

Leadership Training

Lesson 1- Motivation and Encouragement, Goal Setting, Time Usage and Family Considerations

What is leadership? It is influence. The ability to influence another person to follow you for the accomplishment of the Lord's work.

Why be a leader? Seems like a lot of work and risk to stick your neck out. Isn't it easier to follow?

Matthew 28:19-20 - "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. " (2 Tim 2:2)

2 Tim 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

1 Timothy 3:1 It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

1 Peter 5:1-4 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Ephesians 5:1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;

James 5:20 My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth, and one turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins.

Who can lead? Anyone who has the Spirit of God inside him, male or female, can lead. Anyone willing to take responsibility for some task can eventually learn to lead in that task. Most of the spiritual leaders in the New Testament were not natural leaders in their former lives. Effective spiritual leaders are made from improbable raw material:

Matt 4:19 And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.

1 Samuel 22:2 And everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented, gathered to him; and he became captain over them. Now there were about four hundred men with him.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Ex 18:21-23 Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them, as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. 22 And let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you,

but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. 23 If you do this thing and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in peace."

What are the characteristics of a spiritual leader?- Paul gave three extensive lists for elders and deacons and Christians in general:

1 Tim 3:2-13 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money. 4 He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity 5 (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?); 6 and not a new convert, lest he become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. 7 And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. 8 Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, 9 but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. 10 And let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. 11 Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. 12 Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. 13 For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

Titus 2:2-5 Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. 3 Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, 4 that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.

Titus 1:5-9 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, 6 namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. 7 For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, 8 but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, 9 holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

Every Christian should aspire to these characteristics, most of which depict a mature Christian leader. In these lessons, we are describing the simplest, most embryonic form of leadership in which one disciple leads another. Paul recognized that everyone who is born again has some capability to lead another:

Rom 15:14-15 And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish (counsel) one another.

Here are some lists of characteristics put in other words by upstanding leaders:

"A true and safe leader is likely to be one who has no desire to lead, but is forced into a position by the inward leading of the Holy Spirit and the press of circumstances...There was hardly a great leader from Paul to the present day but was drafted by the Holy Spirit for the task, and commissioned by the Lord to fill a position he had little heart for...the man who is ambitious to lead is disqualified...the true leader will have no desire to lord it over God's heritage, but will be humble, gentle, self-sacrificing and altogether ready to follow when the Spirit chooses another to lead."- A. W. Tozer, Christian author

“A leader must 1)avoid getting swamped in detail 2)not be petty 3)not be pompous 4)know how to select people to fit the task 5)trust others to do the job without the leader’s meddling 6)be capable of clear decisions 7)inspire confidence”
- Bernard Montgomery, British Military officer

“The person who has difficulty putting the interest of others ahead of his own, or who has difficulty forming a common purpose with others, is someone who is wrapped up in himself and confused about his own identity. A healthy individual gives to others rather than constantly drawing from them. When we are healthy individuals, we help to form healthy marriages, families, congregations, ministries, businesses, communities and nations.” - Keith Yoder, Founder, Teaching the Word Ministries

“Spiritual leadership requires superior spiritual power, which can never be generated by the self. There is no such thing as a self-made spiritual leader. A true leader influences others spiritually only because the spirit works in and through him to a greater degree than in those he leads. We can lead others only as far along the road as we ourselves have traveled. Merely pointing the way is not enough. If we are not walking then no one can be following, and we are not leading anyone.” – J. Oswald Sanders, Christian Author

How do you learn to lead? First, learn how to do something (bring food to a Branch Group, lay hands on a sick person, help someone determine if they are saved, drive a van, help in the nursery, prophesy in a branch group or church, facilitate a discussion in a branch group, etc.). Find someone who is interested in doing what you do and show them how. **Don’t keep your ministry to yourself!** Instead, train someone to do what you do. Congratulations! You’re on your way to being a leader. Don’t try to copy somebody else’s style of leadership, either. It’s better to jump in and start teaching your trainee in the way your own personality and intellect gets it done.

2 Tim 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

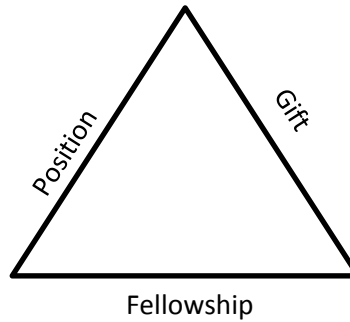
What should my ultimate life goal as a leader be? To disciple 12 people as Jesus did. Start with one. Spend time with one person and mentor them. If they die, drop out, or move away, find another to replace him. Keep recruiting until you have twelve disciples as Jesus had. These are not just friends, but actual trainees you are mentoring. In your lifetime this should be your goal, just as Jesus did. Your goal should not include any of the commonly taught Christian treadmill disciplines such as frantic Bible reading and prayer, frequent fasting, strict conformity to dress codes or social laws of the Old Covenant, etc. All of these have the appearance of holiness, but lead to discouragement. We usually do them as a means of pleasing God while we overlook the Lord’s real desire for us – the making of disciples.

Won’t leadership consume my life? How will I have time for my babies, my wife, husband, dad, mom, pets, plants, hobbies, job, etc.? No, being a leader won’t use up all your life energies. There is always time for everything when we are doing God’s real will for our lives. Consider Paul’s insights:

2 Cor 10:13-14 But we will not boast beyond our measure, but within the measure of the sphere which God apportioned to us as a measure, to reach even as far as you. 14 For we are not overextending ourselves...

Measure = Greek word *metron*. * Everyone has a measure, or a sphere of influence (leadership). God will not give us more than we can do. Our priorities are better understood *not* as God 1st, family 2nd and job 3rd, but as God as the *only* priority. Within Him, He gives us time and authority to address our most meaningful metrons: family, job and church. When we remove from our lives some of the activities promoted by legalistic teaching (e.g., forced Bible reading, mandatory scheduled prayer time, dutiful canvassing in an attempt to witness to others, attendance at church every day of the week, forced giving, etc.) we find that there is plenty of time for everything important to the Lord and that you actually have more time for the things which are meaningful. Making disciples is easy and enjoyable if done God’s way.

Three things qualify us to minister in our metron:



Position has to do with the appointed role we have as a mother, father, son, daughter, elder, Branch Group leader, ride coordinator for your Branch, greeter at church, etc. There is automatic authority granted by God to you depending on your position. Authority is a God-given right to exercise rule. **Gift** has to do with the ability to get a task done. God always gives ability commensurate to your authority. A mother or father will likely have gifts of mercy and words of wisdom, etc., for the raising of their children. A Branch leader will likely have the gifts of leadership and faith for the leading of the fellowship. **Fellowship** has to do with the leader's connection to Jesus. It encompasses obedience, submission, character, worship, etc. Fellowship really depends on our submission to Jesus, whereas *position* and *gift* are rather automatic. Leaders without fellowship can succeed for a while, but their ministries eventually fall apart. The church has seen big, visible ministries in which healings and miracles occur, but the leader's fellowship with Jesus was broken.

Which ministries in our church need leadership? – The church should continually be expanding as we develop leaders. Therefore, all the ministries below will need leaders. The most critical will be for Branch Group leaders.

- Branch Groups
- Nursery
- Sunday School Branch leader
- Women's Group
- Men's group
- Building Maintenance & Janitorial work
- Worship Teams
- Greeters
- Ushers/Security Team
- Administration
- Special events coordination
- Schooner Center Activities Coordination
- Hotspot Food Ministry
- Operation Blessing Food Ministry
- OCF Food Bank
- Schooner Food Pantry

What are some of the things I need to know to lead someone further into discipleship? After you have mastered the skill of showing someone how you do your particular ministry, you will next need to learn how to introduce someone to the basic first experiences of life in Christ: 1) How to know they are saved (justified), 2) how and why to get water baptized, 3) how and why to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit. (See the mentor's guide "How to Become a Christian and Grow in Faith" and continue to Lesson 2 in the Leadership Training Series.)

