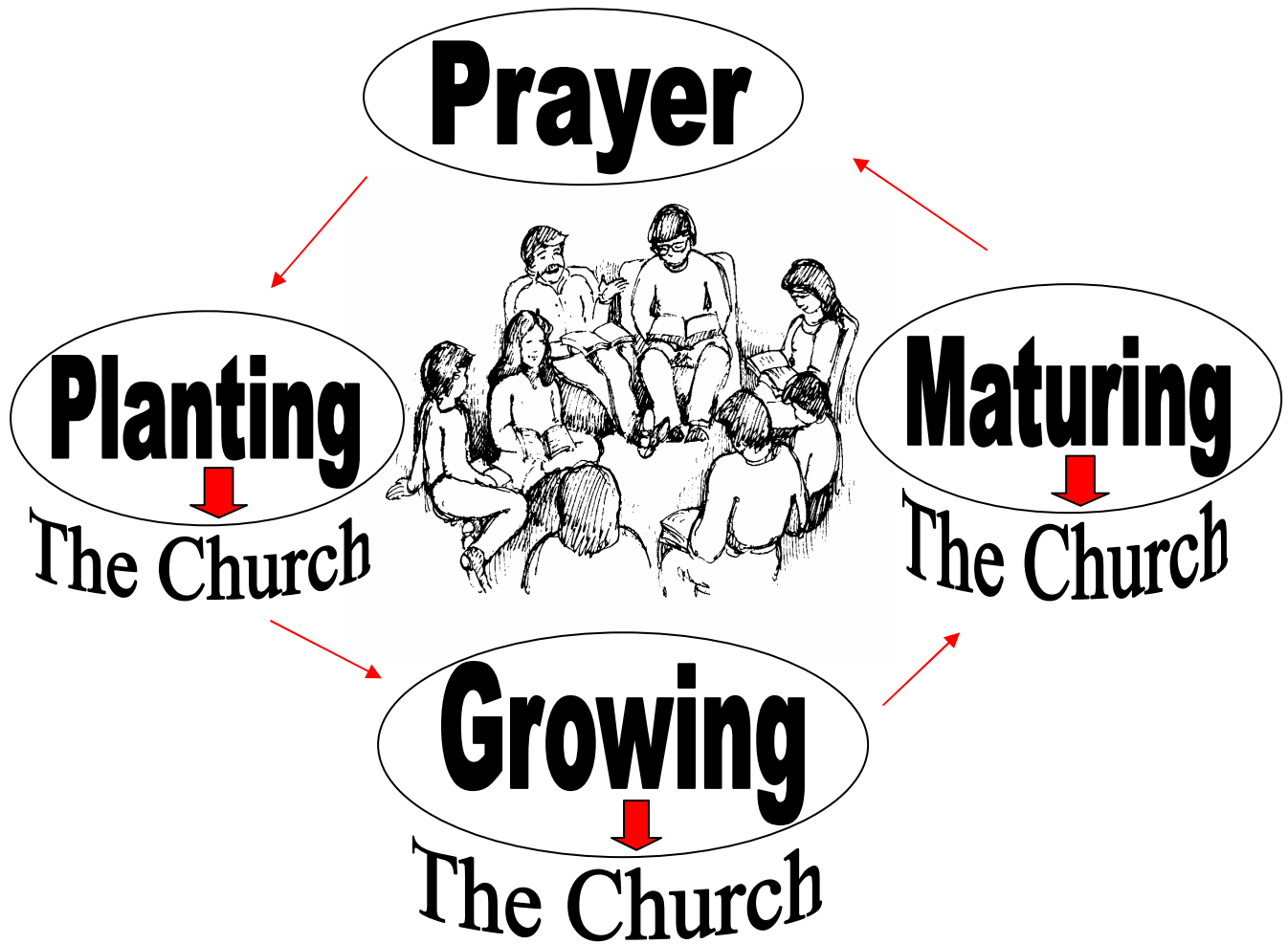


Planting The Church



REVIVAL MINISTRIES

Australia

Prepared by
Apostle Paul Galligan

REVIVAL MINISTRIES AUSTRALIA is an apostolic ministry dedicated to “Equipping the saints [setting the church in order], doing the work of the ministry and building up the Body of Christ’ (**Ephesians 4:12**). God is raising an apostolic company of believers, with links via apostolic relationships to the church in a number of nations.

