

New Testament Values

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		Page
Lesson 1	The importance of the right values	1
Lesson 2	The New Testament church model	4
Lesson 3	The position of the local church	7
Lesson 4	The nature of the church	10
Lesson 5	The church must follow the ways of God	14
Lesson 6	The priesthood of all believers	18
Lesson 7	The motive for all activities in the church	22
Lesson 8	In all nations make disciples of Jesus	25
Lesson 9	Planting of New Testament churches	29

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The importance of the right values

Lesson 1

A. What are they?

1. Biblical values are guidelines, which give strength and direction to the life and fellowship of God's people.
2. They are the God-given building blocks with which to raise up New Testament church life throughout the nations of the world.
3. Biblical values will form the embankments of the life giving river of Divine truths and genuine spiritual life.
4. Biblical values protect God's people from going astray into error and dead religion.
5. Biblical values have the greatness to form the right foundation for the growth of any God-given vision.
Matthew 7:24-25, "... a wise man, who built his house on the rock ..."

B. Biblical values should form the "backbone" – the very nature of the church

1. Values are not rules or laws.

They should be the very nature of the church; the thing we stand on, love and treasure, to the point that we are willing to lay down our lives to uphold these Divine truths.

2. Biblical values must be completely integrated into our vision.

- a) Our vision must not be limited by human, denominational or cultural limitations.
- b) Our vision must be completely free to follow Biblical values.
- c) Jesus said: "... I will build My church ..." Matthew 16:18. So we are not free to do what we like, only His words, as the "architect" must be followed.
- d) Dudley Daniel says: "Freedom is to serve God the way He wants".

Values and vision must be completely integrated

3. Our value system must be radically Word based.

- a) Not just Word based where it suits us, and neglected where it does not suit our traditions.

- b) As someone has said: “It is the whole Bible plus nothing more ... but also the whole Bible minus nothing”.
- c) The Apostle Paul’s statement: Acts 20:27, “*I have not hesitated to preach to you the whole counsel of God*”.
- d) Moses’ warning to God’s people of old: Deuteronomy 4:1-4, “*You shall not add to the word which I commanded you, nor take away from it*”.
- e) Jesus’ warning to the religious leaders of the day: Mark 7:13, “*You make the Word of God of no effect through your traditions*”.

Illustration: If we employ a building team to work, we would never accept it if they did not follow the given plan. neither will God!

- f) A serious warning: Revelation 22:18-19, “*If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the book of life*”.

This refers to the book of Revelation, but God is serious about **all** of His Word.

4. A value system for church life demands a whole Bible theology on church; both local and trans-local. (Which must contain its message, its mandate and its mission.)

a) **The message of the church:**

- i) Christ:
1 Corinthians 2:2, “*I have determined not to know of anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified*”.

In Christ is everything for time and eternity.

Colossians 1:19, “*For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven*”.

- ii) The message of the Kingdom of God:
Matthew 4:17 – The preaching of Jesus: “*The Kingdom of God is near*”. Because the King of Kings came to rescue people out of the kingdom of Satan.

Matthew 10:7. It was Jesus’ command to His disciples to preach the same message of the Kingdom, and to demonstrate its power.

Acts 19:8. The New Testament church continued the same message about the Kingdom.

Acts 28:23. Paul uses both Moses and the Prophets to explain about the Kingdom and the King.

b) **The mandate of the church:**

Go into all the world:

- This is a command from Jesus to His church. Matthew 28:19.
- In John 20:21 there is a clear word from Jesus on how we are sent: “*As the Father sent Me so I send you*” – how was Jesus sent by the Father? ... Jesus was sent to the whole world. John 3:16 “*For God so loved the world, that He sent His only begotten Son ...*”
- God’s concern for the nations of the world is clear right from the beginning: Genesis 12:1-3. To Abraham God said, if you will obey Me, then – “*In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed*”.
- In Isaiah 56:7 God says: “*My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations*”.
Jesus confirms the same in Mark 11:17 – “*a house of prayer for all nations*”.
- These were the very last words that Jesus said before He left for heaven: “*...to the end of the world*”.

c) **The mission of the church: Matthew 28:20.**

- i) Make people become disciples of Jesus ... not just converts.
People born again by the Spirit, John 3:7 ... not just church adherents.
- ii) “Teach them to observe all things that I have commanded you”.
- iii) It is perfectly clear that Jesus expects us to lead people from all nations into a brand new life, where they are well equipped for life and service for Him.
And that is also the model that we have from the early church.
2 Corinthians 5:17.
- iv) We are expected to plant new churches with these radical new converts.
Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5.
- v) Some of these churches will grow up to become base-churches, so strong that they can carry a great trans-local work:
 - The Antioch church. Acts 13:1-3.
 - The Jerusalem church. Acts 15:22.
 - The Ephesus church. Acts 19:10.
- vi) These churches will train, equip and release people into new ministries.
1 Timothy 4:12-16; 2 Timothy 2:2.

**The value system must be word based and cover a complete
Biblical Theology**

The New Testament church model

Lesson 2

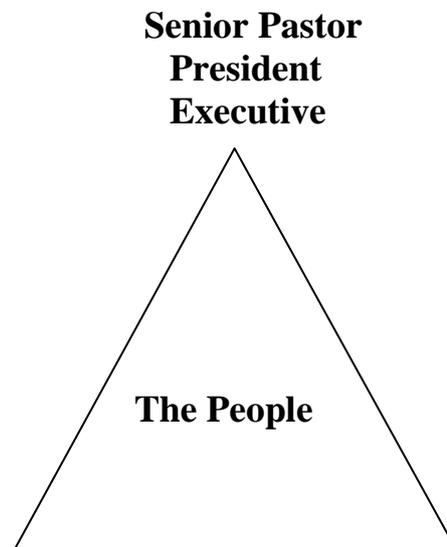
A. Introduction

It is of the utmost importance that we follow the Biblical church model, because without it we will never be able to fulfil the great task of reaching every nation for Jesus, and planting living churches in every town and village of the world.

