. G. White observes: "God has

¹Ellen G. White, Desire of Ages (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1940), 822.

²Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 6:322.

claims upon the service of all, men and women, youth and children; and the earlier they are led out of and away from themselves, and taught to engage in unselfish labor for others, the nearer will they come to fulfilling this holy commission."¹

The role of lay people in evangelism is made very clear by White when she says: "Let those who are well established in the truth, go into neighboring places, and hold meetings, giving a cordial invitation to all. Let there be in these meetings, melodious songs, fervent prayers, and the reading of God's word."²

When the members of the church realize what a tremendous responsibility they have, they will begin to be a blessing to others and to themselves. She puts it this way:

Even while engaged in their daily employment, God's people can lead others to Christ. And while doing this, they will have the precious assurance that the Savior is close beside them. . . . Their own faith will be strengthened, as they realize that the Redeemer's promise is being fulfilled. Not only are they a blessing to others, but the work they do for Christ brings blessings to themselves.³

God called Abraham to be a blessing to all nations. In Christ, the Christian is heir to the blessings and promises to Abraham. The gospel commission must be fulfilled not by the employed minister alone but by every member of the body of Christ who, according to E. G. White, has been ordained for ministry.

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

¹Ellen G. White, "Christ's Commission," Review and Herald, June 1880, 24.

²Ellen G. White, "From House to House," Review and Herald, November 19, 1914, 49.

³Ellen G. White, "Missionary Contact with the People," Review and Herald, January 1912, 1.

earth with power and great glory. This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the worlds for witness unto all nations. "And then shall the end come."¹

The only way the gospel will be preached to the whole world is when every man and woman discovers and puts into action his or her role in ministry. Church members must be educated regarding their role in evangelism. White emphasizes the fact that the minister cannot and should not do the work alone but that he should instead educate people to serve Jesus.

The work of the minister is incomplete if he does not educate the souls newly come to the faith to be laborers together with God, visiting and praying with families, showing to the world what Jesus has done for them. God's word declares, "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." These words are addressed not only to the minister, but to every follower of Christ. There are sluggards all through our churches, who frame excuses for their idleness. God calls not only on the minister, but on every soul connected with him, to be a worker in his vineyard. "Herein is my Father glorified," Christ says, "that ye bear much fruit." By his own life Jesus has paid for your earnest, hearty cooperation. He expects you to work, everyone who has passed from death unto life. If you do not work as faithful missionaries, you are untrue to your trust, and you disappoint your Savior.²

Even though the Great Commission was originally given to the twelve disciples, White believes it was intended also for all believers in all ages.

Upon all who are engaged in the Lord's work rests the responsibility of fulfilling the commission: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing

¹Ellen G. White, Acts of the Apostles (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911), 111.

²Ellen G. White, "Work in Christ's Lines," Ms 48, 1899, March 29, 1899, Ellen G. White Research Center, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you."¹

Ellen G. White and the Training of Lay People

Ellen G. White points out that lay people cannot be developed and brought into proper order to do the work of evangelism without careful planning and systematic training. These lay people, she says, need to be trained and supervised by experienced leaders from the church and the conference. Officers at various levels in the organization need to be involved and must take the heavy responsibility of training lay people the work of God.² According to White:

The forces for good among the lay members of the church cannot be developed and brought into proper working order without careful planning and systematic training. And as these workers are developed, they must be given the wise, helpful supervision of experienced leaders. They should not be left to struggle along alone, unaided. While it is true that the responsibility of leadership rests heavily upon the officers of the local churches, yet this responsibility is to be shared by the ordained ministers and by conference officers. Those in positions of trust in the General Conference and in union and local conferences cannot overlook their responsibility toward every church member, however humble may be the work in which he is engaged. All lines of service are to be bound together in one united whole.³

In analyzing the writings of Ellen G. White, one can see that the laity not only have an important role into the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but also that the mission cannot be finished without the help of lay people. In addition, the training of lay

¹Ellen G. White, "The Example of Christ" Spirit of Sacrifice [The Writings of Ellen G. White on CD-ROM] (Elizabethton, TN: MLI Software, 1994).

²Ellen G. White, "Every Christian's Work," Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, October 22, 1914, 9.

³Ibid., 10.

people for evangelism is not an option, but the responsibility of church leadership at all levels, especially the ordained minister in the local church. The minister must seek to train himself, in order to be able to train others to fulfill the Great Commission. Only in this way can the saints be perfected and equipped. She says, "No man should think that it is his duty to enter the fields as a minister unless he is willing to educate and train himself to act as a shepherd to the flock."¹ And then she adds, "Let the minister devote more of his time to education than to preaching. Let him teach the people how to give to others the knowledge they have received."²

White regards the role of lay people as essential for fulfilling the gospel commission. Therefore, because all are called to fulfill the gospel commission, all need to be not only aware of their responsibility as a member of the body of Christ, but also to be trained and prepared to fulfill their role. This concept has been understood by the leadership of the church, and there has been some progress leading to training and educating the laity. But as White puts it:

In past years, much has been done to strengthen the hands of the lay members, and to encourage them to be vigilant home missionaries. But much more might have been accomplished had those in responsibility recognized and made full use of all the working forces in the church. In every church there is talent, which, with the right kind of helpful training from men of experience, might be developed into a power for the up building of God's kingdom.³

¹Ellen G. White to Brother Curtis, January 16, 1892, Letter C-3, 1892, Ellen G. White Research Center, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

²White, Testimonies for the Church, 7:20.

³Ellen G. White, "Fields Near at Hand," Review and Herald, October 22, 1914, 7.

Believers of all ages are given the command to go to all nations and preach the gospel. What is needed, according to White, is training and education to do the work.¹

In every church there is talent, which, with the right kind of labor, might be developed to become a great help in this work. That which is needed now for the up-building of our churches is the nice work of wise laborers to discern and develop talent in the church, --talent that can be educated for the Master's use. There should be a well-organized plan for the employment of workers to go into all our churches, large and small, to instruct the members how to labor for the up-building of the church, and also for unbelievers. It is training, education, that is needed. Those who labor in visiting the churches should give the brethren and sisters instruction in practical methods of doing missionary work.

The Role of the Church According to Ellen G. White

What is the work of the church according to Ellen G. White?

The church of Christ has been organized on earth for missionary purposes, and it is of the highest importance that every individual member of the church should be a sincere laborer together with God, filled with the Spirit, having the mind of Christ, perfected in sympathy with Christ, and therefore bending every energy according to his intrusted ability to the saving of souls. Christ requires that everyone who would be called by his name should make his work the first and highest consideration, and disinterestedly cooperates with heavenly intelligence in saving the perishing for whom Christ has died.²

She sees the church as the right place for training Christian workers and the pastor as the provider of the training. She said:

Every church should be a training school for Christian workers. Its members should be taught how to give Bible readings, how to conduct and teach Sabbath-school classes, how best to help the poor and to care for the sick, how to work for the unconverted. There should be schools of health,

¹White, Testimonies for the Church, 9:117.

²Ellen G. White, "Missionary Enterprise, the Object of Christ's Church," Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, October 30, 1894, 673.

cooking schools, and classes in various lines of Christian help work. 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

In conclusion, a careful investigation of the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White demonstrates that in God's great plan of salvation every person belonging to the covenant people of God has been chosen to "evangelize," that is, to communicate to others the gospel of Jesus Christ. In addition, Christ's great commission to his disciples was a mandate to all the believers of all nations at all times, until the end of time. Therefore, to obey that command is not an option for the believers. The role of lay people in evangelism is essential and central in the lives of those who in the last days invoke the name of the Lord.

¹Ellen G. White, Ministry of Healing (Mountain View, CA: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1905), 149.

CHAPTER III

A REVIEW OF CURRENT LITERATURE ON LAY EVANGELISM

The Mission of Jesus as a Model for the Mission of the Church

The reviewing of the Christian leaders' literature of the past decade indicates that the goal of the Church as a body and as an organization is to accomplish the mission of Jesus in this world. As was mentioned in chapter 2, one of Jesus' priorities was the proclamation of the gospel to the whole world. His mission was to seek and to save the lost and to teach others how to do the same. Evangelism and discipling was Jesus' mission; the Bible says that "Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness" (Matt 9:35). Jesus and his mission are therefore the model for the disciples' mission and ultimately the model for the modern Christian church's mission (Matt 28:19-20). Martiner Arias points out:

In going to the gospels to find the real meaning of the "Great Commission" and the answer to our missiological questions, we are going to the real source and origin of the mission: Jesus' own mission! We can not understand the disciples' mission without Jesus' mission. Paul's mission and the writings coming from it dominate in the New Testament, and they are the oldest written documents of Christianity, but Paul's mission has no meaning without Jesus' mission. The four Gospels came

later than Paul's letters, but they came from the "Jesus tradition" on which everything depends.¹

Jesus organized his church with only one purpose in mind and that is to share the good news of salvation with a sinful and dying world. Evangelism was never an option for the church, evangelism is the business of the church.

The Church as a Training School of Evangelism

The Bible clearly shows that the method of the Great Commission of Jesus is the method for mission: "Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them . . . teaching them."² It is clear therefore that, for Jesus, mission is discipleship, is training, is teaching people to obey his commands. In order for Jesus' disciples to make other disciples, they needed to obey everything he had instructed them, and teach other followers to do the same. The emphasis of the Gospel of Matthew in terms of the Great Commission seems to be on making disciples. That is why Arias, reflecting on the Great Commission, says:

So if we are serious about taking Matthew 28:16-20 as the paradigm for mission today, our evangelization should concentrate on what we call Christian education! Where did we get the idea that evangelism and Christian education are separate things in the mission and ministry of the church? Certainly not in the 'Great Commission'! Mission, for Matthew, was catechetical mission. How does this understanding compare with our understanding of mission and evangelism?³

He adds that this vision of mission as "making disciples" should be an encouraging and liberating discovery for church leaders who worried about how to do evangelism. He

¹Martiner Arias and Alan Johnson, Biblical Model for Evangelism (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1992), 15.

²Ibid., 18.

³Ibid., 19.

also contends that evangelism without discipleship is not evangelism in the New Testament sense, according to the Great Commission.¹

Arias points out that discipleship Jesus' style is much more than doctrinal teaching and religious training. The last command to teach and baptize implies also a command to obey, to practice everything Jesus taught. This training was not only orthodoxy, the right doctrine—but orthopraxis—the right practice.²

Thus the church is 'mission', as so often we have heard in recent years. It does not merely have a mission; it is mission, here in the world to do something which is of enormous importance. Thus, one can safely say that the Church exists because Christ exists and the Church exists to continue the ministry of Christ on his behalf. This is the reason for the existence of the Church. If the proclamation of Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world is the reason for the existence of the Church, it follows that a church that does not proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to a sinful world does not exist as a church.³

Christ's Commission: A Mandate to Train for Evangelism

George Barna states that the Great Commission given by Christ to his followers was an unequivocal command to everyone, not just a few who enjoyed evangelism. He says that if you and I are to call him Lord, then we, too, must accept that evangelism is

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., 20.

³John Maxwell, Developing the Leader Around You (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), 170.

one of the things we must do.¹ Because Barna sees Christ's mandate to all his followers in all ages, he sees an imperative need for lay training. He asserts:

A large proportion of the Christians who do not evangelize contend that they are just not prepared for anything that taxing or sophisticated. The concern relates to having received little or no training in evangelism, having no understanding of other faith systems as a basis for conversing intelligently about Christianity in relation to other religions, or not being a capable communicator.²

No being prepared is probably one of the main reasons why many people do not participate actively in evangelism. Feeling nervous about sharing one's faith with another person is a sure sign of lack of preparedness. The only way that situation is corrected is by providing the lay people with the necessary tools, materials and training that will make them feel comfortable when evangelizing. In fact, courses on the art of communication should be part of any church's religious educational program.

Training people to do evangelism is not an option for churches and pastors, it is a necessity for growth and survival, especially the kind of training that includes not just theory but practice and mentoring. Barna says:

One of the most overlooked forms of evangelism training is to be mentored by a mature Christian who is involved in evangelism and has a rich desire to involve other people in sharing their faith. This was the primary model used in the Early Church. Notice that the Church in Jerusalem did not have training classes, guidebooks, or step-by-step programs for outreach. The approach was taught by Jesus: Be among the people, live a righteous life, talk about truth from God's perspective and encourage people to take advantage of God's offer of salvation. In the process, develop future

¹George Barna, Evangelism That Works (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1995), 146.

²Ibid., 150.

evangelizers by operating as a team, where one goes from being the master evangelizer to the mentor, evaluating and assisting an apprentice.¹

Mentoring is an overlook kind of evangelism training because mentoring consumes a lot of time. In addition, mentoring requires living a model life, not a perfect life, but a life that is worth emulating. Church leaders can not pretend to train people to be soul winners when they have never won a soul. Mentoring requires modeling. It requires the investment of one's life for the benefit of communicating the gospel.

Training Lay People for Evangelism

Some leaders may presume that lay people do not want to be better prepared to evangelize. They think that maybe the lay people are too busy to share their faith and therefore fail to properly equip them. However, Barna challenges this presupposition and emphasizes:

The fact remains, however, that people who are available and thankful for opportunities to spread the good news want to be better prepared to take advantage of outreach opportunities. How can they accomplish this end? Nine out of 10 evangelizers said they would like to know more about the content of the Bible and 3 out of every 4 suggested that they would like to have a greater number of close friends with whom they could share the good news. These two simple but challenging steps would undoubtedly enhance the ability to make the gospel come alive for many more of those who engage in conversation about what Christ has to offer.²

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., 76.

Barna found that one out of every three Christian churches offers evangelism training.¹ However, most evangelizers have prepared for evangelizing opportunities by enrolling in training courses made available by their churches.

In studies made by Barna it was found that the training of lay evangelists was absolutely necessary in order to compensate for some of the challenges they face. He discovered that:

1. Four out of ten evangelizers are usually concerned that they will not do a good job of clearly explaining their beliefs.
2. One out of every three Christians who shares his or her faith enters the discussion with concerns about a personal lack of knowledge and skills in answering the questions these people might ask regarding Christianity.
3. Three out of ten evangelizers are usually worried that the person they are evangelizing will be upset or offended by the nature of the discussion.
4. One out of every seven feels uncomfortable speaking with other people about spiritual matters.²

This finding demonstrates the great need for a well-planned and well-organized lay training school, either at the church or conference level. According to Barna, there are many people receiving evangelism training; however, very few people are actually involved in evangelism.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., 77.