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CHURCH PLANTING MANUAL

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WELCOME TO THIS MANUAL ON CHURCH PLANTING

A STRATEGY TO REACH A NATION

In late 1998, The LORD began to impress on my understanding a strategy to reach a nation, specifically, Australia. I believe the strategy applies across the world because the strategy is the application of Scripture. Jesus clearly commands His followers [disciples, the church] to preach the Gospel to all people and make disciples of every people group

PLANTING, WATERING, GROWTH

Wherever the servants of the LORD go in ministry in obedience to His command, being sent by the Holy Spirit to do the work of the ministry, there is the planting of the church, and the encouragement [watering] of the church to cause it to grow, and to mature. In these days God is restoring all the gifts, callings and ministries to His church so that the **preaching of the Gospel, the discipling of many believers, and the maturing of the church**, will go forward according to His will, fulfilling His eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus.

SETTING THE CHURCH IN ORDER

After the apostle Paul and a team had successfully preached the Gospel in Crete, Paul sent Titus back to the towns and cities where they had preached and won converts, to set the new churches in order, ordaining elders in every place. Once new converts are made the church is planted. The next step is to raise up leadership, recognising the gifts and ministry callings that the LORD has given among the people of God.

Churches, fellowships, automatically gather around fruitful fivefold ministries and the church is planted. The same fivefold ministry is responsible **to set the church in order: giving apostolic oversight, prophetic guidance,** continuing **evangelistic outreach** into the community by preaching Christ publicly and from house to house, **shepherding the flock of God** and **teaching the apostles doctrine** daily.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

The church of Jesus Christ is not made up of small independent, unrelated housechurches! Nor is it made up of denominationally arranged and governed organisations! Nor is it made up of large pentecostal and evangelical churches! Nor is it made up of a few glamorous TV ministries! Nor is it made up of ecumenical networks where the word of God is subjugated to the traditions of men and to pragmatic ministry limitations!

The church of Jesus Christ is not known primarily by studying church history even where the historical church may appear to have been successful. **The church of Jesus Christ is known by revelation from the word of God and returning to apostolic teaching and foundations in the word of God.** The true church is betrothed to Jesus Christ, not to some important human figure in church history or in contemporary ministry. We must honour the bride of Jesus Christ and not meddle with the clear plan of God.

PUBLICLY AND FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE

The church of the New Testament met publicly and from house to house. Jesus Christ and His Gospel was preached and taught publicly and from house to house. In the Scripture there are house churches meeting daily and there is public ministry, whether it be in the Temple, the school, the street, before the Council or before the king. There is the fully authorised gathering of the few, meeting in the house, and there is the fully authorised sending forth of apostles, prophets and evangelists to preach the Gospel and to plant new churches. There is the ordaining and raising up of pastors and teachers to shepherd and feed the flock of God. There is a blueprint to be followed in leading the church on to perfection: it is found in the Word of God.

Planting the church, growing the church, and maturing the church is the God given ministry of the church.

It is awesome, challenging, wonderful and rewarding to serve the Head of the church and the Lord of the harvest, our soon coming King, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter 1:

What is

The Church?

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

THE EKKLESIA

The Church:- S.C. 1577 '*ekklesia*': literally, **a calling out** [out from the origin]; secularly, **an assembly of citizens** (Acts 19: 32, 39,41);

in Greek O.T. [Septuagint] the congregation of Israel, as in Acts 7:38 the '*congregation*' in the wilderness; the Christian community of saints on earth or in heaven or both.

JESUS AND HIS BRETHREN = THE CHURCH

Heb.2:12 [quoting from Ps.22:22] "*...I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.*" The writer to the Hebrews attributes this saying to the Lord Jesus, who calls the members of the church, "*My brethren,*" and says He "*will sing praise to You, [Yahweh] in the midst of the assembly, [church]*".