The importance of using the right Biblical church model

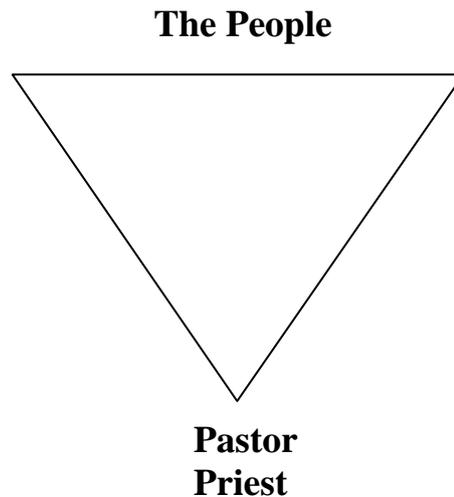
B. Two non-Biblical models, used throughout church history to this day:

1. The “superstar” model:



- This church model can create a power struggle and can lead to a dictatorial system, where one person is so powerful and untouchable that he can hold the church in bondage or lead it astray into wrong practises. This is not the model we find in the New Testament.
- It can also lead to extreme pressure and loneliness for the leading person and can sometimes cause burn out.
- For unprotected leaders there is also the danger of falling into temptation in one of the following areas: “*Worth – wealth – women*”. Because of his elevated position, where no one can touch him, he will continue in his ministry in spite of a fall.
- Sometimes a senior pastor, together with a few co-pastors, or an eldership, sits in such an elevated position. This can make it easier and can be a way of protecting the person at the top, but it is still not the right Biblical model.

2. **The congregational model:**



- This model is a democratic system, where all the members are leading the local church using a system of voting. The pastor is an employed person and at the mercy of the members.
- The pastor is the person who has to do all the work, because he is employed and paid by the members for this purpose.
- The pastor must be careful to please the members; otherwise he could lose his job.
- The congregational model is not the one we find in the New Testament.

3. **The Apostolic / Prophetic model:**



- a) **The Biblical church model:** *(This model is lying flat, indicating great relationships in loving submission to the God-given leadership, all pointing towards the great commission of Christ.)*
- The Apostolic/Prophetic model is the God-given system. The word says:
“He Himself gave us some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for their ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ”.
Ephesians 4:11.

- It was the model followed by the early church.
 - The fivefold ministry. Ephesians 4:11-16.
The task of these five ministries is to train and equip all the believers for their ministry and to build up the Body of Christ.
- b) It is God's plan that the church should be led by Him (Theocracy). That is why the apostolic/prophetic is the right church model, because the apostolic and prophetic ministries are revelation ministries, through which God can reveal His will and plan and lead His work forward.
- Ephesians 3:5, *"God's mystery now been revealed to His holy Apostles and prophets"*.
 - Acts 13:4, *"So being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia"*.
 - Acts 16:6, *"They were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them"*.
- c) The Apostolic / Prophetic ministry. Ephesians 2:19-22; Ephesians 3:5.
These two ministries have a special responsibility for creating a solid word based foundation for expanding the Kingdom throughout the world, according to God's guidance through revelation by the Spirit. (It could be prophetic.)
- "Now you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of apostle and prophets with Jesus Christ as the Chief cornerstone"*.
- d) The foundation of every local church and of every individual believer in the local church must include:
- Jesus Christ the Chief cornerstone. Ephesians 2:19-20.
 - The word of God in all its fullness. Matthew 7:24.
 - The foundation of apostles and prophets. Ephesians 2:19-20.
- e) These three points form the correct, but also the most powerful, foundation for any local church, to enable it to fulfil its calling to reach its Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, even to the end of the world.