*Thanks to Teacher Keith Yoder for this insight on the *metron*

Lesson 2 - Personal Evangelism in the Branch Group – leading others into the initial experiences of salvation

Lesson 1 closed with the question “What do I need to know to lead someone further into discipleship? The answer is: **What the initial three experiences which empower the Christian are, why they are necessary and how you can administer them.** New people in your Branch Group should be paired up with a mentor (that’s you) who can guide them through these experiences and beyond. We have prepared a simple guide to help both of you in this process. It is called “*How to Become a Christian and Grow in Faith.*” It carries the new person through the first year of their Christian life and gives a picture of everything beyond until the day of their rapture or death. We will be referring to this “guide” (called so hereafter) throughout Lesson 2.

First experience – Getting Saved (justified) – Some people we meet have been Christians for a long time and they know that. Others are not sure. To help someone be sure of their salvation, you will need to know the Bible’s description of how a person gets saved:

God had always had a plan, centered on His Son Jesus, for the salvation of man long before Adam and Eve sinned. Their sin plunged them and all mankind thereafter into a state of banishment from God, heaven, and life. Mankind was considered *unjust* because we were *unrighteous*. God knew with absolute certainty that Jesus, at a certain point in time, would give up His perfect life to pay our penalty, appeasing God’s anger toward us. This payment restores anyone who has faith in God to the status of being *just* and *righteous*. We are restored back to a relationship with God and guaranteed a place in heaven with abundant life here as a result.

This is how people before Jesus’ death on the cross got “saved” from banishment. For example, God revealed Himself to Abraham, Moses, Noah, Daniel, Gideon, etc., long before Jesus was crucified in 33 AD. They simply believed that God was real, and obeyed or reacted appropriately. God then credited the yet-to-be payment of Jesus to their lives. Abraham simply believed God’s promise that God would give him and his aged wife a child. There was no mention of Jesus at all. Abraham’s faith in God, as He revealed Himself to Abraham at the moment, was sufficient to enable God to credit the coming sacrifice of Jesus to Abraham’s life, making him *just* and *righteous*.

Gen 15:2-7 And Abram said, "O Lord God, what wilt Thou give me, since I am childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" 3 And Abram said, "Since Thou hast given no offspring to me, one born in my house is my heir." 4 Then behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "This man will not be your heir; but one who shall come forth from your own body, he shall be your heir." 5 And He took him outside and said, "Now look toward the heavens, and count the stars, if you are able to count them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be." 6 Then he believed in the Lord; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

This is still how people get saved today, except that Jesus’ death on the cross is now an historic fact. Even people in far jungles can get saved by exhibiting faith in God as He chooses to reveal Himself to them. They don’t even need an American preacher to go there! They must, however, come in contact with Christians to progress along the path of discipleship. God is not willing that anyone perish, so He makes getting justified very easy. It is still important for the church to go abroad to preach the gospel, teaching and making disciples.

Romans 1:16-20 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith." 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, 19 because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them. 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

If the person you are ministering to is unsure whether he has ever had faith in God, help him to recall any past instances in which he prayed to God, abandoned sin because he felt God wanted him to, gave something to God, worshipped God, or had any other demonstration of belief in the true God. Occult experiences, worship of other gods, the earth, etc., of course are not faith. If your disciple-to-be cannot recall any demonstration of faith in God, you can invite him to profess his faith right then and there with a simple statement. The church has come to call such a profession a "sinner's prayer" although there is no such format in the Bible. Romans 10 is an oft-quoted verse used to support the necessity of a sinner's prayer, but what this verse really teaches is that we believe first in our heart, making us righteous, and then we'll talk about it the rest of our lives.

Rom 10:9-11 ...that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; 10 for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses [resulting in] to salvation.

After the disciple has cleared up his doubt, congratulate him and introduce him to water baptism.

Second Experience – Getting baptized in water

Why get baptized? This experience, common in the Bible, was *the* way of making a public profession about what or who you were allied with, a follower of, believed in, were responding to, etc. We know from history that Jews commonly baptized people into Judaism. John the Baptist, before Jesus' crucifixion, baptized people who wanted to repent and make a statement that they believed in the true God. Jesus submitted to this baptism even though He had no sin to repent of. It was necessary and right for Him to make this public profession of faith in His Father. *If it was necessary for the Son of God to be baptized prior to serving God, how much more necessary it is for us!!*

Christian Baptism has several remarkable promises attached to it. First, it sets into motion protection and safety for your life, just like the people in the ark in Noah's time experienced.

1 Peter 3:20-22 ...when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. 21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you — not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience — through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

Secondly, it gives the Christian real power to "put off the old man and put on Christ." As we rise out of the waters of baptism, we rise in "newness of life."

Rom 6:3-5 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Peter advised the newly saved Jews gathered at Pentecost to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins. We always believe first in the heart, and baptism is the preferred public statement of that belief. Some theologians teach that a person is not saved until he is baptized. If this were the case, none of the saints living during the Old Testament times could have been declared righteous. The word "forgiveness" in the Greek means to be freed from, to break the bonds of. This adds credence to the idea that baptism helps the Christian overcome the sinful tendencies of the old man in daily living.

Acts 2:37-38 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" 38 And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

How did people in the Bible baptize? Almost certainly by immersion, like you would dunk a garment completely in water to dye it. Usually it took place at a river, or springs or pools. The eunuch who Philip baptized went down with Philip into the water and came up out of the water (Acts 8:38-39). **You can baptize someone in water!** It doesn't have to be the pastor or an elder. Like Philip, just the two of you can be present. All you need is some water to get into (a swimming pool, river, pond, lake, big bathtub, etc.) and some clothes to get wet in. Once in the water, stand next to the disciple, ask him to hold his nose if he wants to, have him grasp his elbow with the free hand, pronounce over him that you are baptizing him "in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost" as the scripture says and lower him straight down or rearward until he is under water. The water helps you lift him back up. Even very large people are not too hard to bring back up. If there are other people present it is nice to take time to allow others to prophesy over the candidate before you baptize him.

The third experience – Baptism in, of, with, or by the Holy Spirit

At the Last Supper, Jesus predicted that the Holy Spirit would be sent to be our Helper. He would lead us into all truth. He would teach us about our righteousness. He would bring to our remembrance things which the Father wanted us to remember. He would replace Jesus' actual presence by taking residence inside each believer. The grand entrance of the Holy Spirit into the body of Christians, only about 120 at the time, took place on the Day of Pentecost. The sign that this had happened was that they all spoke in tongues spontaneously while praying in an upper room in a home. Also, a rushing mighty wind accompanied this event. It was so startling that people from surrounding provinces and districts of Asia Minor could hear praises to God being spoken in their native tongues.

Acts 2:1-13 And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

5 Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because they were each one hearing them speak in his own language. 7 And they were amazed and marveled, saying, "Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 "And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? 9 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabs — we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God." 12 And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" 13 But others were mocking and saying, "They are full of sweet wine."

The Bible records this evidence three more times, on three separate occasions: First, in a region northwest of Jerusalem called Samaria. Even though this passage does not specifically say they spoke in tongues, the phenomenon is very similar to the first outpouring. Receiving the Holy Spirit was a distinct, visible and audible phenomenon that necessitated the dispatch of two apostles to facilitate after they had been baptized in water:

Acts 8:14-17 Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, 15 who came down and prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit. 16 For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.

Second, at the home of Cornelius, a Roman Centurion. The evidence again was that they spoke in tongues, praising and prophesying:

Acts 10:44-48 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. 45 And all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also. 46 For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, 47 "Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?" 48 And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Third, in the city of Ephesus in Asia Minor. Here, the men were plainly disciples of Christ, but were only familiar with John's baptism for repentance. They had not even heard whether there was such a thing as the Holy Spirit. This is evidence that the Baptism of the Spirit did not spread spontaneously. It was taught, administered and received with active participation by the receivers:

Acts 19:1-7 And it came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found some disciples, 2 and he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." 3 And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." 4 And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." 5 And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying. 7 And there were in all about twelve men.

This language becomes a private prayer language which the believer has all of his life. Praying in a tongue edifies the believer. The benefits affect body, soul, and spirit.

