

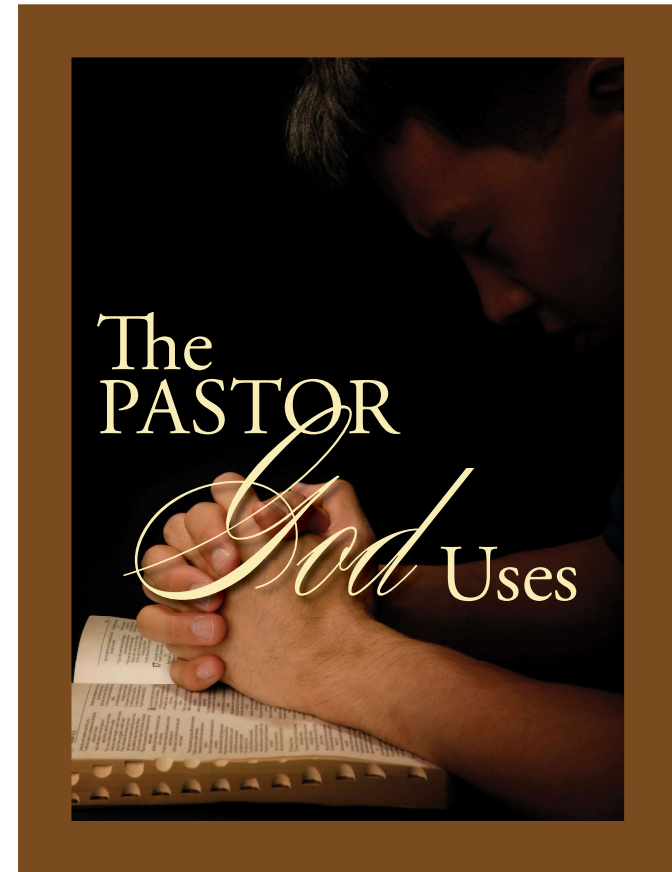
The Great Commission Missionary Institute

The Great Commission Missionary Institute is a practical instrument of Baptist associations, fellowships or churches to enlist and train large numbers of dedicated Christian workers to disciple and evangelize the unchurched people of their community and to open new work in unchurched communities.

Required Courses	Classes	Hours
Missions	<i>The Great Commission Is Personal</i>	6
Personal Ministry	<i>Your Little Flock Ministry</i>	6
Disciple Making	<i>Teach to Save Lives</i>	8
Discipleship	<i>First Steps in Christian Discipleship</i>	8
Church Planting, Growth	<i>The Church on the March</i>	9
Spiritual Basis of Ministry	<i>Spiritual Power</i>	6
Pastoral Leadership	<i>The Pastor God Uses</i>	6
Pastoral Ministry	<i>Pastoral Ministries in the Church*</i>	6
Biblical Homiletics	<i>Preach the Word</i>	10
Biblical Homiletics	<i>Dramatic Preaching, Stories of the Bible</i>	12
Christian Doctrine	<i>Doctrines of the Bible*</i>	12
Family	<i>Ministry to Families*</i>	9
Christian Leadership	<i>Dynamic Spiritual Leadership</i>	6
Christian Stewardship	<i>Your Prosperity Pleases God</i>	6
Elective Courses	(Listed separately)	12
	Total hours:	120

Certificates Offered

Certificate of Study First 60 hours
 Diploma of Missionary Preparation Final 60 hours



*A Practical Study of the Scriptures for One
 Who Pastors a Group, a New Work or a Church*

GREAT COMMISSION MISSIONARY INSTITUTE



"Every Community on Earth Deserves a New Testament Church"



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The Pastor *God* Uses

*A Practical Study of the Scriptures
For One Who Pastors
a Group, a New Work, or a Church*

Many distinguished books have already been written about the pastoral ministry. However, as the churches of the 21st Century move out into the world, the pastoral task has been given to many men and women who are starting new churches or who are leaders of permanent church groups meeting in homes. While the scale of their ministry may be smaller, the inter-personal depth may be greater. In traditional churches, it is common to think of one pastor with perhaps an associate or two. Fast-growing churches today count dozens, even hundreds, of consecrated workers who pastor the many small flocks that, together, make up the whole church. It is difficult to find practical guidance for people whom God calls to care for a new or a small flock, and much that is written has little application to the great number of servants of God who pastor such groups.

The study that follows was written for those who will pastor new congregations and also for many who pastor small groups belonging to the church. This book is to be studied by groups of such workers. The ideal teacher may be the senior pastor of the dynamic church that sends its people to pastor out in the fields. Certainly, a person with pastoral experience should be the best guide. However, the strength of this study will be found in the collective experience and wisdom of the group that examines the Scriptures together and responds to the many thoughts and questions they inspire.

Part One

Leading a New Testament Church

Hundreds of thousands of Christian churches dot the landscape of the Americas from Argentina to Alaska. The same is true of the vast regions of Africa, Europe, Asia and Oceania. While they may demonstrate great differences of culture and custom, they are Christian churches to the degree that Christ is their Head, their Redeemer and their central message.