The position of the local church

Lesson 3

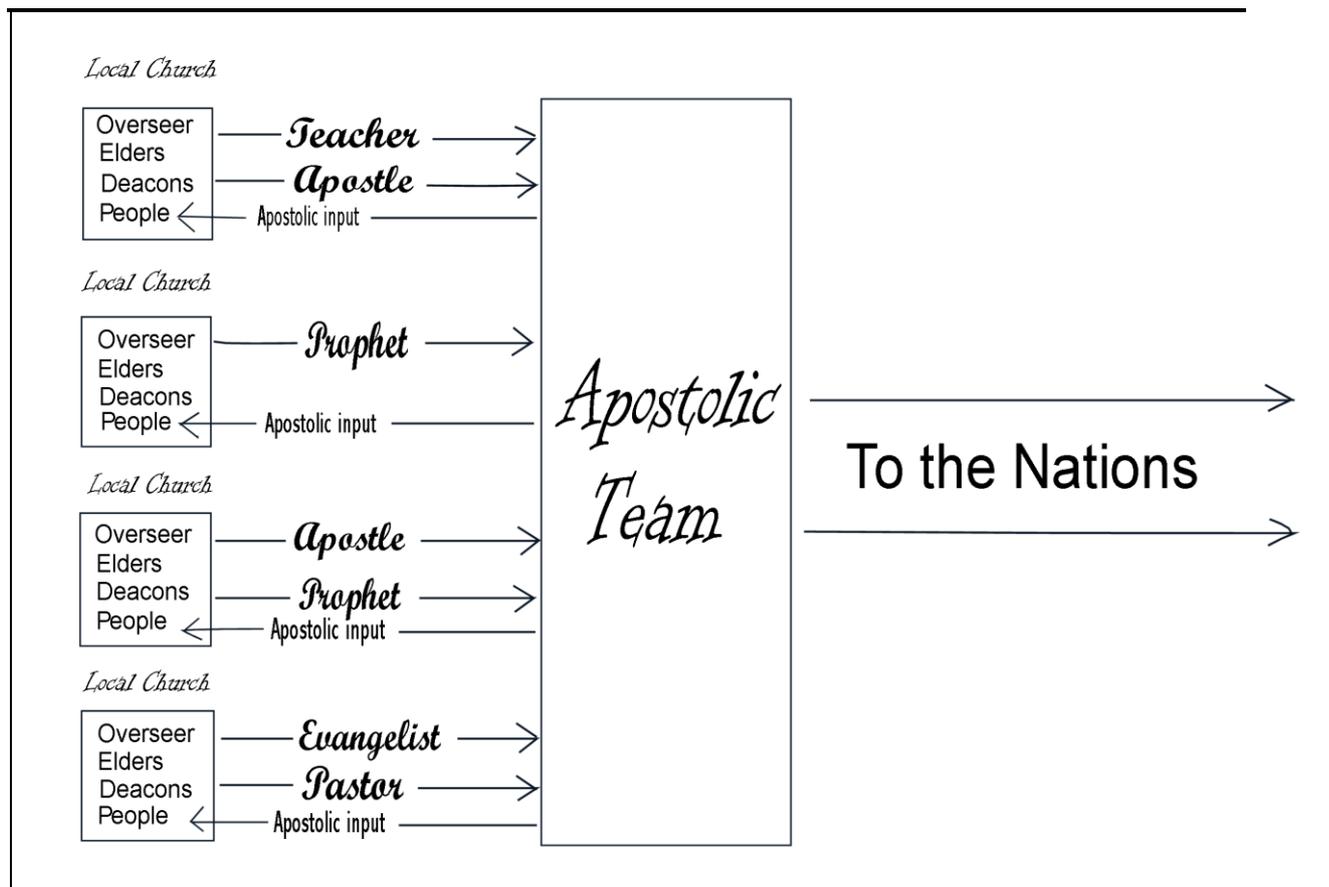
A. Introduction

The New Testament gives us a clear picture of how God intended the local church to function in relation to the apostolic ministry team, which is mainly trans-local and is called to extend the Kingdom of God throughout the world. Also, how the apostolic team should relate to any new church they plant as well as to the base-church they belong to. It is important that we follow the New Testament pattern, so that we can also experience the same power as they had and be as effective as they were.

B. How did the New Testament church function?

Every local church, while retaining its autonomy must relate strongly to an Apostolic / Prophetic team

The New Testament Church model



1. The local church leadership.

- a) An Elder and Deacon team leads the local church.
The New Testament has three words in Greek for elder and they are translated as:

- i) Overseer.
- ii) Shepherd.
- iii) Elder.

These three words are used about the same group of people that were leading the church of Ephesus, and they indicate the leading, caring role of the elders' ministry. Acts 20:17-28.

- b) The word "overseer" indicates that among them one will be the team leader or the Lead-elder.
- c) This team, together with the deacon team, are leaders in their own local church, and don't have any leadership role in other local churches in the area. 1 Peter 5:2, "*Shepherd the flock which is among you*" – *or in your place*.
- d) In their own local church, they are the final and autonomous leadership in any matter concerning that assembly --- **BUT** ----

Willingly they choose to co-operate with an Apostolic/Prophetic team. They must invite them in for:

- Doctrine
- Reproof
- Correction
- Revelation
- Equipping of the local church
- Appointment of leading ministries
- Discipline (*if the local leadership cannot handle it*)
- For friendship and support
- Other major things

- e) Each local church should have a world vision and be involved both locally and trans-locally, by praying for apostolic teams, by letting local members join a team as a support member who can come back to the local church with an exciting report. Luke 10:17.

2. The trans-local team.

- a) The five ministries mentioned in Ephesians 4:11 have been given to the whole Church by Christ Himself and should be recognised and accepted by the church.
- b) Their main task is to extend the Kingdom of God to every nation, by planting healthy local churches in every town and village, and equipping God's people everywhere.

- c) The apostolic team is fully responsible for any newly planted church until they can appoint a local leadership. Then the full responsibility is passed over to them. The local leadership should keep a warm, ongoing relationship with this apostolic team.
- d) The apostolic team does not automatically have a say in the local church, not even the ones they have planted themselves, but the local leadership does have an obligation before God to honour, respect and make use of the apostolic team members.
 - i) In Acts 19:8 we see how Paul, with his team, reached the whole province of Asia, and in 2 Timothy 1:15 Paul complains that everyone in Asia has turned against him.
 - ii) The church of Galatia also seems to want to go its own way and Paul, in a letter, tries to correct them. Galatians 3:1.
 - iii) In 2 Corinthians 11:5-15 it seems that the church of Corinth, which was planted by Paul's team, also wants to close the door to him.
 - iv) In 3 John 9 the apostle John writes against a spirit, which has risen in the local church, which wants to reject him.
 - v) All this, of course, is not the right attitude from the local church, but it proves that in the early church the local assembly was autonomous.
- e) In 1 Corinthians 3:10 Paul refers to the Apostolic team as "Master builders" and God has wisely placed different ministry gifts in the team to build His spiritual house throughout the world.

A normal building team would not be effective if they were all bricklayers, but a full team of different gifts and skills is needed to achieve the end result. Just so, for a spiritual building team to function effectively, we need apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.

- f) It is not so difficult to see how the apostle, prophet, evangelist and teaching ministry can be trans-local in planting and developing new churches, but how does the Pastoral ministry fit into this team? Is this not a very local ministry?

Well a fivefold pastor has been given the mandate to equip others in the ministry of shepherding, which is an important part of the local elder's ministry. 1 Peter 5:1-2.

- g) In these trans-local teams wives and other local members can take part as a support group who will then, on their return, report and excite the local church. 1 Corinthians 9:5; 2 Corinthians 1:1.
- h) When the members of the apostolic team return to their base church, they will once again slot in as part of the local leadership team until such time as they leave on a new mission journey. Acts 14:26-28; 1 Peter 5:1.