Jude 20-21 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit; Prayer in the Spirit cleanses our bodies. Consider Jesus' cursing of the fig tree after His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. In Mark 11:12-14, Jesus curses a fig tree after finding no fruit on it. He then proceeds in the next verses to the Temple, where he drives out the moneychangers who have made the Temple a "den of thieves." In so doing, he restored the temple to a house of prayer. He came back later to the fig tree and found it dead from the roots up. Our body is called the temple of the Holy Spirit. If we fill it with the prayer of this dispensation (prayer in the Spirit, not the Lord's prayer or something else) and make it a house of prayer, God will drive out the thieves inhabiting the den. In other words, the more we pray in the Spirit, the healthier we can become.

Mark 11:12-23 And on the next day, when they had departed from Bethany, He became hungry. 13 And seeing at a distance a fig tree in leaf, He went to see if perhaps He would find anything on it; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. 14 And He answered and said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again!" And His disciples were listening. 15 And they came to Jerusalem. And He entered the temple and began to cast out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who were selling doves; 16 and He would not permit anyone to carry goods through the temple. 17 And He began to teach and say to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a robbers' den." 18 And the chief priests and the scribes heard this, and began seeking how to destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, for all the multitude was astonished at His teaching. 19 And whenever evening came, they would go out of the city. 20 And as they were passing by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots up. 21 And being reminded, Peter said to Him, "Rabbi, behold, the fig tree which You cursed has withered." 22 And Jesus answered saying to them, "Have faith in God.

Praying in the Spirit enables us to pray more appropriately and precisely for what God wants us to pray for. Although this passage does not precisely say that these groanings are our prayer language, what else could it be? Paul introduced the idea that we are "praying in the Spirit" when we speak in tongues and frequently referred to it.

Romans 8:26-27 And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;

1 Corinthians 14:14-16 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. 15 What is the outcome then? I shall pray with the spirit and I shall pray with the mind also; I shall sing with the spirit and I shall sing with the mind also.

Ephesians 6:18-19

With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

This language has a second purpose, that being to deliver a message in tongues to the assembled congregation. There are to be only three of these per meeting and each must be interpreted in turn. The import of the message is the Godward giving of thanks.

1 Corinthians 14:27-28 If anyone speaks in a tongue, it should be by two or at the most three, and each in turn, and let one interpret; 28 but if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God.

1 Corinthians 14:16-19 Otherwise if you bless in the spirit only, how will the one who fills the place of the ungifted say the "Amen" at your giving of thanks, since he does not know what you are saying? 17 For you are giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified. 18 I thank God, I speak in tongues more than you all;

Administering the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is easy. You may wonder "Why do we have to teach people to speak in a tongue? Wasn't the experience spontaneous in Acts 2 and Acts 10? These were sovereign outpourings designed (likely) to introduce the phenomenon to the Jews first and then to the Gentiles. As Paul did in Ephesus, and as John and Peter did in Samaria, we instruct people concerning what to expect and what to do in order to receive this gift. They must cooperate or nothing will happen. Some churches teach that you must "tarry" based upon Acts 1:4-5, where the disciples were instructed to wait so that power would come upon them. If you believe that, you will probably wait a long time! In this era, from the time of the outpouring at Cornelius' house onward, we:

1. Instruct the candidate to ask Jesus to baptize him in the Spirit.

Luke 11:13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

Matt 3:11-12 As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

2. Lay your hands on him and encourage him to speak, only not in English or a language they have learned. This is a very critical point. We speak in English all the time by a choice of our will. Praying in tongues is no different. Throughout all of your Christian life, you will be using it at will. It is no different the first time.

3. Encourage him to keep speaking until a good flow is coming out and to keep using it all his life.

You should become very comfortable with being able to help someone receive all three of these experiences. The primary place in which they are administered is the Home Branch Group. Your Branch leader will have in his possession a lesson plan called "How to Become a Christian and Grow in Faith." We'll call it "the Guide" for short. He'll give you this guide to use so that you and your new disciple in the making can study it together. It covers essential subjects such as:

- Repentance and forgiveness
- The Importance of the Body of Christ
- Who is God, What is he like?
- Finding your unique ministry

Lesson 3 – Spiritual Warfare and Basic Counseling

Your ministry is being carried out on a battlefield. You have an enemy, Satan, who is dedicated to the destruction of your family, your ministry, your Branch Group, and your church. As a leader in this spiritual war, you must have a good understanding of this dynamic and be able to apply God's wisdom to problems you certainly will encounter. There is much hearsay and many fables taught concerning this subject. We will learn the truth – It is one of the main defensive pieces of armor you will don as you grow as a leader.

Part I - Concerning Spiritual Warfare, consider the following:

1. **The devil is defeated!** You don't have to try to defeat him:

Hebrews 2:14-15 Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

Luke 10:17-20 And the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." 18 And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning. 19 "Behold, I have given you authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you. 20 "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven

The devil is not nearly as powerful as Christians believe he is. He himself probably has no power presently. Hebrews used the word "powerless" in describing his condition after the resurrection of Jesus. He, along with many of his subordinates, have been humiliated publicly in heavenly places:

Col 2:13-15

He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14 having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him.

2. **The Christian simply has to put on the armor of God and stand in the victory which Jesus has already won.** It is God's armor, so once you put it on, all the devil and demons can see is the same armor that defeated them 2,000 years ago. They don't know who is under it.

Ephesians 6:10-18

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to *stand* firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to *stand* firm. 14 *Stand* firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the

preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

The armor consists of five defensive and two offensive weapons:

Truth, likened to a belt. The belt held everything together. You can't fight if your trousers are around your knees! This is not about you telling the truth (although that is obviously an important Christian virtue). It is about you *knowing* the truth. You cannot have faith in something you don't know about. When you understand the promises of God you can pray in accord with them and you will see answers. Truth holds every other part of the armor in place. There is a real lack of the knowledge of the truth in the church today! God will not skew the rules to give you an unfair advantage over all other humans. We must know what the promises are before they will work.

Righteousness, likened to a breastplate. The breastplate covered the heart. An enemy wants ultimately to stop his opponent's heart, then he has killed his opponent. The devil teaches you that your standing with God (righteousness) depends on how well you behave and how much you do. This is false. Righteousness is a gift from God purchased by Jesus' death. If the devil can get you to pursue your own righteousness, your heart will eventually become discouraged.

The gospel of peace, likened to shoes. Soldiers take good care of their feet. If your feet are sore, you can't march. You are in pain and stay in one spot. The fight cannot advance. Good news keeps you mobile. Your feet, so to speak, are soothed from the effect of the peace brought by good news. The devil, on the other hand, wants you agitated and tormented as he is. Additionally, good shoes help you in the figurative task of stomping on demons See Luke 10:19 above.

Faith, likened to a shield. Faith is the assurance of something you hope for but cannot yet see in reality. Faith takes truth and acts upon it. *Truth* tells you the black and white facts about how and why Jesus will answer your prayers. *Faith* is the motivating force that moves you to pray because of the truth you know. It keeps you acting and hoping even though you do not yet see an answer. Darts are thoughts from the devil. They promote inaction and loss of hope, and are always the opposite of the promises of God. Faith stops every negative thought so that the fiery darts have no effect on us.

Salvation, likened to a helmet. Salvation is a big package including not just forgiveness of sin but healing, wholeness, success and general well-being. We are told more about the helmet in **1 Thessalonians 5:8:**

But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation.

The helmet involves hope of good things to come. God will bring continual good to us. We do not enter a week thinking that bad things will occur. It will be good for us because God owns us and oversees our lives. Even when some misfortune happens, God turns it around and brings good out of it.

The Word of God, likened to a sword. Jesus spoke the word of God when tempted by the devil. He didn't have an intellectual discussion with him. It completely destroyed the devil's hopes of getting Jesus to sin. That earthly construct, a conglomeration of offers using buildings, stones, bread, kingdoms, earthly admiration, was all destroyed by quoting the written Word. The institutions don't even exist anymore! A sword is offensive, it is used not just to defend the bearer, but to destroy an enemy. The devil is defeated already, but he has left behind a large, foul kingdom which we will have a part in destroying. When we quote the Word (as opposed to just knowing it) *and act upon it* as Jesus did (he didn't succumb to any of the appealing offers presented to Him and resolutely went about the task of making disciples), we have employed the weapon which will bring down the local drug dealer, prostitution ring, corrupt politician, etc.