**The High Call of Humble Pastors**

Churches of Jesus Christ are born of God, as men and women are touched by the Spirit of God to make disciples and gather them into congregations. This may be the organized work of strong Christian organizations, but more often it is the spontaneous work of ordinary men and women who have few of the world's resources and little backing from others. Like the shepherd, Moses, the leaders that arise are seldom those who looked for authority or responsibility over the Lord's flock. Most leaders of New Testament churches today were surprised by their call to leadership, but they find themselves put before people who look to them for guidance and leadership. They are called of God in the formation and growth of a church of Jesus Christ. Most of them have had little formal training for their task, and must scramble to train even as they lead. They have been given an opportunity that even the angels would envy, but the challenges are great and the perils are many. Most of the perils are internal dangers within their own minds and hearts due to their lack of knowledge and experience. They can all too easily lead in the wrong direction, for the wrong purposes, in the wrong ways.

The "school" for most who start churches is the sum of all the experiences they have had before in church and in the world, perhaps mixed with a modest measure of training. Because of these facts, those who lead in the creation of new churches should be eager learners in every level.

Their spiritual maturity will come first, because this will establish the essence of their ministry, whether it be a demonstration of God's love and wisdom or of human pride and cleverness. To be thrust into such important leadership easily swells pride that spoils all that will happen. King Saul is a typical example of one who began his leadership with timidity and fear only to swell up into a presumptuous and egocentric dictator. He permitted his natural attributes, the blessing of God on his work, and his people's praise to fill him with pride instead of humility.

Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall (Proverbs 16:18). David, the shepherd boy who became king, replacing Saul, wrote ***(God) regards the lowly, but the haughty he knows from afar*** (Psalm 138:6, RSV).



Now let us examine together major issues in one's development as a humble and wise pastor of a group of God's people who are gathered to Him and to one another. Many practical matters that face the starters of new congregations as well as the pastors of gigantic churches will be introduced, with wise counsel from God found in the Holy Scriptures. Much of what is found in this book will be helpful to those who lead permanent groups of people meeting in homes. Regardless of the nature of your pastoral ministry, you will be given a chance to respond to God's Word, examining your growing pastoral abilities.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church

King Saul's great error was to forget that God is the Lord and that Saul was simply His servant. Probably without even intending to do so, Saul was overlooking the ownership of God of the nation of Israel. Therefore, God could do nothing else but replace him with a man after His own heart.

NOTICE: In all the statements that follow the Bible texts, mark the answers you understand to be true. Some answers will be false, and help to understand errors that pastors may make. Be ready to defend your answer based on the Bible text. Then ask yourself to what measure you are living according to these answers.

He is the head of the body, the church (Colossians 1:18).

- Jesus is the head of the church both local and universal.
- The pastor is the real head of the local church.
- The church, including the pastor, is under the absolute rule of Christ.

I will build my church (Matthew 16:18).

- If the church is really the Lord's, He will build it.
- The Lord will build every organization that calls itself "church".
- The Lord must be the master builder of every church that is His.
- All those who work to build the church must follow the orders of the Master Builder.

Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain (Psalm 127:1).

- It is possible to work hard to build a church and still work in vain.
- The church is a spiritual creation that the Lord Himself must build.
- Although the Lord is the builder, He will use others in its construction.
- The pastor can be like a worker-foreman, under the orders of the Owner and Master Builder of the church.

Pastors Are Responsible to Others

Saul failed as king because he did not recognize God's right to expect his complete obedience. Nor did Saul pay close attention to Samuel, the man God gave to instruct the king. Rehoboam, son of Solomon and grandson of David, split the kingdom because he refused to listen to the wise men of Israel. No leader is so great that he or she does not have to pay close attention to those God puts over them or beside them for counsel and authority. The ultimate human authority in a New Testament church is that of all the members prayerfully meeting together, and a wise and successful pastor is one who acknowledges his responsibility to the church.

Those who start new work or who lead permanent Bible study groups of the church must also be careful to respect those who are in authority over them. A new congregation that is getting started and its leaders should respect the authority of the church and pastor who have sent the workers. Leaders of Bible study groups established by a church must respect the leadership and authority the pastor or other leaders that guide the general program of outreach. All should pray faithfully for those who have authority over them (Romans 13:2).

David was anointed to be king long before he was accepted as King of Israel. King Saul was foolish in many ways and would someday be replaced by David but David refused to revolt against the king or try to take his place (1 Samuel 26). Because David learned to be subject to authority, God prepared him to someday have great authority and become the great king of Israel. David learned how to use authority by respecting those who had authority over him. All church leaders, no matter what may be their position, are subject not only to God's authority but to the authority of others.



Part Two

Pastors Must Earn Authority

To be named as pastor of a church, a new work, or a church outreach group, implies a certain amount of authority as a recognized leader of the members and fellow workers. The pastor's authority, however, is never absolute, and must be backed up by his obedience to the principles of Scripture and the demonstration of Christ's love through his life. As the pastor grows in wisdom and as the congregation sees his wisdom mature, his authority to lead will grow. Pastoral authority is given by the church to a pastor who earns it by his attitude and his actions.