Every year, approximately one million people receive some kind of evangelism training. In most cases, this consists of classes or other preparation provided by their churches. In other situations, this equipping occurs in classes at schools and seminaries, in seminars and conferences on evangelistic activity, in personal mentoring and in training offered by parachurch ministries such as Evangelism Explosion, Campus Crusade for Christ and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. Overall, among the sixty million adults who shared their faith with non-Christians last year, almost half of them (47 percent) have had some form of evangelism training during their lifetimes.¹

This is good news; however, most evangelistic training has been done in institutions rather than at the local level where the action occurs. This results in people getting prepared to share their faith in a distant mission field while the great multitudes in North America died without a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Oscar E. Feucht asserts:

This makes the training program as vital as the preaching program. Both need to be tied closely to the Church's work program. Training should be for specific work programs: meeting new neighbors, reclaiming inactive members, winning whole families, reaching modern youth, and the like. Actual practice is a necessity. Our priesthood requires a practical apprenticeship under successful kingdom workers.²

This does not mean that the preaching of the Word is not important. On the contrary, what makes the preaching of the gospel more effective is the training of the members. In fact, every sermon should have the aim of helping people surrender their lives to Jesus. When a person surrenders his or her life to Jesus, that will be manifested by his or her life of obedience to Jesus' mandate to make disciples to all nations.

¹Ibid., 73.

²Feucht, 101.

Lay Training Should Be Intentional and Systematic

In order for a lay training program to be successful in a church or conference, it will have to be systematic, mission oriented, and intentional. Burrill points out that most local church training occurring today is not systematic or intentional; rather, it occurs because someone feels a burden to provide training in a certain area. There is no centralized effort to equip all the members for their ministries.¹ Burrill adds,

If training is to be one of the priority functions of the Adventist Church, then it is necessary that money be allocated from the local church budget for training materials and that quality time be given to training in the church calendar.²

Burrill sees a conference-wide training program as essential. However, the churches must get involved in a lay training program that is regular and systematic. He points out that a local church training center may be small, but some training ought to be taking place on a regular basis in every local Seventh-day Adventist Church. Some very small churches may wish to combine with other churches in the district to provide a district-wide training program.³

Challenges of Church-Sponsored Lay Training

Ideally every local church should be a training center for the members. However, for several reasons, this is not always possible. First, to begin a training program in a church requires time and money. Many pastors are already overworked, pastoring two

¹Russell Burrill, Revolution in the Church (Fallbrook, CA: Hart Research Center, 1993), 108.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., 109.

and three church districts. Adding a lay training program is like adding another church to their district. Second, not every pastor has the gift or the interest of teaching and, therefore, will not be as effective as one who sees his or her ministry in teaching the laity. Third, not every church has adequate building facilities to provide effective training. In fact, many churches do not even own a building.

Conference-Wide Training Program

Burrill suggests that perhaps several churches could get together to provide this training program.¹ However, a conference-wide training program could be very effective for several reasons:

1. The people meet in a centralized location.
2. The conference can find trained professionals, pastors, evangelists, administrators that could provide the training at not extra cost to the churches.
3. More people will get involved in the program than if only a few churches do it together.

Normally we think about the pastors and teacher as the trainers of the saints for ministry. But Paul states that evangelists are also to prepare members of Christ's church for ministry. For what kind of ministry? It is logical to assume that the training done by evangelists should be for evangelistic ministry.

Such was Jesus' strategy with his disciples. As he went about Israel evangelizing from town to town, he equipped twelve men for evangelism through on-the-job training.

¹Ibid.

Russell Burrill concludes his book, Revolution in the Church, by presenting eight steps that the Seventh-day Adventist Church needs to take if it wants to prepare the world for the second coming of Jesus:

1. A time to pray for the Holy Spirit and a revival of primitive godliness in the church
2. A rediscovery of the role of the laity as the performer of ministry in the church
3. A recommissioning of the pastor as the trainer/equiper of people in the church

This becomes the chief responsibility of the pastor.

4. A discovery of the spiritual gifts of the members
5. A placing of people into ministry in harmony with their spiritual gifts
6. An ongoing training program for the church, providing the skills needed for various ministries

7. An on-the-job training program to supplement the formal training
8. A system of small groups to provide for the relational needs of the members.¹

According to this author, the rediscovery and restoration of the ministry to the lay people is crucial not only for the survival of the Seventh-day Adventist Church but also for the accomplishing of its mission to the world. In addition, the establishment of lay training centers for ministry is necessary for the training of church members who want to use their gifts for the Lord.

Robert Coleman commenting about Jesus strategy to conquer the world through the gospel of salvation said,

¹Ibid., 124.

His strategy was to prepare a nucleus of laborers for the harvest. These followers in turn would reach others and train them with the same vision. In time, through the process of reproduction, He saw the day when every person would have opportunity to intelligently respond to the Gospel of God's redeeming love.¹

This is evangelism Jesus style. For Jesus evangelism is not a public meeting where thousands come and listen, although he used that method occasionally, for Jesus evangelism is training one disciple who will win others and train them to follow Jesus strategy for reaching the world for salvation.

The Church as a Learning Environment

Paul Stevens suggests that we must measure the adequacy of lay training programs against God's grand plan for equipping all the saints, because according to him what is needed is not just a training program but an environment. That environment can be the local church or a selected place where the local conference provides constant training to the churches in the area. Because the church as an organization has a mission to fulfill, the church should be equipped or prepared to equip its individual members. As Stevens puts it, the church needs specially gifted leaders, highly qualified and trained servant-ministers, recognized elders, and equipping ministers.²

Like many other writers, Stevens sees the local church as the primary training structure. He states:

¹Robert E. Coleman, The Master's Way of Personal Evangelism (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1997), 13.

²R. Paul Stevens, The Equipper's Guide to Every-Member Ministry (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 41.

The church's kerygmatic function is proclamation. But often there is a short in our communication circuit. Most training courses in personal evangelism short out at one of two points. Either they concentrate on mere technique or they train people in an environment foreign to the one in which they live and work. No doubt such training "raids" do something to stimulate faith, boldness and clarity in witness. But I am not convinced that such hot house training experiences are translated into increased witnessing to neighbors and co-workers. . . . Once again, the local church is the best training agency in personal evangelism.¹

Many lay training events and seminars have been conducted in the Seventh-day Adventist church in North America. However, very few lay training events have been continuous and systematic. Research needs to be conducted to find out what kind of program/event can be both systematic, and continuous.

The Mission of Jesus as a Model for the Pastor

Jesus knew what was his mission from the very beginning of his ministry (Luke 19:10). He had a goal in mind and set out to get it (Mark 10:45). The soteriological aspect of Jesus' mission was always parallel to the didactic aspect of his mission (Matt 4:23); for Jesus, saving people meant teaching them the principles of his kingdom. The mission of Jesus ought to be a model for Seventh-day Adventist pastors. The Seventh-day Adventist pastor usually dedicates most of his or her time to preaching, administration, and general ministry. It seems like that is the reason why they have been employed. In addition, some members have great expectations from their pastors. They want their pastors to be able to prepare and preach great sermons. They also want their pastors to

¹Ibid., 104.

chair all the committees of both the church and the school. Consequently, most of the pastor's time is spent in administration.

The conference also has great expectations from its pastors. Conference officials want their pastors to be able to carry on all the activities of the church without neglecting the conference program. They want their pastors to be able to baptize many people during the year and they want the tithe to increase. They also want the Ingathering goal to be reached. The pastors must do all of this without, of course, neglecting their health or their family. All of these expectations create confusion in the mind of the pastors and it could also create a role conflict, as they seek to try to please everyone. What is the pastoral role in the economy of God? Preaching, counseling, evangelism, and administration?

The Pastor as a Discipler, Coach, and Trainer

Jesus dedicated most of his time to training his disciples. He chose them from the very beginning of his ministry (Matt 4:17-23). It is good to remember that pastoring is not a position, it is not an office, it is not a job. Pastoring is a spiritual gift (Eph 4:11). Pastoring cannot be defined primarily in terms of preaching or counseling; pastoring is primarily a spiritual gift. What then is the chief priority of pastoral leadership? Howard Snyder says:

The chief priority of pastoral leadership is discipling men and women for the Kingdom. Ephesians 4:11-12 says God has gifted pastors and other leaders to equip God's people for ministry. Jesus said he was sending out his followers to make disciples (Matt 28:19). Essentially, the pastor's first priority is to so invest himself or herself in a few other persons that they also become disciplers and ministers of Jesus Christ. It is to so give oneself to others and to the work of discipling that the New Testament norm of plural leadership or eldership becomes a reality in the local congregation.

In other words, it is to bring the ministry of all God's people (based on priesthood, gifts and servanthood) to functioning practical reality. God has promised to give sufficient gifts so that through the discipling process all leadership needs are met--whether in evangelism, social witness, teaching or any other area. Only on this basis, in fact, has God promised that the church can reach spiritual maturity, the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:11-16).¹

Because the principal task of the pastor is discipling, all other activities and functions of the pastor should revolve around the making of disciples. The purpose for which the leaders of the church, pastors and evangelist are called is to prepare God's people to give them the necessary tools to fulfill the commission of Jesus. Many lay people will gladly do work of evangelism if they were taught how to do it.

The problem has often been that church leaders teach what to do, and what not to do, but very seldom they teach the practical aspect of Christianity, the how to do it. It is important to study theology and learn the why we must evangelize, and what message we should present to the public, however, of equal importance is to learn how to evangelize. That is the reason why Jesus spent over three years recruiting and training his disciples. This is the reason, also why we must study the Bible to find principles that will help to develop a theology of the laity, however, we should not stop there, but use those principles to develop creative ways to teach lay people how to reach others with the good news of salvation. This is why discipling must be at the center of every pastoral activity, and should be point number one the agenda of pastors, evangelists and leaders at all levels of the church organization. Snyder emphasizes:

¹Howard A. Snyder, Liberating! the Church: The Ecology of Church and Kingdom (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1983), 248.

All pastoral functions should be oriented toward the priority of training God's people for Kingdom life and ministry. Discipling is not a specific, specialized activity. It is the exercise of all pastoral gifts, focused on the making of disciples. Discipling is teaching, understood from the perspective of the Kingdom, not from some other perspective, such as secular education. It is precisely what Jesus said in Matthew 28:20, teaching believers to put into practice what Jesus taught. Once the discipling priority is clear then preaching, teaching, counseling, worship guidance and other activities can serve the priority of disciple making.¹

Besides being a discipler the pastor should be like a coach in a basketball team. He must help his players to develop their abilities so that they can play well and win the championship. One of the most important characteristics of a good leader is his or her ability to develop other leaders. Carl George says:

A minister who wants to experience a championship season must come to view every group leader as a team coach and every parishioner as a potential player. Otherwise, the pastor will become so wrapped up in all the other tasks that the most important one slips: The developing of lay cell-group leaders.²

According to George, the most important task of the pastor is to develop leaders who will develop other leaders who will develop other leaders, in other words 'discipling.' Pastors should realize that God does not want them to do everything themselves; that is not the role to which God calls them. The best way to mobilize entire teams of lay people is for each pastor to train groups of team leaders.³

The church can not be adequately compared to a football team, or a basketball team. Yet, the church is a team, and as a team, it needs a coach to trace for the team an

¹Ibid., 249.

²Carl F. George, Prepare Your Church for the Future (Tarrytown, NY: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1991), 120.

³Ibid.

action plan and to motivate and encourage the team players. In that respect, the pastor is like a coach. The coach has vision, and dreams for his team, and one of the dreams of any basketball coach in America is to have in their teams great players like Michael Jordan, Larry Bird and Magic Johnson. When this three players were in their respective courts the rest of the team raised their level of performance. Rick Pitino, coach of the Boston Celtics says, "that is what great leaders are continually trying to do: make people around them better."¹ When pastors train people for ministry they are making them better prepared to serve God. There are many blessings and privileges in the ministry, but nothing is more rewarding than seeing a born again child of God develop into a full devoted disciple of Christ and become a great champion for the cause of Christ.

The role of the pastor in accomplishing the mission of the church is to disciple and train lay people. The pastor can never help the church accomplish its mission by trying to do it alone. If that were the case, there would be no need to make disciples. Burrill says,

The primary task of the pastor, according to Scripture, is to train or equip the members for their ministry. Much of the pastor's time should be spent in helping members discover a place of ministry in harmony with their spiritual gifts. . . . However, merely placing people into ministries does not ensure that they will be competent, even if they are gifted. Training is an absolutely vital component that will require significant pastoral attention if people are to function effectively in a ministry.²

The Greek word for equipping Katartismos, is used as a noun only once in Eph 4:12. It means to train, to furnish with necessities, to prepare intellectually, to prepare

¹Rick Pitino, Success Is a Choice (New York: Broadway Books, 1997), 33.

²Burrill, 107.

experientially, it means to provide or restore to a forfeited condition.¹ Training is in the end a pastoral task.

The pastor who understands the role of training his people to fulfill their mission will be accomplishing the main task for which he or she have been call, namely, to help people find their niche. To prepare them in such a way that they can share with others what they have receive from the Lord. But not just what they have received, but what they have seen or heard.

Called to Be Witnesses

The followers of Christ have been called to bear witness for Jesus. A witness is one that tells what he or she heard and saw (1 John 1:1-3). Jesus told his disciples, "you are witnesses of these things." (Luke 24:48). He commanded them to stay in Jerusalem until they were ready to bear witness for him (Act 1:8). The Greek word here is diamartiretai which comes from the verb martyreo (to give witness). The apostle Paul understood the command of Jesus for he said, "However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me--the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace" (Act 20:24) commenting on this verse, Paul Ricoeur identified four claims about the witness made by this passage:

1. The witness is not a volunteer, not just anyone who comes forward to give testimony, but only the one who is sent to testify

¹Samuel Bagster and Sons, The Analytical Greek Lexicon (n.d.), s. v. "katartismos."

2. The testimony of the witness is not about the global meaning of human experience but about God's claim upon life. It is Yahweh who is witnessed to in the testimony

3. The purpose of the testimony is proclamation to all peoples. It is on behalf of the people, for their belief and understanding, that the testimony is made

4. The testimony is not merely one of words but rather demands a total engagement of speech and action. The whole life of the witness is bound up in the testimony.¹

Even though a person is born into the kingdom of God as a witness, it is necessary to realize that one needs to learn how to be a witness. The mistake the church have made is that it takes for granted the fact that one is born as a witness and therefore should have the necessary ability for bearing witness to Christ. This reasoning is pervasive and it denies the people of God an excellent opportunity to grow and bear fruits for the kingdom. Jesus once again is our example, he even though the disciples were to be equipped by the Holy Spirit with spiritual gift to build up the kingdom of God, he took the time to train them how to be witness of the things they have seen and heard. Alexander Baltmain Bruce said,

In the training of the twelve for the work of the apostleship, hearing and seeing the words and works of Christ necessarily occupied an important place. Eye and ear witnessing of the facts of an unparalleled life was an indispensable preparation for future witness-bearing. The apostles could secure credence for their wondrous tale only by being able to preface it with the protestation: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto

¹Thomas G. Long, The Witness of Preaching (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989), 43.

you.” None would believe their report, save those who, at the very least, were satisfied that it emanated from men who had been with Jesus.¹

The disciples of Jesus paid special attention to the fact that they have seen and heard. That was important for their testimony to be credible. There are two types of witnesses, one is a true witness, and the one who is a false witness. In his message to the church of Laodicea Jesus says that he is “The True Witness” (Rev 3:14).