Prayer in the Spirit – This means praying in tongues, consistent with Paul's use of this expression. It is the new manner of prayer in this dispensation for the Christian. It has not replaced praying with our minds, but is a powerful adjunct to it. It is prayer guided by the Holy Spirit. It has a cleansing, healing, purifying effect on our whole being. An interesting Old Testament example can help us to understand its effect better: King Ahaz, a bad king, had fallen into apostasy, shut up the doors to God's temple, and erected unauthorized altars all over his kingdom.

2 Chronicles 28:22-25 Now in the time of his distress this same King Ahaz became yet more unfaithful to the Lord. 23 For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, and said, "Because the gods of the kings of Aram helped them, I will sacrifice to them that they may help me." But they became the downfall of him and all Israel. 24 Moreover, when Ahaz gathered together the utensils of the house of God, he cut the utensils of the house of God in pieces; and he closed the doors of the house of the Lord, and made altars for himself in every corner of Jerusalem.

King Hezekiah, His successor, (a good king) opened the doors of the temple and began a restoration process. The first step was to open the doors. This was followed by a cleansing of the interior and a restoration of the altar of incense, burnt offering, opening of the doors of the porch and relighting of the lamps, all types or symbols of the Holy Spirit. The door likely is a representation of our lips. (**Ps 141:3** – Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips.) If we open the doors of our lips and let the Holy Spirit speak we will be paralleling the OT type. Couple to that the scripture:

John 7:38-39 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.'" 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

When we speak in tongues, we are very likely taking part in a cleansing process, in which the river of the Holy Spirit is continually washing your body (His temple) and restoring it to a place of worship for the Lord.

3. **Satan and demons are created beings.** As such they are not omnipotent, omnipresent, or omniscient. They are in one place at one time and only have limited knowledge.
4. **There is no evidence at all in the Scriptures that demons can jump from one person to another or jump from objects into a Christian.** Christians incorrectly apply "Lay hands suddenly on no man" (1

Tim 5:22) to restrict the receiving of prayer from an imperfect person for this reason. This scripture has to do with the ordaining and disciplining of elders, not the presumption that a demon will jump from a sinful person into you. By contrast, you may receive prayer from anyone in whom you have confidence. If you wait for a perfect person to come along, you'll be waiting a long time! Concerning objects used in demon worship, the apostle Paul makes a strong statement by declaring that we are to eat what is placed in front of us when we are a guest in a foreigner's home, even if was food which had been offered to idols and later purchased in a market place:

1 Corinthians 8:4, 8-9 "...there is no such thing as an idol in the world..." and "...we are neither the worse if we do not eat, nor the better if we do eat..."

This verse shows how impervious the Christian is to any detrimental effects which may come from being around material objects used in demon worship. Idols are mentioned frequently in the Scripture. God's people were always advised to stay away from them because of the false religions and practices they represent. They are offensive to spiritually immature people, which is the real danger attached to them. This was the only danger Paul mentioned in connection with eating meat offered to idols:

1 Corinthians 10:19-21 What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? 20 No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers in demons.

1 Corinthians 10:28-30

But if anyone should say to you, "This is meat sacrificed to idols," do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for conscience' sake; 29 I mean not your own conscience, but the other man's; for why is my freedom judged by another's conscience?

For this reason we should not have Buddha statues or occult paraphernalia around us, not because they have any physical power over us.

5. **Satan cannot read your mind.** Demons may happen to hear you say something if they are around you, but they have little power to affect your life. A more probable door, scripturally, is that opened by anger (**Ephesians 4:26**) or occult practices (**2 Corinthians 4:2**) or perhaps even fornication (**1 Corinthians 6:18**). A Christian cannot be possessed, but can be robbed of peace and health.
6. **Deliverance (the casting out of a demon) is a valid, needed ministry.** **Mark 16:17** predicts that we will do this just as certainly as we will speak with new tongues. It is not a complicated, obscure ministry which only a few can do successfully. *There is almost no instruction in the Bible about how it is to be done.* This indicates that it is probably a very simple, Spirit-led, spontaneous act in which the believer verbally confronts an evil spirit in a person and tells it to leave. Christians who, after doing the basics, (coming to Christ, getting baptized, receiving the baptism in the Spirit, repenting of besetting sins, etc.) still have unusual diseases with no known cause or cure, or unusual mental and emotional problems may be affected by a demon. A Christian is never *possessed*, but may give a place to the devil as **Ephesians 4:26** says:

Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity.

Every Christian is able to cast a demon out of another person.

Part II - Concerning the Basics of Counseling – Into your family, workplace, Branch Group or church, individuals will certainly bring problems. Anger, Depression, Fear, Drug abuse, Sexual and Marital problems, Financial mismanagement, etc., will find their way into your proximity. This is not an overwhelming load, as God will only bring you what you can handle. Many of these problems will improve when the individual simply gets involved in the spirit-filled life of your family, Branch, or church. Some, however, will need concentrated help to overcome their problems. This is where counseling is useful. Here are some commonly asked questions concerning counseling:

Who should undertake counseling?

Every believer can counsel. **Romans 15:14-15:** And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish (counsel) one another.

Don't I have to have a counseling degree or know psychology?

Our problems are due directly or indirectly to sin. Psychology and secular counseling do not deal with sin. They are of little help. You know about the solution to sin: Jesus.

What do I do if somebody asks me for help with their problem?

1. Find out if they believe in Jesus. You cannot counsel an unbeliever. (This was covered in Lesson 2.)
2. Ask them 4 questions:
 - a. What is the problem?
 - b. What have you done about it?
 - c. What do you want me to do?
 - d. What brought you to me at this time?
3. Gather Data- Start expanding on the answers to the above 4 questions by asking for details- What did you do? How did you do it? How often has it been done? When did you respond in that way? For what reasons do you lose control? (Never ask "why?" the counselee doesn't know, that's why he's coming to you) Questions follow the logic of a conversation, just like when you talk to someone. Ask what naturally occurs next in the flow. This is called Gathering Data.
4. Diagnose the Problem – not as hard as you'd think, since a short list of basic sins or common problems listed in the Bible are usually the core. Here's a common list:
 - a. Anger (one of the most common, especially in relationships)
 - b. Fear
 - c. Depression (an outgrowth or byproduct Fear and Anger)
 - d. Sexual sin
 - e. Drug Abuse
 - f. Marital problems
5. Uncover the Biblical solution – reveal to the counselee what the Bible has to say about how to solve his problem. Sometimes "the problem" is multi-faceted, but it usually unravels and gets solved when you deal with the most urgent one first. For example, a couple experiencing difficulties may not have any idea how to raise their children, or how to manage their finances, but

the first problem they must deal with is how to handle sinful anger. They can then peacefully cooperate to make a budget or understand their roles as mother and father. Here are some biblical solutions to the most common problems:

Anger – Sometimes anger is righteous – when a parent opposes the sin of a child, when a citizen opposes corruption in government, etc., but most often we are angry because some *perceived right* we feel we have has been denied or violated (e.g. the right to be respected, to not be inconvenienced, to succeed, to be healthy, etc.) The counselee must “put off” the old sinful anger and “put on” a new Christ-like behavior in its place. The new behavior is, basically, the reconciliation of a difference with an opponent. This can be done in many ways. The Bible lists many other *new* godly behaviors which replace sinful anger (pray for an opponent, forgive, give a blessing, give a soft answer, etc.) He must do both: (put off the old/ put on the new) or he will never change.

Ephesians 4:17-24 This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; 19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. 20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, 22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

Ephesians 4:26-27 Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an *opportunity*. (The word for *opportunity* in the Greek language was the same one used for Mary and Joseph’s experience when there was no *room* at the inn.

Fear - This is a very self-centered sin. We are not talking about natural “fears” which serve to preserve our lives (fear of heights, tigers, tornadoes, etc.) The fearful individual thinks only of himself. It is the opposite of love, which thinks of others. He may fear for the welfare of others, but the real fear is the consequence that of the loss of a loved one, sickness of a child, etc. will have on him. Fear is not the problem; it is only an indicator of a lack of mature love.