The church are the called out ones, those who have been predestined to be conformed to the image of the Son, called, justified and glorified, Rom.8:29-30. The church are those who do not stumble at His hard sayings (Jn.6:60), who know that eternal life is only found in the words of the Lord Jesus, (Jn.6:68).

Jn.5:24 "*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgement, but has passed from death into life.*"

JESUS IS BUILDING THE CHURCH

In Matt.16:18 we have the first mention of the word 'church' [ekklesia]. "*And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*"

Jesus commits to "**building the church**". He proclaims it will withstand the gates of hell. It will be built in the foundation of faith in Him: "*Thou art the Messiah, the Son of God.*" Mt.16:16-17. This can only be known by a revelation from God, bringing faith to the believer.

BUILT ON THE ROCK

Jesus is the "*petra*" rock on which the church is built.

1 Cor.10:4 "*...all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.*"

Matt.7:24-27 "*Therefore whoever hears these sayings of mine and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.*"

JESUS IS THE FOUNDATION STONE AND THE CORNERSTONE

The church is the congregation of the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus is the builder of the church. He is the foundation, the tried stone, the precious cornerstone, a sure foundation. Isa.28:16 "*Therefore thus says the Lord God: 'Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation.'*"

Ps.118:22-23 "*The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.*" [quoted in 1Pet.2:7].

JESUS IS THE APOSTLE [THE BUILDER]

He is the apostle *“who was faithful to Him who appointed Him,”* [Heb.3:2]. Jesus the Messiah is the builder of God’s house, the church. Heb.3:3 *“For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house.”* He is the Son over His house, *“whose house we are,”* v.6.

The same one who laid the foundation of the house of God will also finish it. Zech.4:9 *“The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands shall also finish it.”* Zerubbabel is a type of Christ, used by God to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile. This verse speaks prophetically of Jesus, as the apostle of God, building the church.

PETER, A FOUNDATION STONE

Peter is the *“petros”* stone, who will be a foundation stone as an apostle. The church is built by Jesus on the foundation ministries of apostles and prophets which He has set in the church. Eph.2:20 *“having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.”*

Every believer is called a living stone and is being built into the house of God, the church.

1Pet.2:5 *“you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”*

THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

In Matt.16:19 Jesus gives to Peter, a foundation apostle, the keys of the kingdom of heaven, *“And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”* Keys open doors that are locked; they also represent authority.

A look at the fulfillment of Peter’s commission

Acts 2:14-41 records Peter preaching on the day of Pentecost. The result of this awesome anointed message is that 3000 Jews were saved.

Acts 8:14-25 Peter and John went to Samaria, prayed for the believers and they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 10:9-48 Peter went to the house of Cornelius, preached the gospel and the Holy Spirit fell on Gentile believers.

Acts 3:6-9 Signs and wonders happening, a lame man healed.

Acts 5:3-11 Peter speaks out judgement on the sin of Ananias and Sapphira.

Acts 9:32-35 Peter heals a man who has been paralyzed for eight years.

Acts 9:36-43 records the raising of Dorcas from death.

BINDING AND LOOSING

Jesus also gives to Peter the authority to bind and loose, to forbid or permit.

Note from SFLB page 1436 on Matt.16:19: Keys denote authority. Through Peter, a representative of the church throughout the ages, Jesus is passing on to His church His authority to bind and to loose on earth. The Greek construction behind *‘will be bound’* and *‘will be loosed’* indicates that Jesus is the One who has activated the provisions through His Cross; the church is then charged with implementation of what He has released through His life, death and resurrection. Clearly rabbinic in imagery, binding and loosing have to do with forbidding or permitting. In other words, Jesus is stating that the church will be empowered to continue in the privileged responsibility of leavening the earth with His kingdom power and provision. For example, if someone is bound by sin, the church can

“loose” him by preaching the provision of freedom from sin in Jesus Christ (**Rom.6:14**). If someone is indwelt by a demon, the church can “bind” the demon by; commanding its departure (**Acts 16:18**), realizing that Jesus alone made this provision possible (**Matt.12:29**). How the church binds and looses is diverse and would most certainly extend far beyond the mere use of these terms in prayerful petitions.