**The Pastor's Attitude**

As I was with Moses, so I will be with you, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go (Joshua 1:5b-7).

- God promises never to leave or forsake those He calls to lead His people.
- God tells His pastors to be strong and courageous because the people need such leaders to bring His people to full success.
- God knew Joshua would face many difficult problems. In the face of these, Joshua must be strong and courageous, trusting in God.
- Because God called him, Joshua could do whatever seemed best to him.
- God warned Joshua that he must obey the Word of God in all that he would do.
- Success would come even if Joshua were to be careless in his daily obedience to God.

A cheerful spirit is a good medicine, but a downcast spirit dries up the bones (Proverbs 17:22, RSV).

- Godly courage and faith produces a cheerful spirit.
- The pastor, as a leader, will try to avoid discouraging the congregation even when he may feel disappointment.
- The good pastor will never have a bad day or ever feel downcast.
- A cheerful pastor will help create a cheerful church.

He who gives heed to the word will prosper, and happy is he who trusts the Lord (Proverbs 16:20, RSV).

- The main source of the pastor's wisdom will be his constant attention to the Word of God.
- The happy pastor learns to depend on the Lord for all the good things that will happen in the congregation.
- The pastor who trusts the Lord will retain a happy spirit even when things seem to go wrong.
- As the pastor grows in wisdom and experience, his personal study of the Bible becomes less important.

He who walks with wise men becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm (Proverbs 13:20, RSV).

- To grow in wisdom, the pastor will make special friendships with wise members of the church and with other wise Christian leaders.
- The congregation and others take note of the quality of the pastor's closest friends and counselors.
- Wise friends strengthen a pastor in his growth; foolish friends will tend to bring him down.

Where do you find wise friends?

- among the church members.
- among other pastors and teachers.
- among teachers and students in pastoral training.
- in the community.
- in the family.

What are some of the things you are learning from them?

The Pastor's Actions

The attitude and spirit of the pastor are inevitably seen by the congregation and the community by his words and actions. Look at some of these:

As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax office; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him (Matthew 9:9, RSV).

Your opinion:

- Jesus invited Matthew to follow him and learn from him as he taught and set the example of how to minister.
- Jesus was too busy and too important to do the work of a missionary, going from town to town.
- People respond to leaders who will show them a practical example.

Paul wrote, ***I did not shrink for declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house*** (Acts 20:20, RSV).

- Paul preached on every Biblical subject that he felt was necessary for the believers, even on "hard" subjects when needed.
- Paul was careful to preach only evangelistic messages, so that everyone would believe.
- Paul was so important that he preached only to public gatherings.
- Paul set the example of teaching in many houses.



He who tills his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits has no sense (Proverbs. 12:11, RSV).

- My assignment is only as important as the effort I put into it.
- If I have a lot of ability, it does not matter if I cannot take much time to pastor my group or congregation.
- "Worthless pursuits" are activities that have little to do with my real purpose in life.
- My example as a hard worker inspires the members to be like me.
- My congregation's laziness may be inspired by what they see, or think they see, in my own example.
- As the farmer's land to be tilled is the area around him, the pastor's "land" is all the community in which he ministers.

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger... A hot tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention... He who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him (Proverbs 15:1, 18; 18:17, RSV).

- A soft answer demonstrates respect and caution.
- A real man of God will denounce whatever seems wrong, no matter how his words affect others.
- There are always two sides to any story--hear both sides before making any judgment.

He who meddles in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a passing dog by the ears (Proverbs 26:17, RSV).

- The pastor should try to straighten out all the conflicts between members of the congregation.
- A pastor wisely uses deacons and other church leaders to help resolve member-conflicts that affect the church.
- The pastor and the church are not called on by God to get involved in all the problems that may be found in families or among the church members.
- Bible study, preaching and good administration in the church should lead the whole church to act with maturity, avoiding quarrels.

He who keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble (Proverbs 21:23, RSV).

- The pastor gains respect by keeping confidential information to himself.
- The pastor is responsible to tell people everything that will interest them.
- Do not put your foot in your mouth, speak carefully and kindly.



He who commits adultery has no sense; he who does it destroys himself (Proverbs 6:32, RSV).

- This may have been a problem in Solomon's time, but it is not a problem among Christian leaders today.
- Sexual urges are overpowering; we cannot control ourselves.
- Good sense leads us to stay away from all immoral influences, such as pornography, lustful thinking, dirty talk, and dangerous "friendships."
- Many good things can come from an illicit sexual relationship.
- Whatever we sow, we will reap, and the harvest of immorality can be worse than death.
- As a pastor or Christian leader, my relationships with persons of the opposite sex are my own business.
- My immorality will not only destroy me, but will ruin many people who learn from me about God.

Abstain from all appearance of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22, KJV).

- I must not only avoid evil. I must not give the appearance of doing something that is wrong.
- A congregation should trust the pastor and not be concerned about appearances.
- Visits to a person of the opposite sex should be done accompanied by one's spouse or another person of reputation.
- As a pastor, I do better not to count or handle the offering. The offering should be counted and registered by two people.