No one would argue that because the disciples of Christ were visual witnesses of the wonderful works of Jesus they did not need to be trained. Yet, that is exactly what the Christian church have done. We baptize people in the name of the divinity, bring them into the church and expect them to be automatic witnesses of the things they have not even seen, but only heard. That is why many Christian leaders today are calling for a lay revolution in the church, to give the lay people not just the opportunity to witness but also the training, and the method of how to do it. John Maxwell has observed:

Successful delegators cannot simply dump tasks on their people without preparing them for the tasks. If they do, their people will fail and resent them. Instead, they must train their people both before delegating and afterward when mistakes have been made. When leaders learn to train others, they are better equipped to delegate.²

Training lay people to do evangelism or any other type of ministry will not only make the trainee more effective in carrying out the task, but the leader himself will be better equipped to send lay people to carry out the mission. In order for a leader to be

¹Alexander Balmain Bruce, The Training of the Twelve (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing Association, 1963), 41.

²Maxwell, 170.

successful, he or she must be able to delegate and to train the people they delegate.

How does the pastor train people to care? In this transitional phase, the church should provide the training mentioned in chapter 2. This formal training, vital as it is, will not suffice to equip people for ministry. In addition, there must be hands-on training occurring in the church. Every time the pastor makes a visit, be it pastoral or evangelistic, he should take a lay person with him. Let the lay person observe, then let the lay person do it while the pastor observes.¹ Barna sees the role of the pastor as a lot more than just preaching and administration. He states:

At the same time, the pastor, if he or she is to fulfill the role of the shepherd, must do more than preach. The pastor must provide true leadership in all dimensions of ministry activity. Such leadership must influence several areas: Teaching, modeling, training, evaluating, encouraging, exhorting, praying and sending. Although it is unhealthy to wait for the pastor to make evangelism happen within the Church, it is similarly unhealthy to minister in a church where the pastor provides no leadership in the realm of outreach.²

In the community of God's people the pastor is not the head, the pastoral director, the boss, or the chief executive officer. Rather, the pastor (or better, pastors) serves as coordinator, equipper, discipler, overseer, and shepherd. This is leadership. But it is leadership for, with, and in the body. It is leadership on an organic community model, not on an organizational hierarchy model.³ The pastor is a disciple of Jesus, and has been

¹Burrill, 116.

²Ibid., 132.

³Snyder, 247.

commanded to teach, preach, disciple, and baptize, first as a disciple (Matt 28:19-20) and second as a pastor (Eph 4:11-12).

The Mission of Jesus as a Model for the Mission of the Members

What is the role of the members of the church as individuals in accomplishing the mission of Jesus? Many believe that their mission is to come to church for worship services, to give tithes and offerings, and to say amen to the plans of the pastor. After all, the pastor is getting paid to visit, preach, and teach. Barna states:

Although the local church is involved in the battle to defeat the forces of evil, every believer has been called by Christ to do whatever he or she can to lead non-Christians, through the enabling of the Holy Spirit, into God's eternal presence.¹

As mentioned in the previous chapter, in the Bible, the laity (Greek, laikoi) refers to the whole people of God, both clergy and so-called laity. It is a term of honor since the whole people of God in Christ are chosen to be a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people (laikoi) belonging to God (1 Pet 2:9). Christianity arose essentially as a lay movement, and it was a long time before "lay" became a term for second-class status. Pressure came from popular piety which used Old Testament models of priestly leadership and projected them into the church-even though in Christ the priestly privileges were extended to the whole church.²

¹Barna, 141.

²R. Paul Stevens, Liberating the Laity: Equipping All the Saints for Ministry (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1985), 21.

The mission of the church as a body and as an organization is evangelism, the mission of the pastor as a leader is evangelism, the mission of the individual members of the Church, as disciples, is evangelism. Evangelism is the reason for the existence of the church, the pastors, and the members. The passage of Eph 4 teaches that God gave evangelists, pastors, and teachers the responsibility of equipping his people in the work of evangelism. The pastor should not expect to do all the work alone. The pastors and evangelists received special gifts to minister to the church for a specific purpose, which is the building up of Christ's Church. "To prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Eph 4:12-13).

Training volunteers for work in the Church is a necessity, not a luxury. We live in an increasingly complex world. Trustees must continually be updated on the new codes being imposed by several levels of government.¹ Many evangelistic crusades could be much more effective in terms of church growth if a major emphasis were placed on training Christians.²

The most urgent task of all in the work of evangelism was building up the lay people of the Church. It was only the arousing of members of the churches to new faithfulness that would carry forward the mission of the Church into every walk of life and every sphere of human experience.

¹Douglas W. Johnson, Empowering Lay Volunteers (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991), 77.

²David Wright and Alastair H. Gray, Local Church Evangelism (Edinburgh, Scotland: St. Andrew's Press, 1987), 117.

Born as a Missionary

A missionary is someone who has a mission. It might be his mission or somebody else's mission. A mission is a task, an assignment that must be fulfilled. White writes,

Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary. No sooner does he come to know the Saviour than he desires to make others acquainted with Him. The saving and sanctifying truth cannot be shut up in his heart. He who drinks of the living water becomes a fountain of life. The receiver becomes a giver.¹

This statement is centered in Jesus' strategy for evangelism. The steps are as follows: first, the disciple is born, second he desires to bring others to Jesus, third his heart cannot be shut up, as a result he becomes a giver. Nothing is mentioned in this steps regarding training the lay people. However, the phrase "true disciple" seem to indicate that this person has being through the process of becoming a disciple and has therefore received all the training to be born as a true disciple of Jesus.

The Bible, the Writings of Ellen G. White and current Christian literature on the subject of lay training for evangelism seem to indicate that a seminar/event for training Hispanic lay people in the Oregon Conference will have an impact on the conference's efforts to evangelize its territory. If one is born into the church as a missionary then one must be trained as a missionary.

¹White, The Ministry of Healing, 102.

CHAPTER IV

DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LAY- TRAINING PROGRAM

Design of the Program

This project was designed as a creative approach to develop an evangelistic training environment for the Hispanic members of the Oregon Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Principles of lay training have been drawn from the Bible and the writings of E. G. White to prepare a seminar/event that would train Hispanic lay people to accomplish the mission of preaching the gospel in their community. These principles were discussed extensively in the previous two chapters. The Seventh-day Adventist Church believes in the priesthood of all believers and, therefore, historically has endorsed the need and importance of lay training.

The project was very practical and action oriented. It was designed as an on-the-job training for the participants. The project did not conclude with the primary pilot program; it has been evaluated and refined and continues as a permanent evangelism training center for lay people in the Oregon Conference.

Feelings, attitudes, motivations, experiences, and previous training of the people involved needed to be known. How do they feel about evangelism? How were they

involved in evangelism? Are they adequately prepared for winning souls? Do they want to participate in teaching non-believers how to understand the Bible?

My general observation of the involvement of Hispanics Adventists indicated that evangelism was not practiced by most people in their respective churches. The level of preparedness seemed to be too low. A questionnaire was developed to attempt to learn the answers to certain questions regarding lay evangelism involvement (Appendices 1 and 2). Research was done to determine a method for evangelism training based upon the questionnaire that could be used. Current literature regarding training for evangelism was analyzed and principles were drawn upon to prepare lessons that could be used in the Hispanic context of the Oregon Conference.

Background of Hispanic Work in Oregon

The Hispanic work began in the state of Oregon about twenty years ago, with only one church and one pastor for many years. Statistics regarding Hispanics in the Oregon Conference are unavailable before 1992 because the Hispanic work was underdeveloped and no one took the time to compile any serious statistics until 1992. Table 1 shows the growth trend of the Hispanic members of the Oregon Conference from 1992 to 1997. A comparison of the data in this table will quickly reveal steady growth, especially in the last three years.

Population Growth Projections

Not only is the Hispanic membership of the Oregon Conference growing, but the whole population of the state of Oregon and Southern Washington, which is part of the

Oregon Conference's territory, is growing too. In fact, Clark County, in Southern Washington, is one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. Many Hispanics are moving into Clark County. The same is true for Oregon.

TABLE 1

GROWING TRENDS FOR HISPANICS IN THE OREGON CONFERENCE

YEAR	MEMBERSHIP	CHURCHES	PASTORS	BAPTISMS	TITHES
1992	868	8	3	100?	\$195,475
1993	1,019	8	3	134	234,112
1994	1,019	9	4	115	319,117
1995	1,119	10	5	179	444,102
1996	1,796	12	7	279	493,747
1997	1,898	14	9	321	573,692

According to the Census Bureau, Oregon's Hispanic population has increased nationally by 53 percent between 1980 and 1990 to more than 22 million (9% of the country's population), whereas, in the state of Oregon, the number of Hispanic persons has increased by 71 percent between 1980 and 1990 to 4.0 percent of the state's population.¹

¹U.S. Bureau of Census, 16.

The fact that the Hispanic population of Oregon is growing so fast should propel the church to evangelize this new people group before they get grounded in the culture and become more difficult to reach. The rapid growth of the Hispanic population in the territory comprised by the Oregon Conference is a challenge that the church needs to take into consideration when planning its evangelistic outreach and training events. All these population changes would indicate that there are challenges and needs characteristic to the Hispanics that should be addressed by the leaders of the church in an urgent matter.

The Oregon Conference has been addressing these needs through the years by providing pastoral leadership to newly formed groups. However, many new people are coming into the church that have no knowledge of how to share the gospel with its friends. Indeed, that is the reason why the need for a lay evangelism training school is apparent.

The process of developing a lay training program for the Hispanic members of the Oregon Conference started in 1995 after conversations I had about the need for Hispanic people to be trained for evangelistic outreach. The Institute of Church Ministries of the Oregon Conference had a very successful program that taught many areas of ministry including personal evangelism. It became apparent during the conversations that the specific needs of the Hispanic people were not being met by the training program of the conference. Moreover, there were two factors that made the need for training urgent.

1. The Hispanic membership of the conference was growing rapidly and the need for training became a concern.

2. The Hispanic population of the state of Oregon was growing faster than the national average, 71 percent as compared to 53 percent, and they needed to be reached with the gospel.

Reasons Why a Lay-Training Program for the Hispanics Is Needed

The present lay-training program of the Institute of Church Ministries of the Oregon Conference, although an excellent program, is not meeting the needs of the Hispanic members due to four reasons:

1. Most Hispanic people in the state of Oregon are first-generation Hispanics and cannot speak or understand English very well.
2. Seminars and training events are held in English, with running translation into Spanish in an adjacent room, or with transistor radios with headphones.
3. Meetings are held in different parts of the state of Oregon which are difficult for many Hispanics to reach.
4. All the materials pertaining to a particular seminar were distributed in the English language and, therefore, not useful to many Hispanics.

I met with some of the Hispanic pastors and the conference leaders to discuss ways to address the needs of the growing Hispanic community. After dealing with the questions of why we are here, what we want to do, and where we want to go, we came to the conclusion that something needed to be done even though nobody knew the best way to approach the situation. I suggested the possibility of establishing a school of evangelism for the Hispanic people to prepare, train, motivate, and inspire them to preach the gospel

to their communities. I told them that I was working on my doctor of ministry degree and this would be a great project for me. Some pastors were hesitant at first because it was a new idea for them, nevertheless, they all agreed that a training program for the Hispanic people of the conference would address some needs. The plan was approved and money was allocated from the conference budget for this project.

Organization of the Program

An evangelism training festival was organized by the author in the Oregon Conference as a start-up event. The purpose of this event was to inspire and motivate Hispanic lay people for evangelism. Flyers were sent out to the different churches inviting the members and their pastors to this weekend event. Over four hundred people from different Hispanic churches attended the meetings. The people communicated to me that the meetings were a real blessing because they never had so much training and inspiration in a weekend session as they had in this one. Training and motivating events like this are conducted from time to time in the Oregon Conference, but usually, as noted above, very few Hispanic members participate. In the state of Oregon about 75 percent of Hispanics are first-generation Hispanics whose mother tongue is Spanish. As a result, most of them cannot speak or understand English.

A questionnaire was prepared to discover how they felt about being prepared to share their faith. A registration form was prepared and handed out to the participants at the evangelism festival. One hundred and ten people filled out the form indicating that

they would very much like to participate in the training school. The group that actually attended the training program was about 50 percent of those who preregistered.

A sixteen-week training program was developed and taught once a week for sixteen weeks continuing for ten months from February 1996, to the month of November, 1996. Three persons were recruited to be individually trained to hold evangelistic crusades. The results were analyzed and conclusions reached. From the experiences of the one program a continuing training process was developed.

The Questionnaires

The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine the attitude and experiences in personal evangelism of a cross section of the Hispanic membership of the Oregon Conference. The questionnaire was distributed at the beginning and at the end of the classes which met on Sunday morning. Participants filled out the questionnaire, and it was tabulated. The survey sought to identify the feelings and experiences of the participants. The people who filled out the surveys did so with the understanding that they were going to be used in a doctoral dissertation. Some of those completing the survey also went through the weekend of evangelism training which may have contributed to more positive answers on the part of the participants. The same questionnaire was distributed at the end of the sixteen-week training event for comparison purposes to see what improvement if any was made in the attitudes, feelings, and preparedness for evangelism. A third questionnaire was given to the students at the end of the training program (see Appendix 3). The curriculum outline is shown in Table 2.

The lay training program consisted of lessons prepared and presented by the author through sixteen weeks. Since this program was designed as on-the-job-training, every student was expected to participate in personal and public evangelism during the time of the program. They were given forms which they needed to fill out and turn in every week. The philosophy of lay training was based on three basic premises:

1. God's mission cannot be accomplished without God. Therefore, it was imperative that the participants realize and understand that a closer relationship with God was essential for their success as lay evangelists. Consequently, a program to enhance spirituality was developed and implemented. The lessons and the discussion led to such questions as: What is spirituality; and How does spirituality affect soul winning by a lay evangelist? After discussing these issues with the students we came to the conclusion that without the Holy Spirit it was impossible to share the gospel effectively. Thus, the first lesson on the curriculum of the school of evangelism was "Spirituality in lay ministry" (see Appendix 4). The purpose of the session was to emphasize the need for a closer relationship with Jesus. Another main purpose was to help the participants learn the spiritual disciplines of prayer, meditation, fasting, and study of the Bible. These exercises were not just taught theoretically, but they were practiced by the students during and after classes. The point was always emphasized that we were not there to fill our heads with knowledge but to learn and practice how to win souls for Jesus.

2. Evangelism, Jesus' style, should be the method learned and used for Hispanics reaching Hispanics. According to White, there is only one method that can bring true success. This method is outlined in the book the Ministry of Healing. She writes:

Christ's method alone will give true success in the reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. The He bade them, follow me.¹

When establishing the school of evangelism and developing its curriculum, I thought that in order to be successful in our endeavor we needed to follow Christ's method. Therefore, Christ's way of reaching people was studied and practiced during the duration of the program. People were not only taught how to mingle with people, empathize with them, and win their confidence, but they practiced in class how to accomplish these goals in their local congregations. During the ten-months of the program, every student was asked to find a friend using this method. As a result many, Bible studies were established, leading to conversions to Jesus. One lady commented very happily in class that she had been developing so many friends and Bible student interests that she could not handle any more.