1 John 4:18-19 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

The fearful person must be taught to examine how and where else in his life he is self-centered. Is a mother too fearful to spank her child that she will not discipline him because she fears he will reject her? Does the person love money over God’s values over insecurity about God’s provision? Do they have a fear of being judged or rejected? In each case the sinful fear must be replaced by love. Sometimes such elusive medical problems such as panic attacks go away when fear is replaced by love.

Depression – A common feeling of blueness or sadness which lasts for some extended period of time. The person loses interest in his normal pursuits, sleeps a lot, loses energy, stops eating. Depression is more of a problem related to sin than an actual sin by itself. The depressed person has lost the ability to think properly. His spiritual shield of faith is down and he believes many negative thoughts which are taught by the devil and the world. Often people who have no schedule or responsibilities will fall into wrong thinking, as they have too much time on their hands, and consequently get depressed. The depressed person's entire being is affected. He must address his whole body, soul, and spirit. The antidote is found here:

Phil 4:4-9 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things. 9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you.

The depressed person needs to think right and do right. He needs to normalize his body, physically, by getting onto a schedule of regular bedtimes and risings. He needs to exercise and eat regularly, *no matter how he feels*. He must start to think rightly also. He will need to work at recalling details of Paul's list (things that are true, lovely, praiseworthy, of good repute, etc.) You may suggest that he make a card and carry these thoughts around with him to review when he is tempted to be depressed.

Sexual Sin and Drug Abuse – Fornication is a grief to the Lord. It may include many forms of sexual perversion including these modern terms: *homosexuality, lesbianism, bestiality, transvestitism, pedophilia*, etc. A person who takes part in these acts sins against his own body as well as his spouse or the person he is fornicating with. The body is made for the Lord. He designed it to be used in a certain way, either to remain single or to marry and have children. The fornicator is self-centered, using his body completely for his own gratification and interests (which usually don't include taking on the burden of reproducing children). This is not to be confused with the God-given pleasure derived by an individual from normal sexual function which obviously is a self-directed sensation. The fornicator replace selfishness with genuine love for others, which is all about giving, not taking. He must be taught how to live a life in the Holy Spirit, where the fruits of the Spirit powerfully replace uncontrolled sex perversion.

Gal 5:16-24 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. 19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness,

faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Masturbation is a confusing subject for the Christian. You will no doubt have people who will have questions about it. Simply put, the Bible says nothing about it, which is a clue that we are authorized to say nothing, either positive or negative, about it. Some teachers assemble several vague scriptures (“possess your vessels in honor”, “don’t yield your members to sin”, etc.), to show that it is a sin. Those Scriptures could apply as well to bank robbery or assault and battery. As a result of saying something negative about it, many legalistic fables have grown up over the years, teaching that blindness, insanity, and sterility are the unwelcome results of masturbation. Other teachers appeal to human reason, saying that it is common and normal and we all know it, so it should be encouraged for self-development. This causes a person to *disobey his conscience*, which is indeed a sin. The conscience must be dealt with by bringing it to the Lord, who will adjust it to biblical standards like we adjust a thermostat. We will be judged by what the Scriptures say, not by what they don’t say (**John 12:48**). This process enables a person to experience the working of grace. The sex drive is a holy thing, placed in us by Jesus. The Bible’s silence about it is probably a merciful statement in which God is giving us room to learn about this powerful motivator which creates families. Keep in mind that there is much more in the scripture about how to handle other natural bodily functions (defecation, urination, menstrual flow) than this act.

Concerning drug abuse, The Lord showed us by example how to live victoriously through the ups and downs of life on the fallen earth. We do not need to numb our feelings with pills or alcohol. We were designed to know Jesus in *both* the fellowship of His sufferings and in the power of His resurrection. The drug abuser selfishly wants to avoid all pain and anything negative. He must be taught to repent and trust the Holy Spirit to sustain him emotionally:

Ephesians 5:18-21 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; 21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

Marital problems are no more difficult to address than any other spiritual problem. They just involve two people. The specific problems are usually the ones already mentioned above. The approach is to have both spouses together to talk to them. That way, one doesn’t worry about what the other partner is saying to the counselor, which is usually criticism. Ground rules must be set from the time you sit down. Other than the initial description of the problem, which probably will include one partner complaining about the other, Luke 6 must be strictly observed:

Luke 6:41-43 "And why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 42 "Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.

They must begin by thoroughly confessing their sins to the Lord and each other and extend forgiveness to each other. Homework such as a “log list” (Available from the pastor) is very helpful. You can meet them a week later, after they have had time to take the homework home and complete it. If they won’t do simple homework such as this, it is a sign that one or the other is insincere and won’t progress. You *can* work with the other singly until the reluctant partner comes around. . The Prepare/Enrich Marriage Improvement Inventory put together by Life Innovations, Inc., is an excellent diagnostic tool available online that can really pinpoint problem areas (If you’d like to get qualified, please see Pastor Custer). This tool is not mandatory; your natural questioning will work adequately.

Almost always, sinful anger is the first problem that must be dealt with. The relationship is like a logjam. Perhaps the most substantive problems (understanding of their roles, their place in the body of Christ, agreement on children and finances) are in the midst of the jam, but to get to them, an initial “log” must be moved. Usually that is anger. This may take three or four weeks. The couple must learn the put off/put on procedure, and take awkward (at first) steps to practice speaking softly, saying a blessing, forgiving, etc. Almost always, they need the help of a reminder card or memo to help them insert the new, foreign behavior. It is like learning to ride a bike. After several weeks of progress they can turn attention to different homework, such as a study of their roles, construction of a financial plan or a unified plan for the training of their children, etc. Our church has a good series of homework lessons for varying needs in a marriage: Understanding God’s purpose for marriage, Role of the Husband, Role of the Wife, Communication, Raising of Children, Financial Unity, Sexual Unity.

6. Train in righteousness – This is the last phase in counseling after Gathering Data, Diagnosing the Problem, and Uncovering the Biblical Solution. You guide the counselee into meaningful behaviors which he can learn and practice, as described above, until he has truly overcome sin and replaced it with righteousness. Looking up Bible verses pertaining to the problem, making a schedule, getting up and going to bed at regular times, keeping track of thought patterns (e.g., situations in which you were tempted to be depressed and what you did), undertaking a healthy diet, and beginning some simple physical exercise are examples of training in righteousness. Our church has a variety of homework which you may use with a counselee.

How do I know that counseling has succeeded? There are observable changes that will tell you:

- 1 the problem has been adequately dealt with
- 2 the counselee understands the biblical principles which freed him
- 3 the counselee is able to generalize these principles to solve other problems in his life and can tell others how to solve theirs
- 4 he has been restored to usefulness in his family
- 5 He has been restored to usefulness in his Branch Group , his church, and in the Body of Christ

Biblical counseling teaches people to be independent, not dependent on the counselor.

Does counseling have to be an extended, clinic-like effort? – No. Most counseling takes place in one meeting, most often informal, over a cup of coffee or in a short conversation in which you prescribe the Word of God to someone who wants help. A room at the church or in your home will suffice for counseling involving successive meetings. You need not wear yourself or the counselee out with long sessions. 1 ½ hours is a good average time for a session.

Conclusion: God has taken counseling out of the mysterious realm of the professional and placed it in your hands. Counseling is no more complex than what is printed on these several pages. The way to get started in counseling is to let “Hi how are you?” be a question and not a greeting. One of the best places to learn to counsel is in a small, intimate group such as a Branch Group. In lesson 4 we’ll talk about how to start one and to cause it to multiply.

Lesson 4 – Why start a branch group?

Why start a Branch? Isn’t it safer and easier to be a spectator?

The mainstays of our society - the extended family, the guaranteed job, and the secure neighborhood - are slowly crumbling. People are turning to the church more than ever before. Jesus knew this would happen and has designed His church to be a place that can skillfully meet the needs of the disillusioned and damaged. This will not happen automatically; it is not done completely by God without any involvement on our part. The church, as an absorber for the needy, is likened to a building built on the foundation of Christ, *but its superstructure is built by men.*

1 Corinthians 3:9-15

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. *But let each man be careful how he builds upon it.* 11 For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. 14 If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.