The nature of the Church

Lesson 4

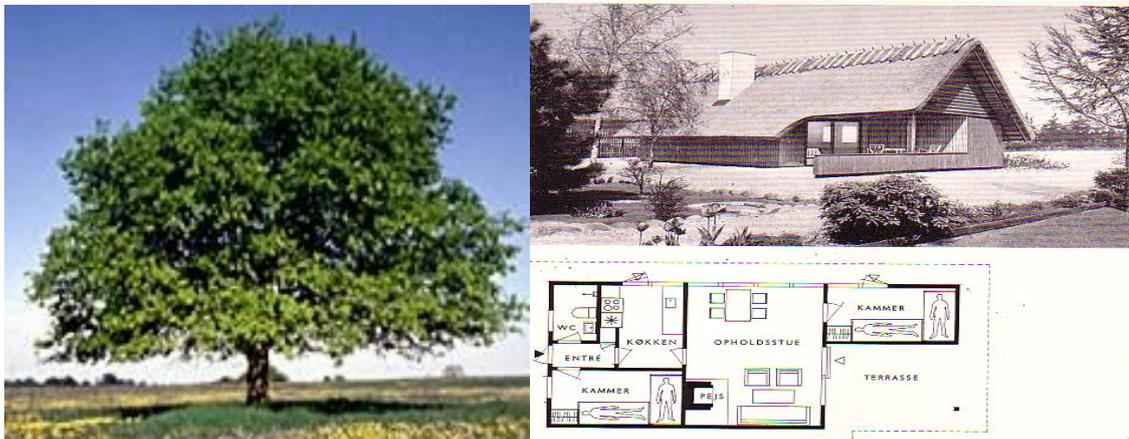
A. Introduction

The church has often been run as an organisation with business-like principles, but the church is not an organisation. The Bible compares the church to a body – “The Body of Christ” – which is organic, and must develop according to organic principles.

“The church is not an organization, but an organism”

B. An organisation is a man-made structure

1. A house is like a man-made organization; a tree is a God-given organism.



- An organisation (a house) cannot grow, it can only be extended. An organism will automatically grow and develop as long as life is flowing through it.
- An organization (a house) is a dead thing, an organism is alive.
- An organisation (a house) cannot die, but it can fall apart. An organism can die, when the life stream stops flowing.
- An organisation (a house) is not flexible, but is a firm, strong structure that is difficult to change. An organism is flexible and can live and develop in many different conditions and environments.
- It is possible to mix organisation with organism: “Fill the house with plants, then we can keep up the façade even if the plants are dying”, and then the organisation can continue even if all life has disappeared.
- In an organisation titles, hierarchies and appearances mean a lot. In an organism, like a family and a church, these things mean little, but relationships and functions are what really count.

- These comparisons between an organisation and an organism, and there are many more, clearly show that the Church is not an organisation but an organism.

2. **The church is an organism.**

- a) Jesus speaks about the Word as powerful seed, which can carry up to a hundred-fold, and it has to be sown all over the field. And Jesus said: *“The field is the world”*. Matthew 13:23, 38.
- b) In 1 Corinthians 3:6-7 Paul speaks about church planting in the following way: *“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase”*.
- c) There are other illustrations in the word of God that show that the church is not an organisation but a living organism. The church is compared to: “a family where children have to grow up to full maturity” 1 Corinthians 3:1 and Hebrews 5:12-14. “A vine with its branches” John 15:1. “A building, built of living stones, with a living foundation”, 1 Peter 2:4-6.
- d) The church is also compared to “a wineskin” which has to be flexible and moveable in order to be able to follow the guidance of the Spirit of God, and be willing to be stretched to whatever limit God has for His church. Luke 5:37-38.
 - The new wine is fresh revelation from God. A new understanding of God’s will for now. A new fresh move of the Spirit.
 - The new wine is sparkling and filled with power, and will push the wineskin to its limit.
 - The old wineskin is the old structures, which have stiffened into the shape they once had when God blessed them, and they have become so stiff that they will keep that shape even if there is no more wine in them. And they will remember the old wine they once had, *“The old wine is better”*.
 - If they don’t get softened by the water (the Word) and the oil (the Spirit) they will split if the new wine should come into their structure.

C. **Organic church life is created by the Holy Spirit**

(Like the sap, the life stream flowing through every branch.)

1. **Paul warns the churches in Galatia.**

- a) Galatians 3:3, *“Are you so foolish, you began in the Spirit, will you now finish in the flesh?”*
- b) That warning could be repeated to many church organisations today, which once began because of a wonderful revival.
- c) Romans 8:11, *“If the Spirit of Him who raised Christ from the dead dwells in*

you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you”.

- d) It is so important that the life giving sap, the Holy Spirit, flows through every branch and twig for it to live and bear fruit.

2. Spiritual life can only be sustained by the Spirit of God.

- a) Jesus said: *“It is the Spirit who gives life, the flesh profits nothing”* John 6:63. Anything that is just added into the church, by human tradition and organisation, and not by the Spirit of God, profits nothing.
- b) Romans 8:14, *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God these are the sons of God”*.
Sons have special blessings, rights and authority, but notice, the church only has this if the Spirit of God leads us.

3. The Holy Spirit is the driving power in extending the church.

The last command of Jesus before He left for heaven was that we must not try to do the work in our own power, but we must make sure that we get filled with the power from on high. Don't leave before!!!

*“You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses in **Jerusalem**, and in all **Judea and Samaria**, and to the **end of the earth**”, Acts 1:8.*

4. The church was born by the Spirit.

- a) Jerusalem: *“They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and they began ...”*, Acts 2:4. The result was that a new church of 3000 was born again in Jerusalem.
- b) Judea: *“They were all filled with the Spirit and they spoke the word of God with boldness”*, Acts 4:31. *“Also the multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem”*, Acts 5:16.
- c) Samaria: *“And Phillip went down to Samaria and preached Christ, ... as they believed, ... they were baptized both men and women, ... they laid their hands upon them and they were filled with the Holy Spirit”*, Acts 8:5, 12, 17.
- d) The Gentiles (non Jews): *“While Peter was speaking, the Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the word”*, Acts 10:44.
- e) This is also the right model to follow in planting new churches today.

5. The Holy Spirit created further trans-local ministries.

- a) In the local church in Antioch there was an elders team of five, with Barnabas as the lead elder (verse 1), and it was him and Saul that the Holy Spirit chose as leaders for the first trans-local mission journey.