¹White, The Ministry of Healing, 143.

TABLE 2

SIXTEEN-WEEK CURRICULUM OUTLINE

Date		Lesson	Instructors
January	28-30	Inspiration/training	Sergio Moctezuma
February	11	Registration/Introduction	Ramon Canals
February	18	Spirituality in Ministry-part I	
March	3	Spirituality in Ministry-part II	
March	17	Spirituality in Ministry-part III	
April	14	Christ's Method of Winning Souls-part I	
April	18	Christ's Method of Winning Souls-part II	
May	5	How to Present an Effective Bible Study-part I	
May	19	How to Present an Effective Bible Study-part II	
June	2	How to Present an Effective Bible Study-part III	
June	9	How to Share Your Testimony	
June	23	The Art of Evangelistic Preaching-part I	
July/August		Vacation	
September	1	The Art of Evangelistic Preaching-part II	
September	15	The Art of Evangelistic Preaching-part III	
September	29	How to Organize an Effective Evangelistic Meeting-part I	
October	13	How to Organize an Effective Evangelistic Meeting-part II	
October	20	How to Prepare the Church For an Effective Evangelistic Meeting-part I	
November	3	How to Prepare the Church For an Effective Evangelistic Meeting-part II	
December	1	Graduation	

3. Lay evangelistic training is essential to accomplish the mission of Jesus.

Sometimes we make a distinction for our own understanding between personal and public evangelism. However, Jesus Christ did not make a distinction between public and personal evangelism. He would preach to one person or to ten thousand. As disciples of Christ whose mission is to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord, we need to be prepared to share our faith in both personal and private settings; but also to speak to as many people as we can. That is why classes on evangelistic preaching and how to prepare the church for an evangelistic meeting were also presented.

I do not expect every person who comes for training to be able to hold an evangelistic crusade. However, if people, in the course of being trained, find they have the gift of evangelism, they should be encouraged and motivated to hold a series of meetings. Moreover, they need to be trained and coached all the way through their meetings so that their first experience with evangelism will be a pleasant one, which, it is hoped, will be repeated over and over, resulting in many souls won for Christ. I selected three students who ranked high on evangelism, using the spiritual gift inventory. I trained them, and then encouraged them to do evangelism. In addition to the baptisms that resulted from these meetings, I think that the real winners were the lay evangelists themselves who took the opportunity to sharpen their skills as Bible workers and as lay evangelists.

Recruitment

The idea of a school of evangelism was something new for pastors and members of the Hispanic churches in the Oregon Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. But selling

the idea was a challenge. Even though some thought it was a great opportunity for training lay people on how to win souls, others expressed their concern that perhaps people would not support it for a long period of time. Another pastor doubted that some would be able to attend because of the driving distance, some people had to drive between 30 miles to 90 miles thus there were numerous concerns; however, the majority of the people we talked to were in favor of the plan.

Since one of the stated objectives of the school of evangelism was to motivate and inspire people to accomplish the mission of Jesus of preaching the gospel to the world, I organized a weekend of inspiration for the lay people. This weekend was meant to be a fiesta (party) for lay people. We called The First Festival of Lay People of the Oregon Conference. The program featured as a guest speaker Elder Sergio Moctezuma, a pastor who trains lay leaders from the Inter-American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. He inspired, motivated, and trained people from Friday to Sunday. The meetings began Friday, January 28, 1996, at 7:00 p.m. and went until Sunday, January 30, at noon. The meetings concluded with lunch, and everyone who attended received a diploma of graduation. Attendance at this weekend of recruitment was as follows: Friday night, 210 people; all day Sabbath, over 400 people; Sunday morning, around 250.

On Sabbath afternoon I divided the people into groups by churches and asked them what they would like to do for the Lord this year as a result of what they had learned. It was exciting to see the pastors and lay leaders discussing ways to reach people for Jesus. The groups which represented all the churches set a goal for baptism for 1996 of 583 souls. That Sabbath afternoon while everyone was inspired, and motivated, I asked

the participants to fill out a questionnaire regarding the weekend retreat. A majority of those who attended like the training they had received but felt that it was inadequate to prepare them for the task of winning souls for Jesus. I asked them if they would be willing to participate in a longer and more complete training program. Of the 400 people present, 110 filled out a pre-registration form. The following week, letters were sent to those who had filled out the pre-registration forms telling about the program of studies, the schedule, and requirements. February 11, 1996, was the day set for registration, orientation, and introduction. Fifty-five people registered for the program. This number of people was more than what I had anticipated. My goal was to teach evangelism in general to these people, to inspire, motivate, and train them. However, my focus for the purpose of this project was to choose three lay evangelists whom I could train and coach to do public evangelism.

Training Classes

The classes were taught at the Gladstone Convention Center, near Portland, Oregon, for a period of sixteen weeks on Sundays beginning February 18 and ending November 3, 1996. Graduation was December 2, 1996. The classes began at 9:30 a.m. and ended at 12:30 p.m. The program was organized as follows:

1. Ten minutes singing praises to the Lord
2. Five minutes of short testimonies of gratitude to God
3. Five minutes for conversational prayers
4. Ten minutes of announcements

5. Sixty minutes for a lesson
5. Fifteen minutes for break
6. Sixty minutes for a lesson
7. Fifteen minutes for a question-and-answer period
8. Dismiss.

Lessons were lectures using the blackboard, overhead projector, lesson outlines, and handouts. Students were also given the opportunity to gather into small groups and discuss the lesson, brainstorm, and come up with solutions to points presented in the lesson. Because this was a very practical course, application of the lessons was expected during the program. A light refreshment was served after each meeting and that time was used for social interaction.

Field Work

The motto of the school of evangelism was: The goal of true education is not just knowledge but action, for this reason, every student of the school of evangelism was expected to be engaged in some kind of evangelistic outreach in his or her respective churches. The requirements to be a member of the school of evangelism were as follows:

1. Be present at every class (a student may miss two classes during the program)
2. Dedicate three hours to evangelistic outreach in their respective churches
3. Find at least one person with whom to share Jesus
4. Participate in an evangelistic meeting in their local churches
5. Pay a fee of \$15 for the course

6. Participate in every class discussion
7. Report evangelistic activities to the director of the school.

At the end of the sixteen weeks of training, fifty-two lay evangelists graduated from the school of evangelism. At the graduation ceremony, with representatives of the conference and union conference present, the graduates marched and wore cap and gowns. It was exciting to see these people receive their diplomas from the president of the Oregon Conference. Many of them with tears in their eyes confessed that this was the first diploma they had ever received, and was so important because it was recognition that they had been trained to serve the Lord. In fact, the graduating class chose the theme "Prepared for Service" as their graduation theme.

During the sixteen-week training program, the students reported visiting 1,083 homes throughout the state of Oregon and gave 997 Bible studies. The students also bought twenty Bible study projectors with filmstrips to be used during their presentations.

Out of fifty-two lay evangelist who graduated twenty-one were women. The women played an important role during the meetings. They held Bible studies, participated in visitation, and helped coordinate the crusades.

The Three Lay Evangelists

Three lay evangelists from the class were handpicked to be individually trained to conduct an evangelistic crusade in their local churches with the support of the other graduates. The three lay evangelists were Hipolito Morales from the Woodburn Spanish Church, Ricardo Fernandez from the Portland Spanish Church, and Alejandro Esparza

from the Hillsboro Spanish Church. The criteria for choosing this three people were as follows:

1. They scored high on a spiritual gift inventory
2. Class participation and attendance
3. Leadership position in the church
4. Excellent interpersonal-relationship abilities.

As part of their training they needed to take part in an evangelistic campaign that I conducted. They were to participate in the evening program, either directing song services, making announcements, conducting quizzes, or handing out gifts from drawings. They also were required to participate with me in the visitation of candidates. Another requirement was that they needed to give me feedback on how the meeting went, what worked and what needed improvement. After the meetings were over they were supposed to hold their own evangelistic crusade.

The three lay evangelists received training on how to make multimedia presentations. The Oregon Conference bought two slide projectors with the purpose of lending them to these lay evangelists as they prepared for their meetings. In addition, I helped them set up Don Gray's slide series "Good News for Today" in Spanish. I trained these three lay evangelists on how to use the projector and how to preach from the slides. They practiced until they felt comfortable using them.

The Hillsboro Meetings

I held the first evangelistic meeting with the help of the three lay evangelists. The purpose of these meetings was to be a hands-on-training event for these three men, in addition to about ten other lay people who served as the support evangelistic team. They were to help, conduct song services, announce quizzes, make announcements, and offer prayer. In other words, they were to be in front all the time. One of the three lay evangelists could not be present all the time because of the traveling distance. These three men were to observe everything that happened in the meetings from the preparation of the nightly programs to the dismissal of the audience. They were to take notes and to make comments. They were supposed to evaluate what happened and discuss among themselves what they were seeing and learning. Alejandro Esparza an elder of the Hillsboro Spanish church assisted me most closely. Mr. Alejandro was supposed to conduct a follow-up meeting in Hillsboro, but for personal reasons has not been able to complete the project. He is waiting for an opportunity in the near future. Whenever he is ready, I am committed to be there to help him.

The Woodburn Meetings

The second crusade was held by lay evangelist Hipolito Morales with coaching from me. This series of meetings was held in the Woodburn Spanish Church. The local church pastor was informed that Mr. Morales was ready to do an evangelistic series in the local church if he was given an opportunity. The local church board met and decided to

let Mr. Morales do the meetings. I helped him with prepare the budget and develop the flyers. I gave him a set of my sermon outlines and other materials to use in the meetings.

On the opening night, Mr. Morales was very nervous. I encouraged him to just preach the word of God from his heart. The first night there were seventy visitors in attendance and forty-five non-members continued in attendance throughout the meetings. Mr. Morales was very excited, and the church members were delighted because they had never seen anything like this before. Mr. Morales called me almost every night for suggestions and to tell me the mistakes he thought he had made the night before. I continued to encouraged him and I told him that I was praying for him. At the end of the meetings, twenty-four people were baptized, and others were baptized later.

Mr. Morales was very wise in enlisting the support of sixteen of those men and women who had graduated with him in the school of evangelism, as well as the support of the rest of the church. Mr. Morales is so serious about his call to evangelize that he is currently planning his second evangelistic meeting. In fact, he wanted to buy his own slide projector; however, the conference decided to give him one as a gift for his hard work. As a result of his participation in the school of evangelism Mr. Morales is now contemplating the possibility of studying to become a pastor.

The Portland Meetings

The third evangelistic meeting was held in the Portland Spanish Seventh-day Adventist Church by Ricardo Fernandez. Mr. Fernandez received the same training that Mr. Morales received. He also was given a slide projector, slides, sermon outlines and

other materials. He prepared his own flyers and was very innovative in his presentations. Mr. Fernandez felt that he did not need much coaching and therefore did not call me very often. I called him once in a while to see how things were going and to encourage him. I also attended the meetings on several occasions. Mr. Fernandez' meetings were not as well attended because the Portland Spanish Church is located in an area where few Hispanics live. Nevertheless, about fifteen to twenty visitors attended the meetings and at the end three people were baptized. Mr. Fernandez also received a slide projector as a gift from the conference at the end of the meetings and he bought a second projector to use with a dissolve unit. He is also planning to do other evangelistic series wherever he is called to do them.

Evaluation

At the conclusion of the evangelistic training program, the students were given a second questionnaire identical to the first. It was distributed a second time to determine if there was a change in inspiration, motivation, and training regarding evangelism. A third questionnaire was distributed on December 1, 1996, to determine their attitudes, feelings, and perceptions concerning evangelism and the evangelism training school in general. The first and second questionnaires were given to thirty-five and thirty-eight respondents respectively.

The second survey results, when compared with those of the first, revealed that the Hispanic lay evangelism training school participants reported an overall increase in evangelism involvement. Similarly, the results of the third questionnaire indicated that the

Hispanic members of the Oregon Conference not only want to be trained for evangelism but are committed to fulfilling the Great Commission. The third questionnaire was given to forty-three respondents.

Results of the First and Second Questionnaires

Question 1: "To What Extent Have You Been Involved in Evangelism?"

The first question in the survey was intended to find out how many people were actively participating in evangelism in their respective churches. The results of the second questionnaire revealed that 13 out of 38 respondents felt that they had always been involved in evangelism as compared to 6 out of 35 who responded to that question in the first questionnaire. That represents an increase of 50 percent more people who feel they were always involved in evangelism. Table 3 shows the results for both the first survey and the second survey. The four possible answers are: (1) Never, (2) Occasionally, (3) Usually, or (4) Always. Appendixes 1 and 2 presents the results of the questionnaires.

Question 2: "To What Extent Have You Been Engaged in Giving Bible Studies to Non-Adventists in the Past 12 Months?"

The second question attempted to find out what percentage of the participants were actually engaged in giving Bible studies to non-Adventists during the past twelve months. Significant change was noted in the responses to the second questionnaire ten months after they had filled out the first. Table 4 shows the results of the inventory taken before and after the training program.

TABLE 3

PARTICIPANTS' ANSWERS TO QUESTION 1: "TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED IN EVANGELISM?"

	Never	Occasionally	Usually	Always
Before	13 37%	10 29%	6 17%	6 17%
After	3 8%	10 26%	12 32%	13 34%

TABLE 4

PARTICIPANTS' ANSWERS TO QUESTION 2: "TO WHAT DEGREE HAVE YOU BEEN ENGAGED IN GIVING BIBLE STUDIES TO NON-ADVENTIST IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?"

	Never	Occasionally	Usually	Always
Before	10 29%	11 31%	9 26%	5 14%
After	5 13%	8 21%	14 37%	11 29%

Question 3: "To What Extent Have You Been Trained for Evangelism and Soul Winning?"

The third question was intended to find out how much training, if any, these lay people have had in the past. When one compares the answers to the questionnaire before the establishment of the school of evangelism and the answers given at the end in the second survey it is easy to see the students' perceptions of how much they had changed in their thinking regarding training for evangelism. Only 3 people out of 35 respondents to

the first survey, believed that they had been trained for evangelism and soul winning, whereas 28 people out of 35 who responded to the same question on the second survey said that they have been trained for evangelism and soul winning; (see Appendix 1 and 2). This evangelistic training has been a blessing to the churches where the training has occurred as evidenced by the number of evangelistic crusades that have been held since the establishment of the school of evangelism. Table 5 presents the results of question 3 for both questionnaires.

TABLE 5

PARTICIPANTS' ANSWERS TO QUESTION 3: "TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE YOU BEEN TRAINED FOR EVANGELISM AND SOUL WINNING?"

	Never	Occasionally	Usually	Always
Before	23 66%	7 20%	2 6%	3 8%
After	2 5%	1 3%	7 18%	28 74%

Question 7: "To What Extent do You Feel Motivated to Be Involved in Evangelism?"