Other Illustrations in the Scripture show that this church-building process is planned, concerted, and requires the wisdom a farmer puts into his farm:

Isa 28:23-29

Give ear and hear my voice, Listen and hear my words. 24 Does the farmer plow continually to plant seed? Does he continually turn and harrow the ground? 25 Does he not level its surface, And sow dill and scatter cummin, And plant wheat in rows, Barley in its place, and rye within its area? 26 For his God instructs and teaches him properly. 27 For dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge, Nor is the cartwheel driven over cummin; But dill is beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a club. 28 Grain for bread is crushed, Indeed, he does not continue to thresh it forever. Because the wheel of his cart and his horses eventually damage it, He does not thresh it longer. 29 This also comes from the Lord of hosts, Who has made His counsel wonderful and His wisdom great.

James 5:7

Behold, the farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains.

John 15:1-3

"I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more.
- Holy Bible, New Living Translation

Yet another illustration of our responsibility in the church building process is that of the Christian being a fisherman. Jesus said He will make us "fishers of men".

Matt 4:18-20

And walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Luke 5:4-11

And when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." 5 And Simon answered and said, "Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but at Your bidding I will let down the nets." 6 And when they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish; and their nets began to break; 7 and they signaled to their partners in the other boat, for them to come and help them. And they came, and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink. 8 But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" 9 For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken; 10 and so also James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men."

John 21:2-7

There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples. 3 Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We will also come with you." They went out, and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing. 4 But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 Jesus therefore said to them, "Children, you do not have any fish, do you?" They answered Him, "No." 6 And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you will find a catch." They cast therefore, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish.

Wisdom, planning and hard work are all necessary to catch fish. A fisherman will not be successful with a passive approach. He cannot be heedless of where, when, and with what he attempts to catch fish. As a church, we must study our task and work hard at figuring out how to "catch," i.e., receive and nurture the harvest Jesus brings us in contact with. It will not just "happen" any more than a farmer's field will just simply grow into an orderly and abundant harvest.

Every Christian is to build something upon the foundation Jesus has laid. We cannot be casual or passive about this expectation of God for us. The Book of Acts has a basic pattern for our construction. They are small groups we call *branches*. They have been around since the church was born:

Acts 20:20-2

...how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house,

Acts 2:46-47 And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, 47 praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

The traditional American church is slowly dying. Church growth researcher Win Arn estimated that in 1988, 80-85% of the churches in America were plateaued or in decline and that 3,500-4,000 churches die every year. While the American church is struggling, the unchurched population is growing. In 1978, George Gallup polled American adults 18 or older and discovered that 41% were unchurched. Ten years later, the same poll showed that the number had risen to 44%. Questions from the same study done by Gallup showed that even though not as many people were interested in attending formal churches, they were actually more religious and interested in spiritual things than a decade earlier. These people can be reached. They are simply not interested in attending a church which operates like it did in the 1940s or 1950s, which includes 85% of American churches.

The small group has always been the tool used by the Lord to build His church. In times of persecution, both historically and in this present age, the church has prospered through small groups. Christian A. Schwarz, author of *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of Healthy Churches*, published the results of a 1996 survey of 4.5 million people in 1,000 churches in 32 nations. The survey concluded that, worldwide, the most effective method for the growth of the church is “the multiplication of small groups.”

Types of Small Groups

Our church will need a variety of small groups to adequately handle the harvest, which is ripe and ready. Here is a list of the most common types which we will be using:

The Branch Group – This *is* our church. Our Sunday morning meeting is only an outgrowth of our collection of Branch Groups. This group should be the most numerous type of group we have. The reproductive *cell*, as it is called, is the best organism to provide relationship and connection for most church members. Ideally, the entire church is organized around an inverted pyramid model in which the pastor works with a leadership team, who, in turn recruits, trains, deploys and monitors leaders of groups. Every group starts off with at least three people – leader, host, apprentice-in-training – and an empty chair to fill. As soon as the group reaches ten or twelve in number, the apprentice takes one or two people and starts a new group. When there are 5 groups, one of the group leaders moves up to be the pastor-coach of the five groups. When there are ten pastor-coaches, one of the ten moves up to become the supervisor of the coaches, etc. As the church grows, some of these supervisors will become senior pastors who will plant churches utilizing the people they are bonded to relationally. This process keeps the Branch Groups growing and evangelizing, preventing them from becoming ingrown and burning out the leaders.

Since the entire church, ideally, will be involved in some form of small groups, the larger scale gatherings and organizations called programs (multiple church services, drive-in church, large permanent singles groups, large permanent youth groups, etc.) so common in the American church are not needed. The cell, or Branch Group, is *the* church. Larger occasional programs, such as youth meetings or rallies only support and enhance the cell. Sunday school classes (really small cells) already have some of the dynamics of cell life and just need aggressive recruitment and training of adults. In our church, our plan is to augment the existing cell life already in the Sunday School and expand it by

training existing teachers in cell dynamics. We do not need a classic “Youth Group” with the typical paid Youth Minister. Such a continuous large program is expensive and difficult for kids, families, and the church staff.

It is interesting, as we look at our church’s history, that very few of our own congregation’s youth attended our “Fishgate” youth group over all the years we had it. Before we came to Monessen, when we were essentially a true small group church, we had 100% of our children involved in our Sunday School and related special youth outings. The move to Monessen, necessitated by the purchase of our large church building, forced us to put time and energy into the new centroid of our church life – a big building. Most of us lived 40 minutes away in our South Pittsburgh homes. We knew no local people. Eventually, the energy required to travel to the new locus and to keep it repaired took its toll. Small groups slowly died and the original team members who worked so hard to plant the church left for deserved rest. In its place, we had to rely on programs – large meetings run by a handful of church staff – to try to minister to Monessen. It was what the town expected, seeing that we owned one of the largest churches in the area. Fishgate was one of those programs. It was a noble experiment, a strenuous program of outreach to mostly troubled local youth. Those who led it have an eternal reward and immeasurable good came from it, but there is a better way to minister to our own youth, through cells, much as we did in the beginning.

The Support Group – This group is a specialty group focused on the needs church members or members of the community who have a particular interest or felt need such as: drug and alcohol recovery, grieving widows, veterans, single moms, victims of a particular disease, etc. They may also include people with a specific interest or hobby, such as fishing, travelling, knitting, music, baking, etc. The group is often temporary. People usually don’t stay in one for the long haul. The group is a conduit to introduce people to the full-orbed Branch Group, in which their long-term spiritual maturation will be much better served. Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Bereavement groups, weight control clubs, MOPS (Mothers of Preschool Children) etc., are examples of support groups.

The Task-oriented Group – This group may be long or short-termed, depending on the need it addresses. People who join are interested in committing to a *task* primarily and bonding with *people* secondarily, although bonding such as is found in a Branch occurs. Intercession, a building project, visiting care homes or hospitals, jail ministry, disaster preparedness, food distribution, are examples of tasks which a group can form around. As long as there is a willing and able leader. 50% of people in a task group will not join a Branch Group, but that is not a problem because the task group members will ultimately grow in their walk with God, with each other, and with the church.

The Discipleship Group – This group is a group for the highly committed 10% of the church who want to meet for personal accountability in spiritual disciplines of Bible study, prayer, and moral accountability. This type of group is needed for those who want to go into a deeper or higher calling in Christ. To stay healthy, the group needs a termination date and must work to avoid becoming a clique or developing co-dependency on the accountability in the group. Promise Keepers is an example of such a group. In spite of the potential liabilities, much good can come from the discipleship group.

Since the Branch is the nucleus of our church, in the next lesson we will discuss how to develop one. You can use most of this plan to start the other, more specialized groups mentioned above, although they are not the focus of the rest of this series.

Lesson 5 - Branch Leader's Startup Training

Congratulations! You are here because you've decided to do something great in God's Kingdom and start a small group we call a "Branch." Since the Branch is the nucleus of our church, from here forward we will discuss how to develop one.

How to Start a Branch Group

There are two ways in which Branches are started: **Direct Planting** - The leader finds a co-leader and treasurer and starts the branch without the sponsorship of a "mother" branch, and **Mother-Daughter Planting** - The new branch is a concerted birth effort by an existing branch. A team forms within the existing branch and is sent at a pre-planned date to start a new branch. The leader of the mother branch mentors the new leader as needed through succeeding generations of birthing.