Acts 13:1-3 – *the Holy Spirit said; “Now separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them”.*

- b) Verse 4 “*So being sent out by the Holy Spirit they went”*
- c) He still has the same burning desire to reach the next town – the next village: *I must reach the next town ... “Jesus went about all the cities and villages teaching ... preaching the gospel of the Kingdom”.*

6. **Any organic life needs a power-stream to constantly flow through it, to keep it alive. The Holy Spirit is the power-stream who must constantly flow through every local church to keep it alive.**

The Church must follow the ways of God

Lesson 5

A. Introduction

The church tends to fall into methods, religious formula and endless repetitions of something which once was meaningful, but the church should constantly follow God's ways, which is a wonderful journey of discovering new things and ways to walk. God is endless in every way and His grace is new every morning. We are called to walk in an endless, eternal discovery of Him.

Job 11:7, *"Can you search out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limits of the Almighty?"*

Isaiah 40:25-26, *"To whom then will you liken Me, or to who shall I be equal?" says the Holy One.*

"Learn to know and follow the ways of God"

B. Leaders must know God's ways, not just traditional methods

Old Testament examples:

1. **Moses: Exodus 33:13-14.**

Moses was one of the greatest leaders in the Old Testament. He understood that he could not lead God's people according to certain religious formulas and previous experiences. He constantly wanted God's ways. He prayed: *"Show me your ways, that I may know You"*.

And God's answer was: *"My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest"*.

Even today, if we want to know God's ways, we must walk in close relationship with Him, "in His presence", not just in religious ways, even if we feel that we have built them on the Bible.

His presence is the most restful place. If anyone should have had "burn out" it should have been Moses, but his face was shining with the glory of God.

Psalm 103:7, *"God made known His ways to Moses, and His acts to the children of Israel"*.

There is a very big difference between knowing God's ways and knowing His acts.

- Moses knew God's ways, God's presence; the people only saw the miracles.
- Jesus knew God's ways, God's presence; the people only saw His acts.
- Paul knew God's ways, God's presence on the sinking ship; the rest only saw God's action.
Acts 27:22-25, "Take heart men, for I believe God that it will be just as He has told me".

2. **David: Psalm 16:8-11; Psalm 86:11.**

David was another great leader in the Old Testament who was determined to know and experience God's ways and to be in God's presence. David sings: "*One day in Your presence is better than a thousand elsewhere*", Psalm 84:10. Right throughout the story of his life we read this phrase: "*And David enquired of the Lord*".

During David's leadership God introduced so many wonderful new things:

- A new kind of worship.
- New instruments, made by David himself.
- Instead of one person, everyone could come into God's presence.
- Instead of an old closed Tabernacle, a new open tent on Mount Zion.

C. **God's ways**

1. **God's ways are perfect.**

Psalm 18:30, "*As for God, His way is perfect*".

2. **God wants to teach us His ways.**

Isaiah 48:17-19, "*I am the Lord your God who teaches you to profit and leads you in the way you should go*".

If we will follow God's ways, the result will be:

- a) "Peace like a river".
- b) "Righteousness like the waves of the sea".
- c) "Multiplication like the sand of the sea".
- d) "Our name will stand before the Lord".

3. **God's ways are higher than ours.**

Isaiah 55:8-9, "*For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways*".

We will not always understand God's ways at first:

- a) Abraham had to wait until he was 100 and his wife 90 years old, before God gave him the promised son.
Later, he had to lay him on the altar and lift the knife to kill him before God intervened. *He must have had problems in understanding God's ways!*
- b) God led Moses and the people down to the Red Sea, although they could have

passed over on dry land closer to the Mediterranean coast. But God had His reasons, which Moses didn't know about until later.

- c) God allowed Daniel to spend a whole night amongst hungry lions.
- d) A modern example: A local church prayed earnestly for revival, but what happened instead was that their beautiful church building burned down to the ground. All the pastor's good sermons went up in flames! *Who could understand that this could be God's answer to their prayers?* The next Sunday they had to rent the town hall and the pastor had to seek God for fresh new sermons. Within a short while people flocked in and a revival broke out.
- e) God's ways are higher than ours, but we had better trust Him!

4. God's ways are fresh and new.

- a) Israel did not cross the Red Sea and the Jordan River by the same methods:
 - The Red sea: *"Stretch forth your staff"*.
 - At the Jordan: *"The priests with the Ark, stepped into the water"*.
- b) Jesus used so many different ways to heal the sick.
 - *He used mud – touch – spit – a word – a finger in the ear – a command.*
- c) More than any other person, Jesus walked in the ways of God:

John 5:19 – *Jesus answered: "Most surely I say to you, the Son can do nothing by Himself, but what He sees the Father do, whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner"*.

D. How do we walk in God's ways?

1. Jesus the great example.

- a) John 1:18, *"No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him"*.

John 14:6, 9, *"I am the way, the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through Me". "He who has seen Me has seen the Father"*.

- b) In Jesus Christ God's ways are revealed:

Jesus said: *"Follow Me, and I will make you....."*, Matthew 4:19.

Philippians 2:5, *"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus"*.

2 Corinthians 3:18, “*But we all with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of God are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord*”.

- c) Example: The book “In His footsteps” describes how a local church decided, over a period of time, to apply to everything they did or said the statement: “*What would Jesus do, what would Jesus say?*” and then do or say the same. The most remarkable things happened during that period as they followed the ways of Jesus.

2. God will teach His ways to the humble.

Psalm 25:9, “*The humble He teaches His ways*”.

1 Peter 5:5, “*God resists the proud, but He will give grace to the humble*”.

- a) The word tells us that Moses was the meekest man in the world. Numbers 12:3.
Jesus said about Himself: “*I am meek and lowly of heart*”, Matthew 11:29.
- b) We are speaking here about the two greatest leaders the world has ever seen. They were humble and meek. Without that attitude we can never find the ways of God.

3. The one who fears the Lord.

Psalm 25:12, “*The man who fears the Lord, him shall He teach in the ways He (God) chooses*”.