THE CALL OF JESUS

What is the call of Jesus? Is it to be saved? Is it to be a church member?

The call of Jesus is 1. to be fishers of men

2. to take up the cross
3. to lose your life (soul)
4. to follow Jesus

Word wealth SFLB p.1601:

Follow SC #190: *akoloutheo* To accompany, go along with, go the same way with, follow one who precedes. A is in union with, and *keluethos* is a road. *Akoloutheo* is being on the same roadway with someone. Since the word was used for soldiers, servants, and pupils, it can easily be transferred to the life of the Christian.

5. to give up all things
6. to endure persecution
7. to be pastors/shepherds
8. to receive the Holy Spirit
9. to be witnesses
10. to preach the gospel with signs and wonders
11. to make disciples of all the nations, baptising and teaching
12. to be ready for His return
13. to receive the ones He sends
14. to respond to the call and be obedient to the heavenly vision
15. to be saved, including water baptism [full immersion]
16. to be set in the Body as a member
17. to be set in the church to minister

CHURCH PLANTING

18. to be part of a church plant [many church plants]
19. to be fully joined and functioning as a member of the church.

CHURCH GROWTH: THE BIBLE WAY

Do not look to man’s tradition and worldly methods. Follow the commands of the Lord Jesus and the example of the disciples He trained. They preached and taught the Gospel publicly and from house to house. They proclaimed Jesus of Nazareth to be the Son of God. They proclaimed Him to be the Messiah. And they were successful in seeding the Roman Empire with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not need to look any further than the commands of the Lord Jesus in the Gospels and being led by the Holy Spirit, preaching and teaching Him publicly and from house to house. The church will be planted! Multiple churches will be planted! Church growth is all about the new converts being nurtured and disciplined and growing up in all aspects into Christ.

Chapter 2:

Planting

The

Church

PLANTING THE CHURCH

THE CHURCH IS PLANTED IN THE HOUSE

In the New Testament it is evident that the church met in houses. **1Cor.16:19** *“Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house.”*

Rom.16:3 *“Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus.”* v.5 *“Likewise greet the church that is in their house.”*

While the church in Jerusalem frequented the Temple and Paul hired the school of Tyrannus in Ephesus, the church of the New Testament predominantly met in houses. This is indisputable. The contemporary church must come to grips with the biblical testimony and must return to apostolic practice. Until the church returns to biblical practice – meeting daily in one accord in the Temple and from house to house – we will not be experiencing the level of revival we hunger for.

[The temple can be seen as the dedicated church building of today. However both the temple and Paul’s school in Ephesus operated daily]

In **Acts 16:13-15** we read of Lydia who *“opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.”* She was baptised and said to Paul *“If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.”* It seems that a house church grew up in her home and this is where the brethren met, v.40 *“So they went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, they encouraged them and departed.”*

The Bible model for planting the church is in the house. **The apostles ministered from house to house.** They broke bread [shared communion] in the houses. They invited people into their homes. They met daily. Notice that the apostles ministered from house to house. Most senior ministry today does not minister in house-church meetings. In Myanmar where we have ministered many times, the Government does not allow the church to build public buildings. It is a great delight to minister from house to house in that nation. Yes, there are some public church places where Bible schools and churches meet and we have ministered there as well. A properly functioning church meets daily, publicly and from house to house.

The five-fold ministry minister publicly and from house to house

Acts 2:42 *“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. V.46* *“So 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.”*

Acts 20:20-21 *“How I kept nothing back that was helpful but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews and also to Greeks, repentance towards God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

SEVEN STEPS TO FRUITFUL MINISTRY IN OBEYING THE GREAT COMMISSION AND ESTABLISHING NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES

There are seven steps to fruitful ministry in obeying the Great Commission and establishing New Testament churches.