Regardless of which of the above methods you choose, the following will be some helpful how-tos:

1. *Become familiar with the suggested format for a branch meeting* (see "Suggested Branch Format," attachment #1 at the end of this lesson) either by reading the attachment or by being in an existing branch.
2. *Recruit someone to be a co-leader.* He or she should have your vision for multiplying the group and assuming leadership of the multiplied portion. This person may already be within your present branch.
3. *Recruit a trustworthy person to be a treasurer.* This person will keep a simple record of tithes and offerings donated at the branch meeting and get them to the church treasurer.
4. *Select some other host homes into which the meeting will eventually rotate.* They don't have to be mansions, but should be reasonably comfortable and free from distractions (noisy pets, odors, drafts, etc.)
5. *Invite several people (other than your co-leader and treasurer) whom you'd like to have as a nucleus.* These may be people within your present branch or other friends, if you do not attend one.
6. *Instruct the nucleus on the three first experiences mentioned in How to Become a Christian and Grow in Faith so they are able to assist in helping people to know: 1) if they are "justified," and 2) that they need to be water baptized, and 3) baptized in the Holy Spirit.*
7. *Decide on a time and place to start the meeting when you feel ready.* Delegate the tasks of snack preparation, nursery (if needed) and phone canvassing. Someone should call the members who are joining to remind them of the time and place of the next meeting. Ask people to commit themselves to working with one branch. They may attend any number of other meetings, but should be committed, i.e., a working part of only one.
8. *Follow the Suggested Branch Format, adapting it to your situation.* At the end of the night you should be able to answer four questions: Did we have fellowship? Did we have discussion? Did we have application? Did we share our vision?
9. *Assign new believers to someone who can be a personal mentor to guide them through the "Guide" (How to Become a Christian and Grow in Faith) series of lessons.*
10. *As the branch grows to 10 committed regulars, start making plans to multiply it.* Branches are most comfortable with no more than 10 people. Share your vision for the multiplication of the branch from the very beginning. More branches = more disciples.

How to multiply the Branch Group

God has always wanted his children to reproduce, not only biologically but spiritually. Satan is afraid when we reproduce our kind. He would rather see us just occupy pews and listen to sermon after sermon, never attempting anything to advance God's kingdom.

Gen 1:28

And God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth,

Ex 1:7

But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them.

Recognize the stages of Branch Group growth – Your branch will go through stages as it grows toward reproduction. Hopefully, reproduction will happen in a year at the latest.

- **Getting Acquainted** - The new Branch goes through a period (1 – 2 months) in which the members get to know each other. It's a honeymoon time with a lot of rather shallow, but important information being shared: background and bio information, talk about likes and dislikes, lightweight testimonies, fun stories, etc. Everything is fun. The promise of the good that the Branch will bring stimulates a lot of interest.

During this period and throughout the future when newcomers arrive, simple food (something you can buy on the way to the meeting – chips, cookies, fruit, cheese and crackers) served at the beginning of a meeting is a valuable tool. The group must learn to warm up to each other, and food is a great way to do it. Even a 300 pound man can hide behind a cup of coffee! If you keep food until the end, the newcomer has nothing to do with his hands. . It makes the warm up time much more awkward. Simple is better. A large meal each week is a lot of work for the women, but it can certainly be done on occasion

The icebreaker time, a non-threatening time of light interaction, is a very important time in which the members have a chance to tell about themselves and get to learn about their fellow members. If you want to preach a long sermon or launch into heavy duty worship each week, you will inhibit the learning process. This period of acquaintance is especially important in the first few weeks of your Branch's life.

- **Resolution of Conflict** - The members sometimes find that their fellow members are not perfect. Irritating personal habits, lack of responsibility, ignorance of the Scripture, spiritual and natural immaturity, etc., cause reactions to the less mature individuals in the group. Some members must resolve the question "Why am I attending this group?" The group leader has an important role in helping the offended persons to behave scripturally toward the less mature members and to counsel the less mature to put aside self-centeredness. After about two or three months, the group should have worked through the most obvious conflicts and is ready to really work together as a team.
- **Clarifying of Roles and Goals** – When the pecking order problems of the second stage are quieted down, the members can comfortably enter the third stage, finding a meaningful ministry within the Branch which helps the Branch to achieve its goal of multiplication. The leader must analyze the group's needs and find volunteers to help with the simple tasks so that the meeting goes smoothly and new people can be absorbed. Typical tasks such as providing food, arranging for rides, calling the

participating members to remind them of the next meeting location, mentoring new persons, arranging for ministry to children who come to the meeting, training the Branch members so they can lead new members into the Three Initial Experiences of their walk (justification, baptism, baptism in the Spirit), arranging water baptism logistics as needed, visiting a sick or shut-in member, calling or visiting those who have stopped attending, etc., need to be assigned to willing volunteers. Everyone should have a sense that this is MY Branch and my work will help it multiply. Everyone should have a job. In addition to these regularly occurring tasks, God has appointed the branch to be the first line of defense in case of emergencies in the lives of its members. There is plenty of meaningful work to do!

- **Evangelism** – As the members grow in confidence in their ability to do their respective assigned tasks, the branch is ready to enter the fourth phase, assimilation of new members. When evangelism, not personal needs, is the main topic on the tongues of the members, the branch will enlarge, perhaps up to 10 regular people. A good target number is 10 regular members. There will always be a fringe of semi-committed people, but the real core, those who are actually doing a job to help the Branch work, and not merely attending, should be no larger than 10 adult or older teen members. If the group is less than 10, it should naturally focus on some exciting neighborhood outreach (barbecues, community service projects, etc.), to meet unchurched people.

After the group has been in existence for at least 3 months, has a co-leader who understands how to lead and manage a meeting, and has a faithful core who want to start another Branch, the group is ready to form a team. This is a critical phase of growth to move through. The biggest danger for any small group is “koinonitis,” a coined word taken from the Greek word for fellowship, *koinonia*. Koinonitis manifests itself when the group is not interested in, or unable to absorb new members. There are several reasons why koinonitis develops:

1. The leader may have no plan for growth and does not keep it in front of the group.
2. He may have allowed the personal needs of the group members to paralyze the group’s meetings. Personal prayer requests, other than laying hands on the sick or healing, should be channeled to the Intercessor Group, the internet prayer chain, or congregational prayer on Sunday morning, for example.
3. He may want his preaching and teaching or worship leading to be the centerpiece of the meeting, creating a “sit and listen” mentality amongst the members. We really discourage long teachings or sermons. Short, active *discussions* are what is needed.
4. He may not have taken the time to delegate tasks to every member, having his family or himself doing most of the work, consequently robbing others of the chance to be productive. Delegation and training, not preaching, are his most important jobs.
5. He may feel that no one else is good enough or capable enough to lead a new group, so he never recruits a co-leader. Co-leaders need not be male only. Paul Yonggi Cho, leader of the world’s largest church, reluctantly opened up leadership of cells to women when the men in his church would not rise to the occasion. *Most of his cell leaders are women*. The leader does not have to be “the apostle Paul 2.0.” Paul just said to find *faithful* men who will teach others also. God takes risks with all of us. He certainly realizes that some leaders will get discouraged or distracted. The leader is the key. He should focus on developing *leaders* within the Branch; the result will be that the new leader and team, encouraged by being given a chance, will be blessed by the Lord in the form of new people (“...the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.” - **Acts 2:46.**)

In a healthy Branch, during this phase the nucleus of the new Branch forms. The existing co-leader himself chooses a co-leader to help him with the new group. The entire Branch has an eager, cooperative spirit and tries to help the newly forming nucleus in any way they can, even though they are still within the membrane of the existing Branch. This process is remarkably similar to the multiplication of a biological cell in nature, a process called *mitosis*.

- **Leaving and starting the new Branch** – When the new nucleus is ready to depart and begin operation on its own, the Branch chooses a night to make the sendoff a special event. They invite other friends, family, even unchurched people to the event. After a community meal, the pastor and Branch leader explain to the group what is happening and lay hands on the new leader, his co-leader, and the team. At this point the co-leader-turned-new-leader has lead the existing Branch at least four times, has an orderly family, has a vision for the new group, and has completed this Branch Leader’s Startup Training instruction.