To fear God is to reverently see Him in His endless knowledge, greatness and power, and at the same time understand that He is my Father who loves me, whom I can fully trust and who is all for me. Romans 8:31-32.

4. God waits for us to choose His way.

He has given us a free will, but He waits and expects us to let Him have His way in our lives and in our churches.

The priesthood of all believers

Lesson 6

A. Introduction

Today, in most churches, an Old Testament priestly system is used where one person or a little group of specially elected people are doing the entire ministry for the rest of the body, who can just sit passively and evaluate and criticise their performance. But this has never been God's plan. He wants every believer involved in the life and ministry of the local church.

Every believer must be involved in ministry

B. Everyone is a minister unto God

1. God's original plan.

Genesis chapters 1 and 2.

These scriptures show that God expected deep fellowship with man and that man should administer everything in close relationship with Him.

It utterly failed because of the fall of man.

2. Then God chose the nation of Israel to bring them forth as a token, a pattern, a foreshadow of what He planned to accomplish in Christ.

- a) They were redeemed by the Blood, Exodus 12:13.
- b) Baptized in the water and the cloud (the Spirit), 1 Corinthians 10:2.
- c) Were guided by the cloud (the Spirit) and drank from the rock (Christ), 1 Corinthians 10:4.
- d) Already here God said about His people: "*You shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*", Exodus 19:6.
- e) And God speaks through Moses saying: "*Oh that all God's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them*", Numbers 11:29.
 - That all God's people would hear His voice.
 - That all God's people would minister for Him.
- f) But Israel failed to be such a people because of their disobedience.

3. In Christ, God will accomplish His plan in the Church.

- a) In 1 Peter 2:5-9 the same words are repeated when referring to the church:

Through Christ, the precious Chief Corner Stone, He would bring forth a special People: *“You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim His praise....”*

- b) Verse 5 clearly shows that it is only true believers who are all four things: *“You also, as living stones, are being built up to a spiritual house, a holy priesthood”*.

It even explains some of the ministries every believer has:

- To offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
- To proclaim His praise who called you from darkness into His marvellous light.

- c) Paul calls every born again believer an ambassador: 2 Corinthians 5:17-20.

- An ambassador is under the full control of his King.
- An ambassador must speak and act on behalf of his King.
- An ambassador can be sent wherever the King wants him.

4. We are the Body of Christ.

- a) The Bible clearly explains that each member in this Body has a function:

1 Peter 4:10, *“As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God”*.

1 Corinthians 12:11, *“One and the same Spirit works out all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wants”*.

- b) The Bible also explains that we do not all have the same function, and that we should be happy and satisfied with the function and ministry God has given us.

1 Corinthians 12:12-26, *“ ... but God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased ...”*

Romans 12:5-6, *“So we being many are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having different gifts, according to the grace given to us, let us use them”*.

5. The fivefold ministry.

- a) God has given these five ministries, to make sure that every believer is equipped and released into his ministry: Ephesians 4:11-16.

- The local leadership must make sure that all believers under their care are equipped and released and must call in the apostolic team for this purpose.

- If only 50 to 60 % of the members in the local church are functioning in their ministry, the body is crippled, and will be limited in the great task God has given it.
 - 1 Corinthians 12 compares the Church to the human body. Just imagine if only 50 to 60 % of the members of your body functioned?
- b) If we will allow the apostolic team to equip everyone, the results will be amazing: Ephesians 4:11-16.
- An active church. Verse 12.
Each member effective and equipped.
 - A fulfilled church. Verse 12.
Each person in their right ministry.
 - A united church. Verse 13.
United in faith, love and purpose.
 - A stable church. Verse 14.
In the truth – not confused by false doctrine.
 - A mature church. Verse 13.
To the measure of the fullness of Christ.

6. Church gatherings must demonstrate this Biblical truth: that everyone is involved in ministry, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

- a) 1 Corinthians 14:26, *“When ever you come together, each one of you has a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, an interpretation”.*
- Please notice it says: **“When ever you come together”**. And also: **“Each one has something”**.
- b) The Holy Spirit must lead this variety of ministry. He should be the conductor of the meetings, just like a conductor in an orchestra decides when each instrument should blend into the symphony.
- Ephesians 5:18-19, *“be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”*.
 - 1 Corinthians 12:11, *“The Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wants”*.
 - 1 Corinthians 14:40, *“Let all things be done decently and in order”*. Many put so much emphasis on “decently and order” that they forget that the word says: **“Let all things be done”!!** All these wonderful things mentioned in chapters 12, 13 and 14.

- Then the meetings would be alive, creative, spontaneous and new every time we come together, and we would avoid the monotonous, stereotype way of so many church gatherings.
- This calls for humble authority and great flexibility amongst the leadership and full dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Every church gathering must be alive, flexible and spontaneous, led by the Spirit, and involving every believer present

The motive for all activities in the church

Lesson 7

A. Introduction

It is important that the activities in and out of the local church are done from right motives, to allow the Holy Spirit to flow through it. A great deal of Christian work is done out of wrong motives, such as competition, pride and selfish ambitions.

Philippians 2:3 *“Let nothing be done through selfish ambitions, and conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself”.*

All activities in the local church must be driven by the right motives

B. The motives behind all our works

1. Jesus puts love as the very first commandment.

- a) Matthew 22:37-40. Notice – it is a commandment to love God with everything we have; spirit, soul and body, and out of that should grow the work we do for our fellow man.
- b) Jesus even said that if this were right in our lives, everything else would fall into place: *“On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets”*, verse 40.
- c) When Jesus wanted to reinstate Peter into his apostolic ministry, after his terrible denial, He did not come with a long correction and instruction, no! – all He enquired of him, even asking him three times, was: ***“Simon son of Jonah, do you love me?”*** Because this is the only motive that will keep us on fire for Him. John 21:15-17.