Other moral failures have ruined the lives, the families and the ministries of many Christian leaders. These include such matters as theft, dishonesty, unpaid debts, grudge-bearing, disrespect for others and pride. Self-rule over the rule of Christ is the greatest danger, because it can lead to any one or all of these. This explains the wisdom and greatness of Paul's statement when he spoke of pride (the Big "I") in these terms:

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me (Galatians 2:20a).

Your opinions:

- By means of these words, Paul is saying:
- His self-centered life died when he gave himself to Christ.
- Paul was nailed to a cross just like Jesus was.
- With Paul's death to self-rule, Christ rules in his life, working through him.

Many books have been written on how to make the crucified life the reality of the pastor's life. It is the key to spiritual victory in the midst of every trial and temptation. Church Starts International offers for this purpose the study *Spiritual Power: The Spirit's Fullness in Your Life*. This is a practical textbook similar to the one you hold in your hands.

Part Three

The Mission Is Clear

It is not enough to simply start a church or to pastor a church. A church, as a group of people, can be used for many different things and a pastor is useful to God only as he leads the congregation to do what God has called it to do. This he accomplishes not simply by the different things he challenges the people to do, but by helping them to have their own vision of the true reason for the church.

**The Church Gets A Vision**

It is not enough for the pastor to announce to the congregation what will be done, because many members will then think, "That is fine. You do what you want to do, but it is not important to me." One of the greatest jobs of the pastor has is to help the members come to understand their mission as a congregation, as families and as individuals. After they understand their mission, they can work with the pastor in developing plans to fulfill the mission. Otherwise, the church can do many things but never really understand what is important and, therefore, never work with much purpose or accomplish much of importance.

Jesus tells us: ***As the Father has sent me, I am sending you*** (John 20:21).

- Jesus was sent by the Father into the world with a mission. The church and I have a similar mission.
- We are a people who are sent. That means we cannot stay where we are.
- It is enough that the church has all its meetings and takes care of its members.
- Jesus' mission determined his whole life; God's mission for us will determine our whole lives also.
- Jesus was sent to sacrifice Himself for the sake of the world, I am called to sacrifice myself for God's purposes and for the blessing of others.
- Jesus' sacrifice led to victory and the salvation of many. My sacrifice for Him should have the same kind of results.
- This verse refers only to the Apostles and not to us.

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you (Matthew 28:18-20).

- These last orders of Jesus were given only for those who go to other nations with the gospel.

- Jesus himself went into the world making disciples. He was the first living model of this mission.
- Jesus has authority in heaven, but he has no right to ask this of us who live in the world.
- Our job is to get out into the world and make disciples of people everywhere.
- Our main job is to have all the services and programs the members expect of a church.
- It is enough if we get people to make professions of faith.
- Our teaching should lead to nothing less than baptizing and training believers to do everything Christ commands.
- Christ made going out and making disciples the primary function of the church, of which all others are complementary.

How seriously do you take this Commission? How much of your time each week is spent going out into the world and making disciples there? How much effort is your church making to do what Christ commanded here? What practical steps can you and your congregation take to get on track?

The Church Makes Its Plans

Out of the church's understanding of its mission should come its plans for action. How does the church decide, in detail, what it will do? In many churches, the pastor, perhaps with a few other leaders, designs all the plans for the church. When this happens, many members of the church do not take the plans seriously, because they had nothing to do with them. On the other hand, the church looks to the leadership and guidance of its pastor and other leaders.

How can the church be led without simply being told what it should do? There are several basic steps:

(1) The church is led to determine its main purposes. All that it will plan to do should be related to those purposes, directly or indirectly. The pastor should constantly remind the church what it chose to be its purposes, and can use his messages to illustrate practical ways these purposes can be fulfilled. He begins to fill their minds with a vision of what they can do, and as they hear, they will have good ideas of their own.

(2) The church is led to list its goals. At least once a year, the pastor should gather the church and lead the members to talk about things they would like to see the church do in the coming year. It would be well to have a white board, and quickly write down each idea, understanding that not all ideas can be used in just one year's time. If the pastor has talked about possible ministries in his messages, many members will mention some of those. Others will suggest other ideas, some of which will be very helpful. People are most likely to do what they themselves have thought of and suggested.



(3) Then the pastor and other leaders of the church study the list and select the most useful ideas that were given and begin to make plans on how to put them into practice during the year. Plans should include how to organize people for the job, details of what is to be done with clear goals, and a calendar. Then the pastor and other leaders can gather the church and show what came of all the ideas, and ask the church's approval. This brings all the church together as a team and makes it far easier to enlist people to do their part than if only the pastor or a few leaders made all the decisions.

Plans are established by counsel; by wise guidance wage war (Proverbs 20:18, RSV).

- The pastor should make all the plans for the church.
- The wiser the pastor is the more he will consult with others in the development of plans.
- Asking the opinion of others is to confess one's own weakness.
- The growing church will provide the pastor with wise counselors.
- The more the congregation can be involved in helping to make the plans, the more the members will work and give to make these plans come true.