The relationship of the branch leader to the newly commissioned co-leader (new leader) is a crucial connection. The new leader stays in continuous contact with the Branch leader indefinitely, getting advice and encouragement. The “principle of 12,” mentioned in Lesson 1 and expanded on below really works well here, in that the Branch leader does not have to shepherd an infinite number of persons in his lifetime.

Development of leaders – Anyone can learn how to lead. Jesus discipled 12 men (11 after Judas Iscariot) in His lifetime. We should attempt the same. Jesus’ disciples were not educated. They came from all walks of life. King David, similarly, assembled a group of men who were in distress, debt, or discontented (1 Sam 22:2). As a leader, you want to find someone who has your vision and wants to do what you are doing. The process is simple: recruit, train, deploy, monitor. Find someone who is interested in what you are doing, have him watch and then give him chances to do what you are doing, send him out to do what you have trained him to do, and check in on him from time to time to see how he is doing.

Leadership is basically servanthood. It is the willingness to take responsibility for a task which needs done and to influence others to get it done. A leader doesn’t have to be gifted or brilliant, mostly just willing to learn how to organize and execute the task which needs to be done. Our job is to train the ones God brings our way, as Jesus and David did, and not to look for the brilliant, gifted, or popular man or woman. The foremost requirement for a leader is that he simply be faithful (2 Tim 2:2 – “these entrust to faithful men who will be able teach others also”). If you start with three people in your Branch, spending time with them and encouraging them in kingdom interests, you are on your way to discipling your “twelve.” Over the course of your life, if one drops out, moves away, dies, etc., you simply replace him or her with another. The relationships never end. You encourage others to do as you have done, i.e., disciple their own 12. What do you teach them? Basically, teach what you know. If you apply yourself to learning the knowledge from the four leadership lessons, you will be teaching most of what a disciple needs. Here’s a list of essential subjects with lesson plans:

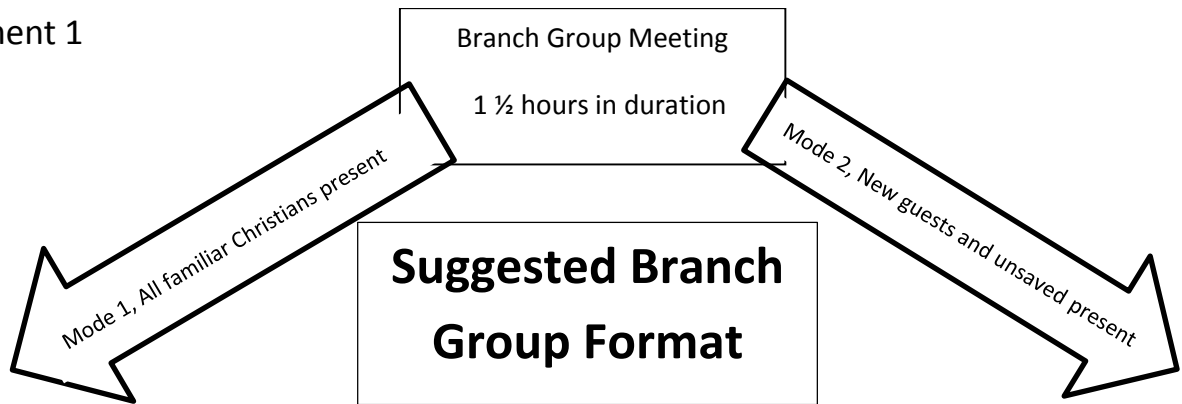
1. Motivation and encouragement, Goal setting, Time usage and Family Considerations
2. Personal evangelism and salvation – leading others into the basic experiences of Christianity within the Branch Group structure.
3. Basic Counseling and Spiritual Warfare – applying them to the Branch Group
4. Why Start a Branch Group?
5. Branch Leader’s Startup Training

These are designed to be used by the Branch leader to train his co-leader and are all available, with CD's for self-study, from the church office, 724-684-3443.

Spiritual warfare in a Branch Group— Apart from the general problems which the devil's left over kingdom would like to cause, a leader can encounter problems in the managing of the Branch:

- **People who dominate the meeting** – In your discussion time, maintain control as the facilitator and politely interrupt the self-absorbed, moving the discussion to the quieter, overlooked person. Talk to the dominator behind the scenes. This person may actually have no interest in getting healed or growing spiritually, but wants to draw attention, week after week, to himself and his problems. He probably comes from a dysfunctional family and is seeking attention he never got at home. Talk to him privately. Public rebuke really kills people. You will never see the person again if you embarrass him openly in front of others. Only in the case of severe doctrinal error should someone be corrected publicly. Be slow to invite open times of prayer for individual needs. You may get an endless string of aunts, uncles, cats, dogs, employment problems, and world events to pray for. These consume a lot of time and wear people out. Refer these instead to Sunday morning, the intercessor team, or prayer chain. Cases of deliverance, a very real and needed ministry, can usually be done away from the meeting at another time in a more private setting. You certainly may lay hands on someone who has an immediate, critical healing need who can't make it to the other forums.
- **What to do with kids** – Take up a collection and pay a reliable babysitter, preferably a female, or have some of the adults take care of the small kids. In no case have only one male, teen or otherwise, in charge of the kids. Have them present for the food time, icebreaker or worship times and dismiss them for the discussion, vision, and ministry times. An adult can teach them a lesson during this time geared to their age and understanding. Ministry to kids is a drawing card for new families. In some churches, cells advertised, with great results, a "Back to School" night at their meetings in which they prayed for kids returning to school. *If your branch has children who regularly attend, the branch leader and the person in charge of the children must undergo several background checks to comply with Pennsylvania's new child protection laws.*
- **Deterrents to comfort and accessibility** – After the meeting make gentle requests of the host to remedy barking dogs, children who interrupt, odors or other unsanitary conditions, room too hot or cold, etc.
- **No plan or direction** – without a clear purpose, you will simply become a "maintenance" meeting. You must have a clear, focused purpose to make disciples. Branches are to be reproductive ("be fruitful and multiply"). This will not happen without a concerted plan of training leaders. Concentrate on training leaders rather than gaining people. The trainees will bring people.
- **Unapproved outside speakers** – We aren't promoting long monologues or lectures for a reason. It is so that no one, especially an outsider, would come with his pet doctrine on end times or inner healing or the deity of Jesus, etc., and confuse the group. Lessons on types and symbols or the millennial kingdom are interesting, but not really the mission of the Branch.

Attachment 1



Part 1 - **Food and Fellowship**, 15-20 min

(Simple stuff which can be picked up on the way there)

Part 2 - **Worship**, 3-4 songs from a CD or simple instrument accompaniment

Part 3 – 20-25 minutes. **Discussion** led by the Branch Leader. Focused on the Sunday Sermon or prophetic activity from Sunday's congregation meeting. (What was the message about? Which scripture was used? How can we apply it to our lives? Questions about what was said by the speaker?) Life application is the goal of this discussion, not a lecture

Part 4 – Balance of the 1 ½ hours - **Vision and outreach plan** – Identify others the group is attempting to bring into the kingdom. Keep a growing list of people. Analyze how to help them, meet their needs, show acts of kindness, etc., get acquainted through special events, and pray for them by name. This contrasts with the usual process of focusing on the group's own needs. Share the group's goal to develop leadership and to absorb people, eventually multiplying the group.

Part 1 – **Food and Fellowship**, 15-20 min

(Simple Stuff which can be picked up on the way there)

Part 2 – **Icebreaker** – a simple get-to-know-you exercise. (take two minutes to tell us about yourself)

Part 3 – 20-25 minutes. **Discussion** led by the Branch Leader. Focused on the Sunday Sermon or prophetic activity from Sunday's congregation meeting. (What was the message about? Which scripture was used? How can we apply it to our lives? Questions about what was said by the speaker?) Life application is the goal of this discussion, not a lecture.

Part 4 – balance of the 1 ½ hours - **Ministry to the new and unsaved**. Leader goes over the simple plan of "How to grow as a Christian." Explains how to get saved, water baptized and baptized in the Holy Spirit. Invites new and unsaved to get involved, heading them toward these basic experiences, praying for the BHS for example. Individual prayer needs are important, but can be done on Sunday mornings or through the intercessors.