The answers to question 7 in both surveys reveal that Hispanic people are highly motivated to be involved in evangelism. This is significant because even though motivation increases the desire for involvement, as one can see in question 7, probably what people need most is training. In addition the survey results revealed that the Hispanics in the Oregon Conference are not afraid or timid about sharing their faith with

other people. The second survey shows that 63 percent of the respondents felt that they were not afraid to talk about their religion to other people. When that is compared to the first survey, one can see that 63 percent of the respondents felt that they were not afraid to share the gospel with others.

**Question 8: "I Would Like to Be
Occupied in Evangelism
All the Time"**

The answers to question 8 in both questionnaires revealed that Hispanic lay people in the Oregon Conference would like to be involved in evangelism all the time. Moreover, 66 percent of the respondents to question 12 would like to spend time getting prepared for the work of evangelism. This is an opportunity that pastors, evangelists, and leaders of the Oregon Conference can tap into.

**Question 9: "I Feel Adequately
Prepared for the Work of
Evangelism"**

The answer to question 9 in the second questionnaire revealed that 37 percent of the respondents believed that they were adequately prepared for evangelism after the sixteen-week training program. However, when asked if they felt that they had the necessary training for evangelism, 34 percent answered never, 24 percent answered occasionally, 21 percent answered usually, and 21 percent answered always (see Appendixes 1 and 2). These findings indicate that training for evangelism is highly regarded by these respondents of the Hispanic membership of the Oregon Conference.

Question 10: "My Church Runs a Continuous Program for Training Lay People"

The answers to question 10, for both questionnaires did not indicate significant changes during the sixteen weeks of training. The results of these questions in both surveys would indicate that since a church-centered training program has not been established, perhaps a conference-centered lay training program would be feasible.

Question 13: "Have You Been Involved in Training Other People for Evangelism?"

The results of question 13 do indicate that meaningful changes took place between questionnaire 1 and questionnaire 2. However, it is important to understand that in order to fulfill the Great Commission as mentioned in the previous two chapters, the church must continue to multiply itself by one disciple making another disciple. In fact, the church should be like a maternity ward where babies are continuously born, with the pastors and evangelist the midwives that help the babies to be birthed. That is why it is imperative that the training for evangelism carried out in the church or conference should not stop with just teaching people how to evangelize, but should also teach people how to teach others how to evangelize.

Question 16: "I Have a Passion for Lost Souls"

The answers to question 16 were significant because in the first questionnaire 54 percent of the participants responded that they always had a passion for lost souls, whereas 84 percent responded on the second questionnaire that they had a passion for

souls. This could indicate that awareness and understanding of the importance of evangelism could have a tremendous impact on the lives of people who participate in a training program.

Results of the Third Questionnaire

The purpose of the third questionnaire was to learn the answers to three basic questions: First, how helpful was the school of evangelism for your personal life? Second, how better prepared do you feel to conduct the work of evangelism? Third, what are you going to do with the knowledge, inspiration and training you have received during these last ten months? The answers to these questions based on 43 respondents were as follows: 91 percent of the respondents felt that they have grown spiritually. Seventy-two percent felt that they were helped personally, and 63 percent felt that they have been helped socially. In addition, 91 percent felt that they were inspired to participate in evangelism (see Appendix 3).

The second basic question, which is actually number 3 in the questionnaire, sought to find out how much better prepared the students felt they were for the following four activities:

1. Winning souls for Jesus, 79 percent
2. Giving Bible studies, 95 percent
3. Helping in evangelistic meetings, 77 percent
4. Holding evangelistic meetings, 44 percent.

The third question wanted to learn whether, "as a result of this training I have decided to work for Christ and my church,"

1. Giving Bible studies, 84 percent
2. Sharing my faith, 81 percent
3. Winning souls for Jesus, 88 percent.

The answers to the third questionnaire seem to indicate that the Hispanic people in the Oregon Conference not only want to be trained and equipped for evangelism, but that they are committed to put into practice what they have learned.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was conducted with the main objective of understanding the impact that the establishment of a Hispanic lay evangelism training school would have upon a selected group of Hispanic members of the Oregon Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for evangelistic outreach. I feel that both the students of the lay training school of evangelism and I benefited from this project of training lay people for evangelism. The benefits to the students were that they were better trained to fulfill the mission of Jesus. The survey results indicated an increase in understanding and applying the principles necessary to be an effective soul winner.

The local churches to which these students belong also benefited because they now have a group of people in their churches who are knowledgeable of the dynamics involved in running an evangelistic campaign and of helping both the pastor and the evangelist to prepare the field for evangelism.

Another benefit to the congregations represented by the students was that as a result of the establishment of the Hispanic lay evangelism training school, a revival in evangelism occurred. This was evidenced by the fact that 1,083 homes were visited during the ten-month period of the classes. In addition, 997 Bible studies were given

during that ten-month period. Moreover, eighty-one new people were baptized as a direct result of this program.

The Oregon Conference benefited from the training program because 279 Hispanics were baptized in 1996, and 321 were baptized in 1997, a net gain of 142 people from the previous year. In addition, the baptismal figures of 1996 and 1997 show increases as more people receive evangelistic training. The Oregon Conference also experienced a growth in tithe (see Table 1) for Hispanics as the obvious result of an increase in membership.

I benefited both personally and professionally. Personally, I learned the importance of understanding the meaning of training the saints for the work of ministry. I learned that as a pastor and as an evangelist, it is my duty to continually teach and train others to fulfill the mission to which God has called them. Also, I learned that as an trainer I needed not only to teach theory in a classroom, but that I also needed to model how evangelism is done. During the sixteen weeks of training, I learned a simple process for teaching people how to be effective soul winners. The process is as follows: first, you teach them how Jesus did it. Then you teach them how his disciples did it through the years. Then you teach them how we ought to do it today. After that you do it with them looking and helping. And finally you help them do it with you looking and coaching. In addition, the preparation of the curriculum and subsequent application of the program have been a tremendous learning experience for me. I feel that by seeking to train others I have been also trained.

Furthermore, I learned that for any training program to be successful it needs to be of short duration, it must be dynamic, and it must meet local needs. People will respond more positively if a training program is conducted in their churches in a short, but continuous basis, addressing the particular needs of the local congregation and that of the community.

Finally, I would like to affirm that this project helped me to realize that there is a lot of potential sitting in the pews. My assumption, like that of many other pastors, was that the reason members are not on fire for the Lord is because they are lazy, indifferent, or do not care about evangelism. However, I learned that those who seem to be indifferent, timid, and apathetic about evangelism only need inspiration, encouragement, motivation, and training. In fact, with the proper training and tools, many people who are not doing anything for Jesus could become very effective evangelists and soul winners.

Based on these conclusions, my recommendations are:

1. That the role of lay people in evangelism be revisited, restudied and revived.
2. The church be intentional in its commitment to evangelize the world through the agents God has chosen, namely, every believer in Christ. For that to happen a drastic change needs to occur at all levels of the church.
3. That conference leaders find ways to help pastors and evangelists realize that they have been called to prepare the people of God for the work of ministry.
4. The church should seek to conduct spiritual gift surveys to assess the gifts of each member. This would help members to identify and use their gifts. In addition, the church should also seek to establish schools of evangelism to train lay people.

5. That pastors be involved in the decision making process of establishing a school of evangelism and that they actively participate in teaching classes.

6. More study should be conducted to try to find ways to continue the process of discipleship.

This project addressed the need of training Hispanic lay people in Oregon. However, the needs of other groups could also be met if adequate study is done to the philosophy of lay training. Moreover, we are all disciples of Christ, and should always remember that Matt 28:18-20 is a command to make disciples of all people, in all nations, in all ages.

APPENDIX 1

SURVEY AND PERCENTAGES OF PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES BEFORE LAY TRAINING

Please circle the number of your answer.

1. To what extent have you been involved in evangelism?

37% (13) a. never
29% (10) b. occasionally
17% (6) c. usually
17% (6) d. always

2. To what degree have you been engaged in giving Bible studies to a non-Adventist in the past 12 months?

29% (10) a. never
31% (11) b. occasionally
26% (9) c. usually
14% (5) d. always

3. To what extent have you been trained for evangelism and soul winning?

66% (23) a. never
20% (7) b. occasionally
6% (2) c. usually
8% (3) d. always

4. I win four souls or more every year

49% (17) a. never
34% (12) b. occasionally
9% (3) c. usually
9% (3) d. always

5. I am afraid to talk to people about my faith

63% (22) a. never
20% (7) b. occasionally
9% (3) c. usually
9% (3) d. always

6. I think I have the gift of evangelism

- 71% (25) a. never
 17% (6) b. occasionally
 6% (2) c. usually
 6% (2) d. always

7. To what extent do you feel motivated to be involved in evangelism?

- () a. never
 3% (1) b. occasionally
 20% (7) c. usually
 77% (27) d. always

8. I would like to be occupied in evangelism all the time

- 9% (3) a. never
 11% (4) b. occasionally
 14% (5) c. usually
 66% (23) d. always

9. I feel adequately prepared for the work of evangelism

- 49% (17) a. never
 20% (7) b. occasionally
 20% (7) c. usually
 11% (4) d. always

10. My church runs a continuous program for training lay people

- 69% (24) a. never
 22% (8) b. occasionally
 9% (3) c. usually
 () d. always

11. I feel I have the necessary ability and training for evangelism and need no more

- 86% (30) a. never
 9% (3) b. occasionally
 5% (2) c. usually
 () d. always

12. To what extent would you like to spend time getting prepared for evangelism?

- 17% (6) a. never
 20% (7) b. occasionally
 20% (7) c. usually
 43% (15) d. always

13. Have you been involved in training other people for evangelism?

- 80% (28) a. never
- 14% (5) b. occasionally
- () c. usually
- 6% (2) d. always

14. Do you think you have all the necessary resources and materials for evangelism?

- 80% (28) a. never
- 11% (4) b. occasionally
- 3% (1) c. usually
- 6% (2) d. always

15. To what degree have you been engaged in teaching the Sabbath school lesson?

- 57% (20) a. never
- 6% (2) b. occasionally
- 8% (3) c. usually
- 29% (10) d. always

16. I have a passion for lost souls

- 11% (4) a. never
- 23% (8) b. occasionally
- 11% (4) c. usually
- 54% (19) d. always

APPENDIX 2

SURVEY AND PERCENTAGES OF PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES AFTER LAY TRAINING

Please circle the number of your answer.

1. To what extent have you been involved in evangelism?
8% (3) a. never
26% (10) b. occasionally
32% (12) c. usually
34% (13) d. always
2. To what degree have you been engaged in giving Bible studies to a non-Adventist in the past 12 months?
13% (5) a. never
21% (8) b. occasionally
37% (14) c. usually
29% (11) d. always
3. To what extent have you been trained for evangelism and soul winning?
5% (2) a. never
3% (1) b. occasionally
18% (7) c. usually
74% (28) d. always
4. I win four souls or more every year
42% (16) a. never
34% (13) b. occasionally
8% (3) c. usually
16% (6) d. always
5. I am afraid to talk to people about my faith
63% (24) a. never
26% (10) b. occasionally
5% (2) c. usually
5% (2) d. always

6. I think I have the gift of evangelism

- 5% (2) a. never
10% (4) b. occasionally
34% (13) c. usually
50% (19) d. always

7. To what extent do you feel motivated to be involved in evangelism?

- () a. never
3% (01) b. occasionally
13% (05) c. usually
84% (32) d. always

8. I would like to be occupied in evangelism all the time

- () a. never
5% (2) b. occasionally
16% (6) c. usually
79% (30) d. always

9. I feel adequately prepared for the work of evangelism

- 5% (2) a. never
24% (9) b. occasionally
34% (13) c. usually
37% (14) d. always

10. My church runs a continuous program for training lay people

- 71% (27) a. never
21% (8) b. occasionally
5% (2) c. usually
3% (1) d. always

11. I feel I have the necessary ability and training for evangelism and need no more

- 34% (13) a. never
24% (9) b. occasionally
21% (8) c. usually
21% (8) d. always

12. To what extent would you like to spend time getting prepared for evangelism?

- 3% (1) a. never
10% (4) b. occasionally
21% (8) c. usually
66% (25) d. always

13. Have you been involved in training other people for evangelism?

- 42% (16) a. never
- 34% (13) b. occasionally
- 13% (5) c. usually
- 11% (4) d. always

14. Do you think you have all the necessary resources and materials for evangelism?

- 21% (8) a. never
- 21% (8) b. occasionally
- 39% (15) c. usually
- 18% (7) d. always

15. To what degree have you been engaged in teaching the Sabbath school lesson?

- 42% (16) a. never
- 21% (8) b. occasionally
- 8% (3) c. usually
- 29% (11) d. always

16. I have a passion for lost souls

- () a. never
- 5 (2) b. occasionally
- 11% (4) c. usually
- 84% (32) d. always

APPENDIX 3

THIRD SURVEY RESULTS

Please circle the number of your answer from none to excellent
(answers are based on 43 respondents).

The school of Evangelism in general help you

Spiritual	39
Personal	31
Social	27

The lectures were

Relevant	30
Inspirational	39
Instructional	36
Motivational	34

Now I am better equipped for

Winning souls for Jesus	34
Giving Bible studies	41
Helping in evangelistic meetings	33
Holding evangelistic meetings	19

As a result of this training I have decided to
work for Christ and my church by

Giving Bible studies	36
Sharing my faith	35
Winning souls for Jesus	38

Would you like the Oregon Conference to do something similar next year

Yes	41
No	2

APPENDIX 4
SEMINAR/EVENT LESSONS

Lesson 1

Spirituality in Ministry

Review

1 Pet 2:2-5; Rom 12:11; 1 Cor 3:1; John 3:3-7; 1 Tim 4:7-8; Acts 1:8

This lesson will help you to

1. Be a spirit-filled lay person, and develop a closer relationship with Jesus
2. Understand the spiritual warfare and use the appropriate weapons for the war
3. Provide an opportunity to learn and practice the spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, Bible study, and meditation.

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help you to learn and practice the spiritual disciplines that Jesus practiced. These spiritual disciplines will help you to be a more spiritual person and, therefore, a more effective lay evangelist.

Study

The first lesson in the curriculum of the school of evangelism is a study and practice of spirituality. The lay evangelist must understand that spirituality grows from a close relationship with God. Spirituality is the result of being filled with the Spirit of God.

A person cannot be a spiritual person without the Holy Spirit. Before Jesus ascended to heaven and after giving the disciples the great command to make disciples and to be witnesses of what they had seen, Jesus warned them, "I am going to send you what my Father has promised you; but stay in the city of Jerusalem until you have been clothed with power from on high."¹

Before the disciples could carry out Christ's commission to preach the gospel to the whole world, they needed to remain in Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Father. The promise of the Father was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Act 1:4-8).

There was no way that the disciples of Jesus would be able to carry on the work of preaching the gospel to the whole world without the power of the Holy Spirit.