2. Our great examples.

- a) God’s motive is love: John 3:16, *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son”.*
- b) The motive in the ministry of Christ is love: Ephesians 3:19, *“The love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge”.*

Romans 8:38-39, *“I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor heights nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus”.*

- c) The example of Paul: 2 Corinthians 5:14-17, *“The love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus, that one died for all, then all died, and He died for*

all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again".

- i) Christ's love was the compelling force of this first apostolic team.
- ii) They understood that this love was for everyone, to save them from eternal hell. They knew that this amazing love could liberate even the worst sinner.
- iii) This love should compel us to go as ambassadors for Him, and plead with people on God's behalf.

3. Any other carnal motive is useless in the eyes of God.

- a) A lot of Christian work is driven by competition, pride and for personal gain.
- b) We are warned in 1 Corinthians 13 that if love is not the compelling force, even the greatest sacrifice we can bring is useless, and the mighty results we can produce count for nothing.
- c) In Matthew 7:15-29 Jesus speaks about people (false prophets) who have powerful ministries, but operate with wrong motives, and He warns that neither the person nor the work will stand before God.
- d) Jesus said: "*By their fruits you will know them*". Galatians 5:22 tells us that the fruit of the Spirit is Love, and that Divine love holds so many wonderful qualities: *Joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control*.

4. Love should be the trademark of the church.

- a) Jesus said: John 13:35, "*By this all men shall know that you are My disciples, that you have love for one another*".

- But how can all men know? Only if they see us demonstrate love towards one another in a practical way.
- That would be the greatest draw-card in a world with so little real love.

- b) This is the New Testament model:

Acts 4:32, "*Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul, neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common*".

Romans 12:10, "*Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honour give preference to one another, fervent in spirit, serve the Lord*".

- i) Again and again we read in Acts, "with one accord". This oneness and love made a great impact on the people around them.

- ii) Acts 5:12-14, “*And they were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch, – people esteemed them highly, and believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women”.*
- iii) Acts 2:46-47, “*Continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favour with all the people. And God added to the church daily those who were being saved”.*

5. What kind of love is this?

- a) In the world, love is one of the most misunderstood concepts, mainly based on emotions and often selfish in its motives.
- b) But Biblical love, which must be the motive in all our activities, is a work of the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5) and is not based on emotions, but on the will.
- c) John 15:9-10, “*As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you, abide in my love. If you keep My commandments, you will remain in my love.*”
 - i) It is a matter of our will to keep His commandments, and in that way remain in His love. But how can we keep all His commandments?
 - ii) Jesus has made it easy for us: John 15:12, “*This is my commandment, that you love one another*”.

In all nations make disciples of Jesus

Lesson 8

A. Introduction

There is only one way into the Kingdom of God, and that is to be radically born again by the Spirit of God. Many times, because of carnal motives, members are added to the local church who have not had this radical experience and, in so doing, the spiritual life of the church is hindered and these people are left with a false sense of security concerning their eternal well being.

The local church should only consist of radical converts

B. You must be born again

1. John 3:3-5: This is the clear statement of Jesus, to a very religious man.

This proves several things:

- a) That religion alone will never bring anyone into the Kingdom of God.
- b) That it takes a radical experience – to be born by water (the word) and the Spirit, where the Spirit of God takes the word of God and makes it alive in our heart (spirit).
- c) That from being dead (dead in our spirit towards God) we suddenly come alive, the Holy Spirit moves into our spirit we are born again.

2. The sign of the new birth.

Acts 2:42. Here four essential things are mentioned which all new believers must devote themselves to, in order to stay spiritually alive:

- a) They were devoted to truth: The Apostle Peter tells us that any new Christian must be fed by the milk of the word of God:
1 Peter 2:2, “*As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby*”. They must be helped to read and understand the word.

But they must grow, in order to take the solid food of the word:

1 Corinthians 3:2, “*I fed you with milk and not with solid food, for until now you were not able to receive it*”.

Hebrews 5:14, “*Solid food belongs to those who are mature, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*”.

- b) They were devoted to the fellowship: Not just meeting once a week where they saw the back of another person’s head in a service. No, they met daily,

in fellowship and joyful sharing. Acts 2:46, *“breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity”*.

- c) Hebrews 10:24-25, *“Let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together”*.
- d) They devoted themselves to the breaking of bread. They continually rested in the fulfilled work of Calvary – they even did it daily.
1 Corinthians 11:24-25, *“Take and eat this is My body which is broken for you.....This cup is the new covenant in My blood, do this as often as you drink it”*.
- e) They devoted themselves to prayer: Prayer is called the spiritual breathing of a Christian.
Luke 18:1, Jesus said: *“Men always ought to pray and not lose heart”*.
Ephesians 6:18, *“Pray always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit”*.

3. Another sign of the new birth.

- a) True repentance: The word “repentance” in Greek means: to change our mind about, and to turn away from our former life of sin and rebellion against God.

Acts 26:18, *“To open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of satan to God”*.

- b) Baptism: Which should happen immediately after true repentance as a testimony, a sign: “I am dead to my old life, I now bury it, to be raised up to a brand new life”.

Romans 6:3-4, *“As many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into His death, therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead, ... even so we also should walk in the newness of life”*.

- c) The apostle Paul writes: 2 Corinthians 5:17, *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new”*.

Turn away from all sin:

1 Corinthians 6:9-11: Here Paul mentions 10 different sinful lifestyles, which they were living in, and then he says: *“But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of God”*.

Ephesians 4:22 – 5:4, *“Put off – the old man which grows corrupt according to its deceitful lusts”*. And he gives a long list of sins which should not be found amongst Christians: *“lying – wrath – stealing – corrupt words – fornication – all uncleanness – covetousness – filthiness – foolish talk – coarse jesting”*.

- d) It is not just all the old evil things that have passed away – it is also “**all things have become new**”.
- i) A new joy and peace.
Psalms 40:2-3, “*He brought me up out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and He set my feet upon a rock, and He established my steps, He has put a new song in my mouth, a praise to my God*”.
 - ii) A new love for the Lord.
1 John 4:19, “*We love Him because He first loved us*”.
 - iii) A new love for others.
1 John 3:14, “*We know that we have passed from death to life because we love the brethren*”.