The church is the greatest hope the community has to come to know Christ, serve him, and be blessed by God. It is the most important organization in any place in the world. It is Christ's representative and example to the people. It has the great task of living and proclaiming the gospel, through preaching, teaching and ministries of compassion. Jesus expressed his mission to the world, and to each community of the world, in these words:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor (Luke 4:18-19).

- The work of Christ must be the work of the Holy Spirit within us.
- This work is, first of all, to announce, to explain, to teach the good news of the gospel to those who are impoverished without it.
- Prisoners of sin and every kind of evil should be shown the freedom Jesus, the King and Savior, offers.
- Spiritual blindness can be overcome by Christ's message.
- The message and Spirit of Christ releases the people from their overbearing sense of oppression.
- The people need to know all the theories of how the world will end.
- The message is urgent, because the time of God's favor is now; Christ has come to us and we must come to him.



Part Four

The Church Is Organized to Work

When the congregation is new and very small, the few workers are involved in everything and the pastor may be the only leader. As the congregation grows, however, the leadership must be shared because the pastor cannot do it all and other workers should take on different jobs that need their special leadership.

Moses spoke to Israel, as that great people began to take form as a nation. ***May the Lord, the God of your fathers, make you a thousand times as many as you are, and bless you, as he has promised you! How can I bear alone the weight and burden of you and your strife? Choose wise, understanding, and experienced men, according to your tribes, and I will appoint them as your heads. And you answered me, "The thing that you have spoken is good for us to do"*** (Deuteronomy 1:11-14, RSV).

- Moses' great goal was for Israel to grow as a great nation under God.
- Moses' ambition was to be the only recognized leader.
- Moses realized that a growing nation would need many good leaders.
- Moses recognized that the people were given to strife and needed many wise leaders to govern them and to resolve problems.
- Moses did not care much about the quality of the other leaders that were to be chosen, lest they compete with him.
- Moses established high standards for the leaders the people were to choose.
- Moses, by his own example, set a high standard for leadership in the nation.
- Moses plan was approved by the people before it was put into effect.

The organization of Israel was naturally based on the 12 tribes that formed the nation. The organization of a church will be based naturally on the work it will do, using wise leadership that the Lord gives it. If a young congregation has few experienced and wise leaders, its organization should be simple, using only those who are qualified.

As the church grows, additional wise leaders will become available and a larger organization will be needed. The pastor and the church should agree about how the church will be organized, both at the beginning and later, as the church has more members.

"It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty... And what they said pleased the whole multitude and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and..." (Acts 6:2- 3,5, RSV).

- The Apostles realized they were too busy with their preaching and teaching ministries to also do what became the work of the deacons.
- The Apostles picked out seven men to do the job.
- The Apostles had the multitude to pick out the seven men from among themselves.



- The Apostles set the standards for the new workers, regarding their reputations, their Spiritual lives and their wisdom.
- The church membership unanimously agreed to the idea.

If the church takes seriously its mission to go out into the world and make disciples, it will organize to do this. It will also need to organize for the internal work of the church for all that goes on inside the church. Most churches know much about organizing for the internal work of the church, but perhaps very little about how to organize for the outreach work of the church. Therefore, rather than beginning with the internal organization of the church, let us consider first the external organization. The better we are organized for our work outside the church, the lighter will be our load within the church.

The External Organization of the Church

Today, all across the world, there are churches that are reaching multitudes of people, literally fulfilling the Great Commission and going out into the communities, teaching the lost.

When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. ...After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others, and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest. Go! I am sending you..." (Luke 9:1-2, 10:1-3).

- Jesus called and trained 12 men whom he could send out to fulfill the ministry in many places.
- Twelve men were not enough. Jesus later appointed another 72, who represented six teams of 12 men, each team probably under the leadership of a pair of Apostles.
- The greatest work of the church is what takes place in the church building.
- The greatest work of the church is to train men and women to scatter out into the community and world to minister for Christ.
- The lost world is like a great field ready to be harvested.
- The great need of the harvest field is more workers.
- Those who pray for more workers may be the first workers the Lord will send out.

Rocks. Great Commission churches are those that train teams and send them out to teach in their communities. This is the basis of the strategy of Church Starts International and what we have come to call "the Church on the March." All those who teach and work out in the community are members of outreach groups we call "Rocks." Others call these "Groups of Twelve." Fast-growing churches are built upon their Rocks, Christ being the cornerstone. Each Rock meets weekly under its leader for prayer and encouragement. The leader of the first Rock is usually the pastor of the church.

The members pray for one another and for the people they are discipling out in the community. The workers of a Rock may disciple a number of individuals or families as well as to teach several permanent Bible study groups in the community. As individuals are saved, they are invited to become a part of the Rock and participate in the teaching ministry of the church. When a Rock has more than 12 members, a new Rock must be formed. The pastor must approve the leaders of new Rocks that are formed. The leaders of the different Rocks meet together with the pastor each week to give reports and to help plan special church activities that will attract the people who are being reached out in the community.