Russell Burrill comments:

The Holy Spirit supernaturally enables the Church to accomplish its mission to reach the world for Christ. We can never divorce the Holy Spirit from the mission of the Church. This was the whole reason for the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit.²

Jesus trained his disciples for over two years. He taught them what they needed to know in order to do evangelism and accomplish the mission. In other words, they were equipped, they were prepared, they were ready to go. However, one very important element was missing. In order to fulfill a spiritual mandate, his disciples needed to be spiritual people, and he knew that in order for his disciples to be spiritual, they needed the Holy Spirit.

¹Luke 24:48.

²Russell Burrill, Revolution in the Church (Fallbrook CA: Hart Research Center, 1993), 14.

Jesus' concern, therefore, was not just with his disciples evangelizing the whole world, but with them being full of the Holy Spirit. They needed to be spiritual people in order to be able to accomplish a spiritual mission. Burrill says,

In this initial endowment of the Holy Spirit, we discover its purpose: empowerment for the accomplishment of the mission. The Holy Spirit is poured out for action—for the accomplishment of the task of Christ. We must never see the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as separate from its great function—the making of disciples. That's why we cannot finish the work without the Holy Spirit. The Spirit cannot be poured out unless there are people willing to be filled with power, enabling them to share Christ with the world around them.¹

The Holy Spirit not only gave the disciples power to accomplish the mission but equipped them also with spiritual gifts and helped them to be spiritual lay evangelists. Nobody can pretend to do God's work, taking the good news of salvation to the whole world, without being a spiritual person. That is why the first lesson the students of the school of evangelism receive is the lesson on spirituality. In this lesson we cover the subject of spirituality and how can one become a spiritual person. In addition, we try to analyze the four disciplines that contribute to spirituality.

Disciplines that Contribute to Spirituality

Spirituality is an intangible reality. We cannot measure it scientifically. However, certain disciplines are essential and contribute to the enhancement of the spiritual life. The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, "Train yourself to be godly." Physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things and holds promise for both the present life and the life to come (1 Tim 4:7-8).

¹Ibid., 16

What are those disciplines that, when practiced consistently, can aid a person's process toward spirituality? Through the years, several disciplines have been recognized as essential for the spiritual life to exist; they are prayer, meditation, fasting, and the study of the Word.

Prayer

Prayer is an essential element in the life of a Christian. A life without prayer is not a spiritual life because it is through prayer that people connect with each other and with the Holy Spirit. Nobody will argue the fact that Jesus was a spiritual man. He was a godly man. He was in tune with the Holy Spirit from the day he was born until the day he died. The Bible tells us that Jesus got up early in the morning before sunrise to pray. "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed."¹ Some biblical passages seem to indicate that Jesus not only got up early to pray but he spent whole nights praying (Luke 6:12). And, not only did he pray the whole night, but the Bible says that he "prayed earnestly." Jesus is the perfect example of one who prays. He realized that in order for him to be able to accomplish his mission, he needed to be in constant connection with the Father. The eleven disciples of Jesus followed Jesus example for they prayed for ten days between Jesus' ascension and the receiving of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:14). Dale Galloway, pastor of one of the largest churches in North America, said,

Prayer is the breath and depth of a Christian life. Every study of growing churches reveals that the dynamic churches where it's happening have in

¹Mark 1:35.

common the fact that prayer has a central place in their ministry. No church can begin to accomplish what God is calling them to do without a power center of prayer. It's simple. You cannot do God's work without God. Yet so many of us keep on trying to do it on our own.¹

A lay evangelist is ill equipped if he or she fills the head with knowledge and methodology but fails to pray. Prayer is to the spirit what air is to the body; the Bible says that the body without the spirit is dead (James 2:26), and so is any Christian that belongs to Christ's body. Without prayer, the lay evangelist is dead. Consequently, in order to be successful in evangelism, or any other ministry, prayer must not be just taught and learned but practiced.

Make Prayer a Priority in Your Life

When prayer becomes a priority in the life of a person, it means that God has become a priority. Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all this things will be added unto you."²

To pray means to depend on God. When I pray, it means that I recognize my weaknesses and that I am powerless without Christ. Preaching the Gospel to the whole world is a very sacred commission; it is a spiritual commission, and only spiritual people should endeavor to do it. That is why when Jesus send his disciples to go and make disciples, he promised them that he was going to be with them always till the end (Matt 28:20). Jesus taught them that dependance on him was crucial. He said "Without me you

¹Dale Galloway, 20/20 Vision: How to Create a Successful Church (Portland, OR: Scott Publishing Company, 1986), 57.

²Matt 6:33.

can do nothing.”¹ Paul echoed that thought in his letter to the Philippians when he wrote, “I can do all things in Christ that strengthens me.”²

By abiding in Jesus we become fruitful and productive servants of the Lord. We grow and multiply when we are connected to the vine. That connection is made possible through a consistent life of prayer. Prayer is not something that we must do; it is something that we must be. Prayer was very natural for Jesus, he did not have to drag himself out of bed to pray. For him, prayer was not a dreadful exercise. He loved to pray; he enjoyed prayer. Prayer for him was communication with his Father; prayer was a pleasant conversation with the Divine. Prayer is unnatural for us because we are not used to praying. It is unnatural to us because we are more connected with sin than we are connected to God. Therefore, we tend to reject the heavenly atmosphere that prayer brings. However, we can teach ourselves to be like Jesus. We can teach ourselves to enjoy prayer and to long for the precious moments of communion with God. Ellen G. White comments,

As we make Christ our daily companion, we shall feel that the powers of an unseen world are all around us; and by looking unto Jesus we shall become assimilated to his image. By beholding we become changed. The character is softened, refined, and ennobled for the heavenly kingdom. The sure result of our intercourse and fellowship with our Lord will be to increase piety, purity, and fervor. There will be a growing intelligence in prayer. We are receiving a divine education, and this is illustrated in a life of diligence and zeal.³

¹John 15:5.

²Phil 4:13.

³Ellen G. White, With God at Dawn (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Pub. Assoc. 1949), 212.

Because prayer is so important in the life of the Christian, White emphasizes that it must be our first business.

We should flee to the word of God and to prayer, individually seeking the Lord earnestly, that we may find Him. We should make this our first business.¹

She also points out that prayer must be accompanied by a spirit of gratitude and praise, and that prayer is not something we do once in a while, that it must be constant.

Pray, pray earnestly and without ceasing, but do not forget to praise. It becomes every child of God to vindicate his character. You can magnify the Lord; you can show the power of sustaining grace. There are multitudes who do not appreciate the great love of God nor the divine compassion of Jesus.²

In order for lay evangelists to be able to do the work for which the Lord has called them, they must spend time in solitary prayer to receive wisdom and power. Communion with the Almighty is the goal. Such was the goal of Jesus.

It was in hours of solitary prayer that Jesus in his earthly life received wisdom and power. Let the youth follow his example in finding at dawn and twilight a quiet season for communion with their Father in heaven. And throughout the day let them lift up their hearts to God.³¹

¹Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), 3:53.

²White, With God at Dawn, 213.

³Ellen G. White, Education (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1903), 259.

Meditation

The second spiritual discipline is meditation. Meditation is a spiritual discipline that has been lost in Christianity. We live in a very busy world and a very fast society. Sometimes we are preoccupied by getting things done so that the most important thing establishing and maintaining a closer relationship with Jesus remains undone. Many people reject meditation because they associate it with Eastern religions. However, meditation is a biblical concept. In the Psalms, the difference between the righteous and the wicked is that the righteous meditate in God, his words, and his works, whereas the wicked meditate in their wickedness.

Many psalms encourage meditation on the law of the Lord: "But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night (Ps 1:2); on God: "When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches" (Ps 63:6); on God's work: "I will meditate also upon all thy work, and muse on thy doings" (Ps 77:12); "I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation" (Ps 119:99). Meditation must be pure and spiritual because it must be pleasing to God: "May my meditation be pleasing to him" (Ps 104:34). Ellen G. White said that much meditation is needed for the success of the work. She writes,

There should be much prayer, much meditation, for this is highly necessary for the success and prosperity of the work. A spirit of traffic should not be allowed in anyone who is connected with the office. If it is permitted, the work will be neglected and marred. Common things will be placed too much upon a level with sacred things.¹

¹White, Testimonies, 1:587

She also says that Satan knows how important prayer and meditation are to resist his deceptions and attacks.

Satan leads many to believe that prayer to God is useless and but a form. He well knows how needful are meditation and prayer to keep Christ's followers aroused to resist his cunning and deception. By his devices he would divert the mind from these important exercises, that the soul may not lean for help upon the Mighty One and obtain strength from Him to resist his attacks.¹

The disciples of Christ will be more successful and become stronger as they seek to spend time with God. "Be still, and know that I am God (Ps 46:10). Because it is not easy to be still in this fast-paced world. We need to educate our minds to be still before the Lord. White writes,

Educate your mind to love the Bible, to love the prayer meeting, to love the hour of meditation, and, above all, the hour when the soul communes with God. Become heavenly-minded if you would unite with the heavenly choir in the mansions above.²

Benefits of Meditation

1. Brings peace of mind
2. Elevates the soul, and refines the mind
3. Helps people to know their own heart
4. Increases moral strength
5. Increases spiritual strength
6. Prepares people to work for God

¹Ibid., 295.

²White, Testimonies, 2:268.

7. Keeps people active and enthusiastic for God
8. Resists the attacks and deceptions of the devil
9. Obtains strength and power from God
10. Brings success and prosperity

We are warned not to neglect meditation and prayer lest we lose religious interest and become careless. White writes,

God should be the highest object of our thoughts. Meditating upon him, and pleading with him, elevates the soul and quickens the affections. A neglect of meditation and prayer will surely result in a declension in religious interests. Then will be seen carelessness and slothfulness.¹

Fasting

The third discipline for the lay evangelist to practice is the discipline of fasting. Fasting goes together with prayer and meditation. The Bible tells us that Jesus fasted forty days and forty nights. "After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry" (Matt 4:2). That does not mean that we have to fast for forty days; however, it seems that Jesus intended his disciples to fast. Instead of saying to them, do not fast, he said, "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. . . . But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. (Matt 6:16-18). Once Jesus' disciples asked why they were unable to cast out a certain demon. Jesus

¹White, Testimonies, 2:505.

said, "Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting (Matt 17:2, KJV).

Fasting can increase spiritual vigor and strength. Bill Hybells comments on Matt 17:21.

Once Jesus' disciples complained because they were unable to cast out a certain demon. Jesus said, "But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Matt 17:21). I am beginning to understand why Jesus said that. Spiritually motivated fasting seems to unlock a deeper dimension of spiritual power. Recently I have sensed God working in and through me in ways I had not previously experienced. I attribute the excitement and productivity in my ministry to this simple discipline of fasting.¹

Fasting, like prayer and meditation, is a spiritual discipline. An exercise that needs to be practiced by all those who engage in the work of saving souls. In her book Greater Health God's Way, Stormie Omartian says that

Fasting is a spiritual exercise and discipline. It is a denial of self. When you deny yourself, you position the Lord as everything in your life, and then there is no end to the wonderful possibilities for you. Deliberately denying yourself food for a set period of time in order to give yourself more completely to prayer and closer communication with God has great rewards. Discipline always has its rewards. A physical discipline, like exercising, has physical rewards. Spiritual disciplines like fasting have spiritual rewards.²

She adds that

Fasting is a discipline that God designed for each one of us to bring us into a greater knowledge of Him, to release us into more fullness and power of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives, and to bring us to a point of greater health. Fasting can alter our lives in such a way that we are able to move in new freedom, new closeness to God, and new unity with our fellowmen.³

¹Bill Hybells, Honest to God: Becoming an Authentic Christian (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1990), 29.

²Stormie Omartian, Greater Health God's Way (Chatsworth, CA: Sparrow Press, 1984), 127.

³Ibid., 125.

The disciplines of fasting and prayer are important because they help us depend more on God and his strength than on our strength. Humans have the tendency of feeling proud of their accomplishments. Fasting and prayer help us place the glory where it belongs, in God. The work of evangelism must be accompanied by much prayer, humility meditation, and fasting. White writes

Our work must be accompanied with deep humiliation, fasting, and prayer. We must not expect all peace and joy. There will be sadness; but if we sow in tears we shall reap in joy. Darkness and despondency may at times enter the heart of the self-sacrificing ones; but this is not against them. It may be God's design to cause them to seek Him more earnestly.¹

When working for God, success is one hundred percent guaranteed. However, we must strengthen our faith by prayer and fasting.

In order to succeed in such a conflict they must come to the work in a different spirit. Their faith must be strengthened by fervent prayer and fasting, and humiliation of heart. They must be emptied of self, and be filled with the Spirit and power of God. Earnest, persevering supplication to God in faith--faith that leads to entire dependence upon God, and unreserved consecration to His work--can alone avail to bring men the Holy Spirit's aid in the battle against principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and wicked spirits in high places.²

Benefits of Fasting

Omartian suggests twenty reasons why you should fast.

Fasting will help you

1. To receive divine guidance, revelation, or an answer to a specific problem
2. To hear God better and to understand more fully His will for your life

¹White, Testimonies, 5:134.

²Ellen G. White, Desire of Ages (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1939), 431.

3. To weaken the power of the adversary
4. To cope with present monumental difficulties
5. To have freedom from bondage
6. To establish a position of spiritual strength and dominion
7. To be released from heavy burdens (yours or others)
8. To break through a depression
9. To invite the Lord to create in you a clean heart and renew a right spirit
10. To seek God's face and have a closer walk with Him
11. To seek the Lord when He is directing you to do something that you don't think you have the ability to do
12. To be free of evil or debilitating thoughts
13. To resist temptation
14. To be set free from every day sins—pride, jealousy, resentment, gluttony, gossiping, etc.
15. To help you when you are feeling confused
16. To help you when life seems out of control
17. To humble yourself
18. To break the lusting of the flesh after anything
19. To gain strength
20. To invite God's power to flow through you more mightily.¹

Examples of Short Fasts

In her book, Omartian gives four examples of fasts according to the length of time:

A twenty-four-hour fast:

1. Stop eating after dinner on Monday night at six
2. Eat nothing and drink only water all day Tuesday
3. After six o'clock on Tuesday night eat a fruit salad, or a vegetable salad, or a baked potato and a steamed vegetable. If you do have something more, like meat or cheese, go very, very lightly

Slightly longer fast:

1. Stop eating after lunch on Monday at noon

¹Omartian, 130.

2. Eat nothing and drink only water for the remainder of Monday and all day

Tuesday

3. For dinner on Tuesday evening at five or six o'clock, eat a fruit salad, or a vegetable salad, or a steamed vegetable and baked potato

A thirty-six-hour fast:

1. Stop eating after dinner on Monday night at six.
2. Eat nothing, and drink only water all day Tuesday and Tuesday night.
3. On Wednesday morning break the fast with a raw or steamed apple and a papaya. Eat a lunch consisting of a raw vegetable salad and/or a steamed vegetable and a baked potato.