1 John 4:7-11, “*.... and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God, beloved, if God so loved us we also ought to love one another*”.
 - iv) We will always love to do what is right.
1 John 2:29, “*.... everyone who practices righteousness is born of God*”.

Colossians 3:17, “*What ever you do in word and deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus*”.
 - v) We will always love to obey God.
1 John 2:5, “*Whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him, by this we know that we are in Him*”.
 - vi) We will live in victory.
1 John 5:4-5, “*For whatever is born of God, overcomes the world*”.
 - vii) We will experience the Holy Spirit’s life in us.
1 John 4:13, “*By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit*”.

C. Leaders must make sure that people are not “cheated” (Matthew 22:11-13)

1. **Everything that we have dealt with under point B, and much more, is evidence of the wonderful life changing experience of a true conversion.**

- a) All over the world, in every local church, there are people sitting there who have not had a radical conversion, and they are not “born again”.
- b) They faithfully sit in the church, but they are not in the Kingdom of God, and are therefore eternally lost. John 3:3.
- c) They just slipped in, got accustomed to the system, made friends amongst the believers, and so everybody thinks that everything is alright, but the truth is that they are not much better off than if they had joined a club in town.

- d) And sometimes they even make their way into leadership positions in the local church.

2. **It is the leadership's responsibility to make sure that everyone gets truly born again.**

- a) Let us never use easy methods just to increase the membership of the congregation.
- b) In 1 Corinthians 3:9-17 a leader is warned not to build on the foundation of Jesus Christ with wood, hay and straw, because that will burn up one day, and it would not be good for him either, he must build with gold, silver and precious stones, people who are radically converted, and true disciples of Jesus.

Planting of New Testament churches

Lesson 9

A. Introduction

To fulfil our great commission, we would do well to follow the New Testament method of planting living churches in every village and town throughout the world, and to equip and support them until they are strong enough to stand on their own, and then continue to have a warm relationship with them through the ministry of the apostolic team.

**To plant New Testament churches in every
village and town throughout the world**

B. How to plant New Testament churches

Follow the New Testament model and method.

1. The first thing we should know is where to plant.

It is clear in the book of Acts, that they were careful to be led by the Holy Spirit. Acts 16:6-10 – here the Spirit guided them to Macedonia.

Acts 10:19-20, “*The Spirit said to him: ‘behold, three men are seeking you, arise therefore, go down and go with them’...*”. And the first gentile church was planted.

2. Prepare the “soil”.

No farmer will try to plant before the soil is well prepared – that also goes for church planting.

a) Every time Paul’s team came to a new town, he reasoned with and persuaded people, sometimes for weeks and months (in Ephesus 3 months), and the crowd was always divided, some against, some for. With those who were receptive he planted a church, using a home or a hall to meet in. He would then continue to teach them for whatever length of time was needed. (In Ephesus for two years – Acts 19:8-10.)

b) Perhaps we rush things too much sometimes, and the church plant dies before it has taken proper root.

3. The actual planting of the church.

The new believers should be organised in the format of the New Testament model – with order and a proper local leadership of elders and deacons. It is sometimes necessary to leave some of the team members to complete the process.

- a) Titus 1:5, *“For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city”*.
- b) Acts 14:23, *“So when they had appointed elders in every church and fasted and prayed, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed”*.
- c) Elders were appointed by the Apostolic team in every local church. Deacons were chosen by the local assembly and presented to the apostolic team. Acts 6:3-6.
- d) A great deal of trouble would be avoided if that practice were followed in every local church today.

4. The nurturing of the new church plant.

In 1 Corinthians 3:6 Paul says, *“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase”*.

- a) In Acts 18:24-28 we see how Apollos watered the newly planted work in Corinth with teaching. This was after Paul’s team had left, leaving Aquila and Priscilla behind and they received Apollos for his teaching ministry.

- b) Having the apostolic teams visit them during their extensive travelling also strengthened the churches.

Acts 18:23, *“After he had spent some time there, he went through the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order to strengthen the disciples”*.

- c) They used the postal system to strengthen, correct and advise the churches. The letters to the Corinthians are good examples of how the Apostle Paul used letters to solve many spiritual, practical and doctrinal problems that they had.

C. Who should be the church planters?

1. Many different methods have been used.

- a) An evangelist, with his equipment and practical helpers, invades a town and hundreds respond to the gospel, and after a week they aim for a new town. They try to set up a follow-up system with the local churches but this seldom works properly.
 - i) Experience has shown that it is very difficult to follow up on these converts and a great number of them end up falling away and are very difficult to win back again.
 - ii) This is not a criticism against these burning Evangelists, they are doing their work, but an important Biblical element is missing, as we will see later.

- b) Another method used to reach villages and towns is to send in a team of young people to witness and spread the good news, but often with very limited success.
- c) The Biblical New Testament way is to let the apostolic team, led by the Holy Spirit, move into a town. This apostolic team will consist of different ministries, who will support each other.
 - i) Here the evangelist, as part of the team, would be able to function in his ministry because the ministries of the apostolic/prophetic, the teacher and the pastoral are able to complete the work and so a healthy church is planted.
 - ii) The process of church planting today should follow the same model. If someone believes he has a call from God to church plant in a certain nation or city, he should first present his vision to his local eldership, who then would contact the apostolic team and, when all agree, he would be able to move with great confidence and support in the planting and raising up of the new church.

2. Another important ministry for the apostolic team.

- a) Today there are so many churches all over the world that have gone astray by moving away from the truth and the Biblical way of church life. It is not always knowingly that they have gone astray, but because of their traditions and lack of understanding of the word of God.

As Jesus said in Matthew 22:29, "You go astray because you do not know the word of God, nor the power of God".

- b) The apostolic ministry has a responsibility to the whole Body of Christ, so wherever God opens the door, the team must go in and set things in order.

3. A great task.

It is important always to remember that the Lord's commission to us is: to every nation, to every tribe, to every town and village.