The Rocks are, therefore, groups of Christians who spread out each week to teach the Bible in the community. The teachers of these groups are responsible to their Rock leaders. As those who are taught the Bible receive Christ and show a commitment to him, they are invited by their teacher to visit the teacher's Rock and consider becoming a member of it.

The teacher will also offer to personally disciple those who receive Christ, and will prepare them for baptism. The Rock will care for the new Christians spiritually and will also show them how to immediately start discipling family and friends, teaching *People Who Knew Jesus*. The Rock will ask each of its new members to help one of the teachers and, in time, to become a teacher of one or more new groups. The Rock is the church's tool to develop young Christians and to turn them into active workers in the community.

Friendship Groups and Personal Disciple-Making. Members of the Rocks teach Bible in the community in two different ways. Mostly, they will gather neighbors together for a special meeting in one of the neighbor's homes (not a Baptist home) dealing with an interesting life issue. Some of the interesting subjects offered are *Stress Survivors*, *Overcoming Loneliness*, *Courtship & a Happy Marriage* for couples, *True Beauty* for women, *Popularity That Inspires* for Young People, *Men of Character* for men, and many other similar themes. When the group of friends gathers, they are led in a discussion of the promised subject using a Bible story as the basis of the study.

These studies are all interactive, inviting everyone to participate and to express their opinions, answering questions based on the story. The teacher will be a friend and serve as a caring pastor of each member of the group. If the group liked the first study, they are invited to take the remaining five lessons. When they have finished six lessons, they are bonded as a group and almost always want to continue as a permanent group, which we call "Friendship groups."

The second way that Rock members may teach the Bible in the community is by going straight to family members, friends or small groups and offer to teach them *People Who Knew Jesus* (six lessons from John) and earn a certificate and a New Testament as a part of what we call the National Bible Reading Campaign.



This study, possibly followed by *Faith Power* (six lessons from Acts) helps to bring people to Christ, to join a Friendship Group and/or to start attending the church. We call this "personal disciple-making." This kind of teaching can be done by new Christians.

There are new Baptist congregations today that teach hundreds of people in these two ways out in the community. It is no surprise that these become the fastest growing churches in the area.

Prepare your work outside, get everything ready for you in the field; and after that build your house (Proverbs 24:27, RSV).

- The first work of the pastor of a new work is to prepare the work out in the community from which the members will come.
- The first work of the mission pastor is to get everything ready for worship services.
- After a good work has been started in the community, the pastor should give attention to the "house", the gathered congregation that is being brought in from the community.

The Internal Organization of the Church

If the church has a very active program outside its building, it will normally have a lighter program within. For example, the leaders of the Rocks and the different neighborhood Bible teachers who belong to the Rocks will be mainly responsible for the spiritual care of those who attend the Bible study groups and who are members of the Rocks. The Rock leaders and the pastor work together much as do the pastor and deacons in our more traditional system. A new church may choose to recognize the Rock leaders as deacons and may or may not choose other deacons who do not lead Rocks. The members of the church must be constantly cared for. In a church that reaches out, this pastoral care is given, first, by the teachers of each Friendship group, secondly, by the leaders of each Rock, and, in the most difficult cases, by the pastor himself.

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock (Acts 20:28-29).

- Paul challenges the "elders" who were each in charge of a house group of believers in Ephesus, to first watch over their own faith and testimony.
- A growing church needs many who will be shepherds of flocks.
- Paul's words are only to the head pastor of the church in Ephesus.
- "Shepherds" are needed to protect the sheep from savage wolves that would divide and scatter the sheep.

As the pastor and workers of the church disciple and win people in the community, attention must also be given to everything that will happen in gathering the growing church for worship. The church must be structured to care for its worship program. This program should be subject to the pastor's decisions, but may consist of a worship team under a pastor-approved leader. In a beginning congregation, the pastor-leader may need

to do everything. As the church grows, gifted musicians, Bible readers, and able leaders should help prepare each worship service and then lead the church in it. The pastor should approve all that is done, and determines what will be the emphasis of each service. This emphasis is decided by the theme of the message he will preach. This affects the songs and hymns to be chosen, the prayers that are lifted to God, and Bible reading that might be given.

If the church is teaching Bible to its many adults and young people out in the community, it may reserve Sunday school for teaching the children during the time of the worship services. Many churches will also offer adult and youth Bible classes on Sunday, especially for members who are not participating in the Bible studies out in the community.

The Rocks should meet weekly for prayer, each one under its leader. If it is convenient for them, the Rocks may meet in the church building at the same time others are in a weekly church prayer meeting. Rock members should be excused from the church prayer meeting to be able to meet as small prayer groups.

The pastor's position is the most essential for the leadership of a church. In new work and small churches, he may be bi-vocational, depending more on outside work than the ministry for his financial support. However, as soon as the congregation begins to take form, it should start giving faithful financial support to the pastor. He may prefer not to receive it, but should do so, setting an example to the church for other pastors who will follow him.