A three-day fast:

1. Stop eating after dinner on Monday night at six.
2. Eat nothing and drink only water all day Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.
3. Break the fast either Thursday evening or Friday morning with a raw apple or homemade applesauce plus an orange or a papaya. Nothing more.
4. For lunch on Friday have something like a small, fresh raw vegetable salad or a baked potato with plain yogurt on top and a steamed vegetable (like broccoli or carrots).¹

Beside the spiritual benefits of fasting, there are many other benefits as well.

Fasting is a cleansing process that helps the body get rid of poisons, cleans the

¹Ibid., 146.

bloodstream, and purifies the whole system. Some people even believe that fasting can cure many illnesses and retard premature aging.¹

Study of the Word

The fourth discipline is a devoted study of the Scriptures. A basic knowledge of the Word of God is essential for anyone attempting to share it with other people. However, what is most important is the connection with God one can get from studying the word for personal devotion. Jesus said that eternal life depends largely in the knowledge one can get of the Father and of Jesus himself (John 17:3). But God has revealed himself through the written word. Nothing can inspire the soul more than to read the Bible and meditate in its revelation of God. White writes

A knowledge of God is the foundation of all true education and of all true service. It is the only real safeguard against temptation. It is this alone that can make us like God in character. This is the knowledge needed by all who are working for the uplifting of their fellow men. Transformation of character, purity of life, efficiency in service, adherence to correct principles, all depend upon a right knowledge of God. This knowledge is the essential preparation both for this life and for the life to come.²

This knowledge can be obtained only by reading, studying, and meditating in the Scriptures. White, according to

In God's Word only do we behold the power that laid the foundations of the earth, and that stretched out the heavens. . . . In the Word of God the mind finds subjects for the deepest thought, the loftiest aspirations. Here

¹Ibid., 131.

²Ellen G. White, Ministry of Healing Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1958), 409.

we may hold communion with patriarchs and prophets, and listen to the voice of the Eternal as he speaks with men.¹

Lack of study and meditation can lead any Christian into temptation and sin. The devil knows this and that is why he will do whatever he can to keep us from meditating and enjoying the word of God. Many young people could benefit greatly by studying and investigating the Scriptures. White says,

The reason why the youth, and even those of mature years, are so easily led into temptation and sin, is that they do not study the Word of God, and meditate upon it, as they should. The lack of firm, decided will-power, which is manifest in life and character, results from neglect of the sacred instruction of God's word.²

¹White, Counsels to Teachers, 389.

²White, Ministry of Healing, 458-59.

Lesson 2

How to Share Your Testimony

Review

Read Matt 24:14; 1 John 1:2-3; Rom 10:9.

This lesson will help you to

1. See how a disciple's personal testimony can be one of the most powerful methods for communicating the gospel
2. Discover the characteristics of an effective, genuine, and convincing testimony
3. Study the biblical examples of personal testimonies

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help you prepare and present a simple, yet powerful testimony that will touch peoples' hearts and will induce them to want to know more about Jesus.

Study

One of the most effective methods of communicating the truth of Jesus is personal testimony. Your personal testimony inspires trust and faith and a very fervent desire to experiment the same joy and happiness of the one who testifies. Personal testimonies are so effective that the media uses them constantly to sell products. White states, "What will

be more effective is the testimony of your own experience.”¹ The Bible is clear with respect to the necessity to testify:

1. “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come”(Matt 24:1).

2. “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect” (1 Pet 3:15).

3. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:2-3).

4. “That if you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom 10:9).

Biblical Examples of Personal Testimonies

The testimony of the apostle Paul before Agrippa (Acts 26).

The introduction	verses 1-3	Before
The life before Jesus	verses 4-11	Before
Brief story of conversion	verses 12-20	During
The life after Jesus	verses 21-29	After

¹White, Desire of Ages, 347.

Your Personal Testimony

In order to be effective, a testimony has to have several characteristics.

It

1. Should be brief
2. Must be presented with enthusiasm, joy, and happiness
3. Should be simple, not preached, just spoken
4. Must not contain denominational jargon
5. Should not criticize other religions
6. Should always emphasize the positive
7. Must not detail past sins
8. Should not contain self pity for the things left behind to follow Jesus
9. Must be honest and straightforward and should demonstrate living faith.

Lesson 3

Christ's Method of Winning People

Review

Luke 4:17-21; Mark 2:13-17; John 4:1-26.

This lesson will help you to

1. Examine the method of Jesus for winning people
2. Provide an opportunity to practice the method of Jesus for reaching unbelievers
3. Develop skills that will help you to mingle with people, to empathize with them, help them, provide for their needs, and bring them to Jesus
4. Make a commitment to find a new friend in the next six months

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help you learn the necessary steps to follow the method of Jesus for winning people.

Study

Through the years many methods of evangelism have been developed. Many ways of witnessing and reaching people with the gospel have been tried, adopted, developed, used, and discarded. However, very few methods have been truly successful. According

to Ellen White only one method can bring true success. This method is outlined in the book the Ministry of Healing. There she writes that,

Christ's method alone will give true success in the reaching the people. The Saviour 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

Christ's Steps for Reaching People

The first step for reaching people is to mingle with them. This is a very simple method, but very effective. If you want to catch a fish, you must go where the fish is. In order to win people for Jesus and the truth, we must go where people go and be where people are. This may sound like heresy for some puritans, but that is exactly what the Master did. When he was criticized for eating with sinners and tax collectors, he replied: "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."² Jesus mingled with people with the stated purpose of healing them. The apostle Paul followed the example of his master when he became all things to all men in order to gain some.³

Jesus ate with sinners and tax collectors (Mark 2:16). This was Jesus way of mingling with people. He went to the places where they were. We must do the same. White writes,

¹White, The Ministry of Healing, 143.

²Mark 2:17.

³1 Cor 9:22.

Though He was a Jew, Jesus mingled freely with the Samaritans, setting at nought the Pharisaic customs of His nation. In face of their prejudices, He accepted the hospitality of this despised people. He slept with them under their roofs, ate with them at their tables,—partaking of the food prepared and served by their hands,—taught in their streets, and treated them with the utmost kindness and courtesy. And while He drew their hearts to Him by the tie of human sympathy, His divine grace brought to them the salvation which the Jews rejected.¹

Jesus not only set an example for his Church to follow, but this was the method he taught his disciples. White points out,

This was the method that Christ taught His disciples. When the great throngs gathered about the Saviour, He would give instruction to the disciples and to the multitude. Then after the discourse, the disciples would mingle with the people, and repeat to them what Christ had said. Often the hearers had misapplied Christ's words, and the disciples would tell them what the Scriptures said, and what Christ had taught that they said.²

She goes on emphasizing that Christ's ministers ought to follow his method of working for the Lord,

God's ministers are to learn Christ's method of laboring, that they may bring from the storehouse of His word that which will supply the spiritual needs of those for whom they labor. Thus only can they fulfill their trust. The same Spirit that dwelt in Christ as He imparted the instruction He was constantly receiving, is to be the source of their knowledge and the secret of their power in carrying on the Saviour's work in the world.³

¹White, Ministry of Healing, 26.

²White, Testimonies, 6:87.

³White, Acts of the Apostles, 365.

How can we mingle with people?

1. By inviting people to our homes for lunch or for dinner
2. By inviting people to play a ball game that they like to play (volleyball, racquetball, baseball, or basketball)
3. By visiting with them on the porch of their homes, in garages, or on patios
4. By visiting with them during breaks at the job
5. By going to their places of entertainment (if your Christian principles allow)
6. By chatting on the internet
7. By visiting in their homes

Show sympathy

What does it mean to show sympathy?

1. Agreeing with people on the things you can agree on
2. Comforting people when they are grieving
3. Expressing your appreciation for what people are and for what they do
4. Showing a friendly face and a friendly smile
5. Hugging them (if they are of the same sex)
6. Thinking good things about them and expect the best
7. Sending them a letter or card expressing sympathy

Minister to their needs

1. Provide food and clothing for them

2. Help them find a job
3. Provide transportation for work
4. Help them to stop smoking, loose weight, or stop drug abuse
5. Help them find housing
6. Provide marital counseling
7. Offer help for any work that needs to be done around the house

Win their confidence

1. Show them your friendship, your love, and your appreciation
2. Listen to their story, their problems, their challenges
3. Stay with them when everyone else is gone
4. Pray for them and tell them that God loves them
5. Speak kind words to them
6. Be genuine, authentic, and honest
7. Always keep your word, tell the truth, and share your life from the heart

Bid them, follow him

1. Invite them to take Bible lessons
2. Invite them to evangelistic meetings
3. Invite them to listen to a tape or see a video
4. Demonstrate how to be a true Christian and invite them to try Christianity
5. Call them over the phone and tell them about Jesus

6. Share your testimony

7. Invite them to make a decision for Jesus and be baptized

Lesson 4

How to Present an Effective Bible Study

Review

Matt 28:18-20; Acts 8:29-35; John 5:39.

This lesson will help you to

1. Understand the Great Commission of Jesus to his disciples
2. Recognize the necessary elements in a Bible study
3. Develop the ability of presenting an effective Bible study
4. Provide a basic understanding of how the human mind works and develop the

necessary skills to lead a person to Christ

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help the student to present a Bible study that will lead people to a closer relationship with Jesus and to a definitive decision for Christ.

Study

In this lesson you will learn the basic steps in the art of giving a Bible study. There are many people who give Bible studies, but very few know how to do it successfully.

Definition

Before we begin to study how to present an effective Bible study, it is appropriate to ask the question, What is a Bible study? The simple answer is Bible study is a

systematic study of a given subject in the Bible. A Bible study could also be defined as the study of the Bible through questions and answers. However, a Bible study is more than just sharing the information contained in the Bible. A Bible study is a study of the Bible, verse by verse, with the purpose of doing God's will. An effective Bible study should lead the student not only to have a correct comprehension of the given subject but also to make a commitment to practice what has been taught.

Origen

The plan of giving Bible studies is based on the Bible and the writings of E. G. White.

1. The Bible: Jesus and his disciples gave Bible studies. Note John 3:21; 4:1-26; Acts 20:20; 8:26-40; 18:23, 24-28; 13:52.
2. "The plan of Bible studies is an idea from heaven."¹

The Place

What is the most appropriate place for establishing Bible studies?

1. The home of the student
2. The church
3. The house of the instructor
4. Wherever there would be people
5. Other appropriate places

¹Ellen G. White, Christian Service (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1958), 200.

Materials

The materials used in the Bible study depend on both the instructor and the student. Some suggestions would include

1. The Bible
2. Faith of Jesus lessons
3. Amazing Facts lessons
4. Maranatha Bible lessons
5. Twenty Steps Bible lessons
6. Slides
7. Videos
8. Others

Strategy

Some suggestions for an effective Bible study.

1. Be punctual
2. Be honest
3. Speak from the heart
4. Begin and end early
5. Begin and end with a word of prayer.
6. Be enthusiastic when presenting the truth
7. Be positive
8. Invite the student to accept the lesson

9. Try not to study for more than 30 minutes
10. Dress appropriately.

Special Situations

Do not share the attention of the student with other centers of attraction.

1. In a polite way ask that the TV be turned down or off
2. Find a distraction for the children
3. Do not answer all the questions
4. Use illustrations
5. Do not discuss politics, sports, or religion.

After the lessons on the Gospel, the Bible student should be guided by the instructor to give his or her life to Jesus.

Steps for Leading a Soul to Christ

1. Show them the love of God (John 3:16)

Question: Do you believe that God loves you? Do you believe that he sent his son to die for you? Do you want to accept that love?

2. Show them how the Holy Spirit can lead them to repentance (Acts 2:37-38).

Question: Do you believe that the Holy Spirit of God is leading you to repentance? Do you want him to guide you?

3. Show them how God has promised to forgive their sins (1 John 1:9).

Question: Do you believe that if you confess your sins and ask for forgiveness, God will forgive you?

4. Show them how Jesus wants to enter their hearts (Rev 3:20).

Question: Would you like to invite Jesus to come into your heart?

5. Show them that if they believe, Jesus would really come into their hearts (Mark 11:24).

Question: Do you believe that if you pray and ask Jesus to come into your heart, he will come in?

6. Show them that once they surrender their lives to Jesus, they have eternal life and have become adopted children of God (1 John 5:11-13).

Question: Do you believe that today Jesus will give you salvation? Yes, welcome to the family of God. Now you are a true child of God.

Pray a simple prayer of acceptance of Jesus.

Lesson 5

The Art of Evangelistic Preaching

Review

Mark 16:15; 1 Cor 2:21; 2 Tim 4:2; 2 Tim 3:16; Act 8:4; Luke 8:1; Matt 4:23;
1 Cor 1:18. E. G. White: Testimonies, 5:300,87.

This lesson will help you to

1. Recognize the importance of evangelistic preaching within the context of the plan of salvation
2. Provide an understanding of the nature of preaching as proclamation and witness
3. Understand the elements of evangelistic sermons

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help the student learn the basic steps in preparing a sermon and presenting it to the public.

Study

Before Jesus ascended to heaven he gave his disciples the command to preach the Gospel through the whole world, "'Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15). Every disciple of Christ has been called and commissioned to preach the Gospel. In fact, the mission of Jesus was to preach salvation to people (Luke

4:18). Preaching the word of God is of vital importance. Paul declares, "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God" (1 Cor 1:18). The preaching of the word is the power of God to save sinners. White says, "The preaching of the word is ordained of God to arouse and convict sinners."¹ The preaching of the word, according to White, must arouse and convict people. Consequently, every disciple of Jesus should learn to preach the word in such a manner that it will arouse and convict sinners. The preaching of the word of God is not just the power of God for salvation but the means by which people are saved. White adds,

We are never to forget that Christ teaches through His servants. There may be conversions without the instrumentality of a sermon. Where persons are so situated that they are deprived of every means of grace, they are wrought upon by the Spirit of God and convinced of the truth through reading the word; but God's appointed means of saving souls is through "the foolishness of preaching."²

The Nature of Preaching in the New Testament

Two words will help us to understand the nature of preaching in the New Testament: proclamation and witness.

¹ White, Testimonies, 4:118.

²White, Testimonies, 5:300.

Proclamation

The Christian has been called to proclaim the good news of salvation (Matt 24:14); preaching is proclamation. The Greek words for proclamation are kerysso (announce, make known, proclaim aloud), keryx, (herald), and kerygma (proclamation, announcement, preaching).¹ The proclamation of the Gospel to all creatures on earth is the single most important task of the disciples of Jesus. The proclamation of the crucified, risen, ascended, and coming savior is the reason for the existence of the church.