The pastor should not be in charge of the financial affairs of the church. Where this happens, many have the idea that the church is the "business" of the pastor, and may think the pastor serves the church for the money given. Each church needs a treasurer and a recording secretary to be responsible for the church's finances and to record the decisions of the church that determine how those finances are to be administered. Large churches often employ office help to assist the pastor and the church officers in their work.

The deacons may or may not include the leaders of the Rocks. They, like those in Acts 6, should be men of good repute, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. Many churches likewise elect women as deaconesses, although this is an issue on which churches hold different views.

The deacon body is not the government of a New Testament church. The important decisions of the church, such as the choice of its leaders and how it will use its income should always be done by the entire congregation, as is seen in Acts 6. The deacons, following the pastor, give leadership to the church, watch over its testimony and doctrinal integrity. In harmony with the pastor, the deacons may make helpful recommendations to the church, always respecting the church's decisions. The deacons help the pastor as wise counselors, speaking for the concerns of the church and helping to identify its special needs. When deacons show maturity and labor lovingly with the pastor, they bring honor to themselves and strength to the pastoral ministry.



Part Five

The Stewardship Of Time

Of all that God has given us, time is the most important. That is because time is nothing less than the measurement of our lives on earth. Every one of us is mortal, which means that our time will finally run out and perhaps sooner than we expect. What we do with our time is another way of expressing what we will do with our lives.



Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of the time... (Ephesians 5:15-16 RSV).

- Our "walk" is measured by time.
- How we use our time indicates whether we are wise or unwise.
- As a free spirit, I can use time anyway I choose.
- Time is short and precious. Therefore, I must make the most of it.

Time for God

Every Christian, and certainly every Christian leader must make time every day for communion with God. God should be the first to speak, and this certainly happens when one reads through the Bible on a daily basis. It is wise to have a Bible for reading and study, in which you can underline important verses and even write questions or observations in the margins. This might be an inexpensive paper-backed Bible of an easily understood version. As God speaks, write down things you believe He is telling you to do this day. Then, talk to God, answering His commands and presenting to Him your requests. Keep a written list of your requests and testify to others about the ways He responds to them. Encourage others to seek God and to pray to Him daily, so their lives will become God-centered.

In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation (Psalm 5:3).

- David began his day with God, even as Jesus did.
- Self-confidence should eliminate the need of much prayer.
- God's servants look to the Lord and wait in expectation of his leadership and blessing.
- Devotional time is an opportunity to present your requests to God.

Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness; because of my enemies make straight your way before me (Psalm 5:8).

Your opinions:

- Devotional time gives God an opportunity to lead us in his holy plan for the day.
- My worst enemy may be my self-centered tendencies.
- My own chosen path can be twisted, God's path is straight.

**Time for Others**

When we were lost, all our time was basically for ourselves. When we gave ourselves to the Lord, He changed our hearts so we could love others as never before and give ourselves for them. As we give ourselves to the service of others, we not only learn to love God more and more. We enjoy our own lives much more because they are filled with love and joy, which is the fruit of our selfless obedience.

Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Matthew 20:26-28).

- Personal greatness is measured by our taking time to serve others.
- Jesus set the example of selfless service to others.
- True greatness belongs to those who dedicate their lives to self-interest.
- Those who serve as pastors model the loving life of Jesus to those who they serve.

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever (1 Timothy 5:8, RSV).

Your opinions:

- Paul is only writing about our provision of money, and not about the time and attention we owe our family.
- A pastor can give self to save the world, but lose his own family by neglect.
- A pastor's care of his family is a sermon to the members of the group or congregation about their care of their own families.
- A pastor is justified in failing his family so long as he cares well for the church.

If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church (1 Timothy 3:5)?

- The pastor is not only a friend and counselor to his family, but is also a manager of the family.
- Godly leadership in the family is evidence of leadership ability in the church.
- God proposes to take care of the church independent of anything the pastor may do.

Be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them (Deuteronomy 4:9).

- Like Israel, you are never to forget what God has shown you and the way He has led you.
- Your experience with God has little to do with your children.
- Your children are your most important "congregation" you must carefully teach them the ways of the Lord.

Look and see, there is no one at my right hand; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one cares for my life. (Psalm 142:4).

Your opinions:

- This sense of loneliness and abandonment is something felt by many people.
- This person shouldn't feel this way--God cares for him.
- God places pastoral workers in the world to care for those who are lost or feel abandoned.
- Caring for people means giving them time and loving attention.
- We do not need to listen to others, we only need to preach to them.

Diligence

As sluggard's appetite is never filled, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied. (Proverbs 13:4). **One who is slack in his work is brother to one who destroys** (Proverbs 18:9).

- Lazy people do not hope for prosperity.
- Even lazy people have hopes and ambitions, but are defeated by their inaction.
- If one's vision is great enough, God will surely fulfill it, no matter what the person may or may not do.
- A slacker pastor can destroy a congregation or a group by inaction.

Wealth hastily gotten will dwindle, but he who gathers little by little will increase it (Proverbs 13:11 RSV).

Your opinions:

- God will surely give fast results to any leader who has faith.
- Sudden prosperity in the work may be a passing thing.
- Solid, lasting work is accomplished one step at a time.

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might (Ecclesiastes 9:10a).

- Christian workers must give of their best to any task they accept.
- If our faith is enough, we don't need to strain to do our best.
- The pastor can take it easy so long as others are doing what they should do in the ministry of the church.

Planning and Working

In every task, we first plan what we will do and then we do it. The greater the task, the more planning is needed. Planning, however, is never a substitute for action. Every task of the group or the congregation requires adequate planning. In addition, there should be an annual plan placed on the calendar. This, of course, includes the special holidays, and also should include special emphases of the church. Before the church year begins, the church should have a definite time to prepare its plans, to elect its leaders, and to plan its budget.



Special emphases may be planned for different parts of the year. These may include some or all of the following: family life, youth, children, men, women, community activities, Bible conferences, special evangelistic efforts, Christian music, dramas, etc. These will not be done successfully unless the church year has been planned well before the year began.

Which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him (Luke 14:28-29, RSV).

- Jesus thought it was unspiritual to carefully plan ahead.
- Planning should consider the use of time, of personal effort and of finances, all of which are limited and must be carefully used.

In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to want (Proverbs 14:23, RSV)

- Planning is profitable only to the degree that it leads to real work.
- Work gives results; planning that is unrealistic is a waste of time.
- If our plans are inspired, God will carry them out.

The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty (Proverbs 21:5).

- The diligent are more likely to carry out a plan than those who may have large dreams but tend to be lazy or careless.
- If one works hard enough, there is little need to plan ahead.
- Get rich quick plans usually lead to poverty rather than wealth.
- Profitable planning requires patient effort.

A man's mind plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps (Proverbs 16:9, RSV).

Your opinions:

- A spiritual man does not plan what he will do.
- Prayerful planning is needed, but God may change your course at any time.
- If a plan is well made and approved by the church, don't let anything change what you are doing.

Part Six

The Pastor Who Works With God

When the great ones in the Old Testament, men like Abraham, Moses, Isaiah and Jeremiah, responded to God's call to serve Him for the sake of the people, they became partners with God in the great work He would do. That truth is as real today as it was so many centuries ago. The call to pastor the Lord's flock, be it small or large, is the highest call one can receive, and it is to be a partner with God.

**We are laborers together with God** (1 Corinthians 3:9 KJV).

- Paul marveled that his work and that of Apollos was a work done hand in hand with God Himself as well as with one another.
- Paul and Apollos were laborers, hard workers, in partnership with God.
- If God will build the church, we do not have to worry about working hard ourselves.

Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:4-5).

- As a pastor and a man of God, I no longer need to depend on Jesus Christ.
- I need to watch and see that I do not become distant from Christ.
- I will never accomplish anything of eternal value apart from the work of Jesus Christ in me.
- The amount of fruit I will bear in my lifetime will depend on the strength of my relationship to Christ.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other. (John 15:16-17).

- I am a volunteer, Christ's call has little to do in my case.
- Jesus chose me for ministry and he also appointed me to go forth and bear fruit that will last for eternity.
- Apart from Christ, I may seem to accomplish much, but none of that will last forever.
- My work in the ministry is now more important than prayer.
- My close relationship to Christ enables God to abundantly answer my prayers for that which God is doing in and around me.
- Of all my responsibilities, none is more important than my love for those I am sent to serve.

As it is written, "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:31, NASB).

- Sometimes I do so well that I cannot help but brag a little.
- If it looks like I have done something really important, I know that it is the work of God, and I will brag about Him.

The Pastor's Challenge From God

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15).

- God is the Lord of my life. I seek His approval in everything I do.
- The Lord approves of what is my very best.
- My special work has to do with the handling of the word of truth.
- The Bible is sometimes useful to me in my ministry.

Set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity (1 Timothy 4:12).

- There are special times I try to set a good example.
- In everything I do or say, I must set a good example.
- What I say and how I say it is important as an example to others, and not simply for the message I may be delivering.
- The way I live and the degree to which I love others have powerful effects in the lives of others.
- Every now and then I need to use worldly expressions to show that I am "one of the guys."

Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions (Matthew 24:45-47).

- The faithful and wise servant is seen here as the one who provides "food" for his fellow servants.
- The faithful and wise servant is seen here primarily as the one who tells all the others what they are to do.
- Jesus reminds us that he comes and sees how we are treating our fellow servants.
- The faithful servant will be given great privileges, now and in eternity.



I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

- Paul closed his life and ministry with shouts of victory.
- How I finish my life is not important. What is more important is what I am doing right now.
- The Lord waits until the end to award me the prize He has prepared for me.

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15:58).

- The Lord is most pleased with enthusiasm, even if it comes and goes.
- What counts most is a firm dedication to the Lord and to the great work He permits me to do.
- Even with the discouragements that may come, I can be absolutely sure that my labor in the Lord is worth it.

Know that your work in the Lord is never in vain!