Witness

The disciples of Christ were witnesses of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Therefore, they were preachers of that great event. The followers of Christ also have been called to bear witness for Jesus. A witness is one that tells what he or she heard and saw (1 John 1:1-3). He commanded them to stay in Jerusalem until they were ready to bear witness for him (Acts 1:8). The Greek word here is diamartiretai which comes from the verb martyreo (to give witness). The apostle Paul understood the command of Jesus. He said, "However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace" (Acts 20:24). Long comments,

The witness image emphasizes the authority of the preacher in a new way. The preacher as witness is not authoritative because of rank or power but rather because of what the preacher has seen and heard. When the

¹Colin Brown, The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), 3:48.

preacher prepares a sermon by wrestling with a biblical text, the preacher is not merely gathering information about that text. The preacher is listening for a voice, looking for a presence, hoping for the claim of God to be encountered through the text. Until this happens, there is nothing for the preacher to say. When it happens, the preacher becomes a witness to what has been seen and heard through the scripture, and the preacher's authority grows out of this seeing and hearing.¹

Elements of Evangelistic Preaching

Biblical Preaching

Evangelistic preaching should be biblical preaching. In other words, it must be based on the authority of the Bible only. Every doctrine should be tested by the authority of the Bible. Jesus derived his authority from the word of God. When rebuking the devil three times, he said, "It is written" (Matt 4:4, 7, 10). For a sermon to be biblical, it must be based on sound exegesis of the biblical text. Long says,

Biblical preaching does not mean merely talking about the Bible, using the Bible to bolster doctrinal arguments, or applying biblical "principles" to everyday life. Biblical preaching happens when a preacher prayerfully goes to listen to the Bible on behalf of the people and then speaks on Christ's behalf what he or she hears there. Biblical preaching has almost nothing to do with how many times the Bible is quoted in a sermon and everything to do with how faithfully the Bible is interpreted in relation to contemporary experience. "A sermon that begins in the Bible and ends in the Bible," Edmund Steimle once observed, "is not necessarily a biblical sermon."²

Christ-centered Preaching

Evangelistic preaching should be not only biblical but also Christ-centered. Paul

¹Ibid., 44.

²Ibid., 48.

says that he preached not his own gospel but the gospel of Christ (1 Cor 2:12). He was determined to preach Jesus and him crucified: "But we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles" (1 Cor 1:23; 2:2). Every doctrine of the Bible must be presented through Christ and his sacrifice for humanity.

Theoretical discourses are essential, that all may know the form of doctrine and see the chain of truth, link after link, uniting in a perfect whole. But no discourse should ever be delivered without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel, making a practical application of the truths set forth, and impressing upon the people the fact that the doctrine of Christ is not Yea and Nay, but Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus.¹

The doctrines of the church do not convert anyone. The only one that can touch people's hearts is Jesus. That is why he said, "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (John 12:32). White adds,

Lift up Jesus, you that teach the people, lift Him up in sermon, in song, in prayer. Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls, confused, bewildered, lost, to "the Lamb of God." Lift Him up, the risen Saviour, and say to all who hear, Come to Him who "hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us" [Eph 5:2]. Let the science of salvation be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication. Bring nothing into your preaching to supplement Christ, the wisdom and power of God. Hold forth the word of life, presenting Jesus as the hope of the penitent and the stronghold of every believer. Reveal the way of peace to the troubled and the despondent, and show forth the grace and completeness of the Saviour.²

¹White, Testimonies, 4:394.

²White, Gospel Workers, 160.

Relevant Preaching

Evangelistic preaching should be relevant. In other words, it must meet modern men and women where they are. In order to be effective, evangelistic preaching should address the needs of people of the twentieth-century as well as it did to people of the first-century.

When preaching evangelistic sermons, we must keep in mind that there may be many people in the audience who have many different needs. However, all of them without exception are in a desperate need to encounter God and to experience Jesus. Lee Strobel commenting on how to reach the secular mind, says,

The objective of evangelism should be to bring Unchurched Harry into a personal encounter with God, not just to merely pass on information about God. Harry wants to actually meet this Jesus Christ we are talking about; he wants to sense the comfort and power of the Holy Spirit.¹

People will accept or reject the Gospel depending on how it is presented to them. If the Gospel, which is supposed to be the power of God for salvation of people, is presented in a cold, theoretical, and formal manner and does not address the spiritual needs of the audience, it will not make the necessary impact on the hearts of people. White writes,

In this age of moral darkness, it will take something more than dry theory to move souls. Ministers must have a living connection with God. They must preach as if they believe what they say.²

¹Lee Strobel, Inside the Mind of Unchurched Harry & Mary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993), 59.

²White, Gospel Workers 151.

Lesson 6

How to Organize An Effective Evangelistic Meeting

Review

Acts 1:4; 2:1-39; Matt 28:18-20; Rev 14:6-14.

This lesson will help you to

1. Fulfill the necessary requirements for an effective evangelistic campaign
2. Organize the different groups or committees that will help you before and during the meetings
3. Set up your evangelistic budget to be submitted to the conference
4. Organize your evangelistic sermons' series

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help the student organize an effective and successful evangelistic meeting.

Study

Organization is essential for a series of meetings to succeed. This lesson mentions ingredients that are necessary for a successful evangelistic crusade.

Committees

Reception

Assignment: This committee is in charge of filling out the attendance cards and passing out the Bibles.

Qualification: Must be courteous, prompt, neat, and organized.

Greeters

Assignment: The greeters greet people at the door and helps them find a seat close to the front or wherever the person wants to sit.

Qualification: Should be able to smile, be helpful, alert, enthusiastic, and decisive.

Music

Assignment: People here organize the music program for the duration of the meetings. In addition, they schedule special music and provide instruments, music sheets, transparencies, and projectors used for musical parts of the program.

Qualification: Must be extremely organized, able to delegate, enthusiastic, positive, and able to improvise.

Ushers

Assignment: These helpers distribute quiz envelopes, pick up offerings, and distribute and pick up decision cards and pencils.

Qualification: Must be able to smile, be active, stay alert, and remain courteous.

Visitation Team

Assignment: Visit the people who are coming to the meetings with the purpose of becoming their friends.

Qualification: Must be polite, be a good listener, be friendly, dress appropriately, and be positive and enthusiastic.

Prayer

Assignment: These members organize a prayer war in the church. They organize vigils, fasts, prayer chains, and intercessory prayers. They pray for each visitor, pray for decisions, and pray for the evangelist and his team.

Qualification: Must be a prayer warrior able to organize and delegate—a person who has faith and love for God and souls.

Decoration

Assignment: These people make sure the platform looks attractive and neat. They find flowers and other decorative items to place in front and around the auditorium.

Qualification: Must be aesthetic and have organizational abilities.

Audio

Assignment: These skilled workers make sure the audio system is working properly, test microphones before the meetings, change batteries, and play accompaniment music for singers.

Qualification: Must be on time, active, watchful, organized, and dedicated.

Multimedia

Assignment: These members set up and remove video projectors, overhead projectors, screens and stands.

Qualification: Must be prompt, active, dedicated, and responsible.

Transportation

Assignment: These helpers provide transportation for people attending meetings.

Qualification: Should be on time, courteous, polite, and helpful.

Telephone

Assignment: Callers call people attending meetings one day before the next meeting to remind them of the subject and the time.

Qualification: Must be courteous, have a good voice, be sincere, enthusiastic, and positive.

Budget and Meeting Supplies

Before the evangelistic endeavor begins, the leader should

1. Get together with the pastor and develop a budget for the meeting. The budget should be adequate to cover all expenses.
2. Submit a budget to the conference or have the pastor contact the conference about it.
3. Prepare a sample budget

Advertising

Handbills prepared to advertise the meetings should have certain qualities and be used adequately.

1. Be simple but elegant
2. Be readable and specific
3. Be mailed or distributed two weeks before meetings

Other advertising means can be used.

1. Plan radio or TV ads
2. Use signs and banners all over town where permitted and according to community guidelines.

Bibles and Books

Bibles and books to be part of the program need special attention:

1. Buy Bibles ahead of time
2. Buy books for incentives
3. Give a large Bible to those that attend the whole series
4. Plan baptismal class materials early

Children's Program

1. Programs for children need special attention. They should be evangelistic in nature but fun
2. Should not be day-care programs
3. Should include craft, stories, Bible lessons, singing, videos, and refreshments

Moments of Social Sharing

Social moments provide time for getting acquainted. Those in charge should

1. Prepare light refreshments for people after the meetings
2. Use the time to mingle with people and to share testimonies
3. Invite the whole church to stay and share with newcomers

Organized Prayer Groups

“God will do in answer to the prayer of faith that which He would not do if we did not pray” (Great Controversy 525). This quote should encourage us to

1. Pray hard and ask others to pray for us
2. Pray for meetings, for handbills, for decisions, and for baptism goals
3. Urge each family in the church to pray for one another

Present Subjects in Logical Blocks

Subjects are more meaningful when presented in organized groups.

Second Coming of Jesus

The Signs of Jesus' Return
The Manner of His Return
The Power of Prophecy

Plan of Salvation

Origin of Suffering
Plan of Salvation
Divinity of Christ

The Law and Sabbath

The Divine Law
The Divine Rest
The Human Change

The Coming Kingdom

State of the Death
Heaven or Hell
The New Jerusalem
Bible Baptism

The True Church Series

The True Church

The False Church
The Three Angels' Message
The Beast of Rev. 13
The Mark of the Beast

Christ-centered Approach

Every sermon, every doctrine, and every appeal must be centered in Christ and in him only. Lift Jesus up in everything that is done and the meetings will be a great success for the glory of God.

Lesson 7

How to Prepare the Church for Evangelistic Meetings

Review

Rev 14:6-14; Matt 28:18-20; 24:14; Gal 6:7.

This lesson will help you to

1. Understand the principles of a great harvest as outlined in the Bible.
2. Recognize the three phases of an effective evangelistic meeting: the planting, the harvest, and the producing phase.

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to help the lay evangelist prepare the church for a successful evangelistic meeting.

Study

Preparation is the key to success in any evangelistic effort. Preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God is like farming. There are laws that govern farming. One need not be a farmer to know that for a farming project to be successful one needs to prepare the soil; that would include tilling the soil, moving the earth, watering it, and planting the seed. After that is done, the harvest will come and that includes picking the fruit, vegetable, or grain; bringing it inside the house; and cleaning and storing it. The third phase includes protecting the fruit, keeping it in the right environment, the right

temperature, and using it. In the same way, there are laws or principles that govern evangelism. An effective evangelistic effort has to have three phases: planting, harvesting, producing.

The Planting Phase

The first phase of the evangelistic meeting is planting. The apostle Paul understood the law of the harvest. He said: "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life" (Gal 6:7-9). Planting has to do with preparation. This is the crucial phase. To launch an evangelistic meeting without preparing the soil is like trying to harvest where you have not planted. Several steps need to be taken into consideration when preparing for evangelistic efforts.

1. Planning: Decide the goal and objectives of the meetings. Decide how many Bible studies you are going to give, how many people you want to reach, how many baptisms you want to pray for.

2. Audience: You need to know the background of your audience. In other words, who is the audience you are trying to reach? What is their economic, religious, and social background? When you determine that, decide on your target group.

3. Materials: What type of materials are you going to use to prepare the church and the community for the meetings?

4. Territory: What is the territory you want to reach with this meeting?
5. Organization: The church needs to be organized in groups of two and each couple should be assigned a street, block, or territory.
6. Prayer: For an evangelistic meeting to be successful, every plan needs to be saturated with prayer. Two or three people should be appointed to lead the church into a prayer war. The whole church should be praying for one another, for the meetings, for the pastor, and for the evangelist.
7. Hard Work: Evangelism is hard work. No matter how much planning, organizing, or praying you do; you need to realize that to get results in evangelism you need to work hard. It is the only way to get anything worthwhile in life.

The Harvest Phase

The second phase of the evangelistic meeting is the meeting itself, or what some people call the harvest. This phase is very important because it is the key to the whole program. If you prepare the soil, move the earth and plant the seed, but the plant never grows, then there is no harvest. However, if the preparation part has been done faithfully, then you can expect a great harvest.

Elements of a Great Harvest

1. Quantity: When we think of a great harvest we think of quantity. The more, the better. Pentecost, for example, brought about a great harvest. Over three thousand

people were baptized in one day (Act 2:41). Consequently, quantity is an element which constitutes a sign of a great harvest.

2. Quality: Quality, like spirituality, cannot be measured. However, if the first phase of the evangelistic meeting has been done faithfully and properly, we can expect people to make more intelligent, enduring decisions than if they have not been prepared before the meetings. It's important to prepare people with Bible lessons and testimonies, months before the meetings begin.

3. Commitment: Commitment has to do with surrender. People who are baptized need not be perfect. However, they need to practice what we teach them. They need to be committed to Jesus and his church. That is what makes them disciples of Jesus.

4. Maturity: People who get baptized know what they are doing. Their faith has matured in such a way that they are willing to do anything for Christ and his church.

5. Spirituality: Spirituality cannot be measured. Nevertheless, a truly committed disciple of Jesus is known by his fruits (Matt 7:16-20).

6. Impact: A great harvest makes an impact on the lives of new individual disciples as well as on the community as a whole from which they came.

7. Involvement: New disciples need to be involved immediately in reaching other disciples from among their friends, family, and acquaintances. They need to be actively involved in the life of the community of believers.

The Reproducing Phase

Probably the most important phase of the evangelistic crusade is the reproducing phase. Once the harvest has been completed, the meetings have ended, the candidates have been baptized, and the evangelist is gone, one question remains. What do we do with the new converts? Many people lose interest in the church right after baptism. Some get discouraged and never come back to the church. How can we minimize the loss of people after an evangelistic campaign? How do we know that the meetings have been successful?

Here are some suggestions.

1. The new disciples must be taught what it means to be a disciple of Jesus
2. The new disciples must learn that to be strong, faithful, and enthusiastic in the

Lord they must teach others what they have learned

3. The new disciples need to understand the law of reproduction and to learn how to reproduce themselves

4. The new disciples should be taught to win souls the way Jesus taught his disciples. Robert Coleman, commenting on Christ example, says,

It did not matter how small the group was to start with so long as they reproduced, and taught their disciples to reproduce. This was the way His church was to win—through the dedicated lives of those who knew the Saviour so well that His Spirit and method constrained them to tell others. As simple as it may seem, this was the way the gospel would conquer. He had no other plan.¹

¹Robert Coleman, The Master Plan of Evangelism (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H Revell Company, 1963), 106.

The success of the evangelistic meeting depends on how successful the reproducing phase of the campaign is. Coleman asserts, "The test of any work of evangelism thus is not what is seen at the moment or in the conference report, but in the effectiveness with which the work continues in the next generation."¹ He says that the criteria by which we must evaluate the success of any church evangelistic crusade is not by 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 the multitudes.²

White writes, "One soul won to Christ will be instrumental in winning others, and there will be an ever-increasing result of blessing and salvation."³

This is the great plan of God for multiplying disciples. The principle of reproduction is one disciple training another disciple, and that other disciple, training another disciple until the good news of salvation reaches every nation, kingdom, and tongue and Jesus comes back to take us home.

¹Ibid., 110.

²Ibid.

³Ellen G. White, Gospel Workers (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1946), 184.

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