1. Prayer
2. Evangelism
3. Nurture

4. Discipling
5. Training and equipping
6. Church planting
7. Emergence of new ministries

These steps are the pattern of Scripture. The evangelist, Dick Reuben, teaches that if we obey the patterns of Scripture then we can expect the promises of Scripture to be fulfilled. In other words let us do things according to the Word. As **John** puts it in **Chap.14:12-24**, if we love Jesus we will obey His commands. Then we will see the fruits, even “*greater works*”. God said to **Joshua, 1:7**, “*Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law ...; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.*” These seven steps are the pattern of the New Testament church. If we give ourselves to do this Word we will successfully plant many churches, and see them grow into maturity.

The step that God wants us to take is to **plant the church wherever we are**. This may mean going into a new area; it may mean reaching out right where you are. The key is to be re-orientated in our thinking and motivated in our action by understanding what the Lord wants: He is not after church membership! He calls us to follow Him and to make disciples!

PLANTING THE CHURCH

How do we plant the church? What are the steps to fruitful ministry? How do we fulfill the Great Commission?

There are two steps to planting the church: prayer and evangelism.

PRAYER: gather and pray in agreement for the will of God to be done;

EVANGELISM: the action that comes out of prayer.

If you will be faithful to carry out this work you will have planted a new church in a relatively short period of time.

WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

Gathering in His Name

How many do we need to begin?

Matt.18:20 “*For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.*” Jesus promised to be present whenever two or three are gathered in His name. This gathering of two or three people in His name is the place to begin to pray, and must be entered into consistently until the Lord returns.

Where do we gather in His name?

We can gather anywhere to seek Him but a home is preferable because there we are able to most easily fulfil the needs of breaking of bread, fellowship, teaching and prayer. People need to know where to come to find the church praying.

How often do we gather?

As often as possible – the early church met daily.

Heb.11:6 promises that He will reward those who seek Him.

How long do we meet for?

If we are meeting daily, a half-hour to one hour is probably long enough. Those meeting this regularly learn very quickly how to enter into the Lord’s presence. When we are gathered in the name of Jesus Christ, He is present in the midst of His people. The gifts of the Spirit flow

freely. Words of knowledge, words of prophecy, visions are released and from these we see God's will and His plans and are able to pray accordingly and act accordingly.

This is the church in action. People go out from the prayer house to witness, seeing the gospel at work, and come back rejoicing. There is fruit-bearing, which is faith building, and leads to more fruit, giving all present a powerful and up-to-date testimony to share with others.

WE BEGIN TO PLANT THE CHURCH IN PRAYER

HOW DO WE PRAY?

Agreeing with His word

Matt.18:19 *"Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven."* We are gathered in His name to agree concerning the will of God, that is, to preach the gospel to those around us.

Pray according to His will

The Lord clearly commands us to preach the gospel and make disciples.

Matt.28:19 *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."*

Mark 16:15-16 *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptised will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*

v.20 *"And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs."*

Luke 24:46-49 *"Thus it is written and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold I send the Promise of My Father upon you, but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

John 21:15-17 Jesus commands Peter to *"Feed my lambs," "Tend My sheep," "Feed My sheep."*

Asking for labourers to be raised up to preach the gospel.

Matt.9:37-38 *"Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.'"*

Praying for souls to be saved. It is the Lord's desire that none should perish.

2Pet.3:9 *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."*

Pray for the lost by name

John 6:44 *"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day."*

John 6:65 *"Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."*

Ps.2:8 *"Ask of Me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for your possession."*

Jesus said, *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you."* (Matt.7:7).

Expecting revelation of strategy

As we obey the Lord, He will reveal / open up strategy to us. He is the one who said ***“I will make you fishers of men,”*** (Matt.4:19). He has promised to make known to us what is yet to be, (John 16:13).

SO WE BEGIN

- with two or three gathering together – in a house
- acknowledging God in our midst
- with the Bible open to pray the will of God into place: ***“Thy kingdom come.”***
- asking for a passion for the lost
- prayer warfare – denying satan the right to hold people in bondage by acknowledging the power of God and recognising the Lord’s desire to see all men saved (1 Tim.2:1-4)
- Asking for people by name
- Praying for districts, people groups, nations
- Asking the Lord of the harvest for labourers
- Expecting God to do what He has promised He would do
- Giving thanks for what He will do and is already doing

As the house church meets and continues in prayer, God answers the prayers. Contacts are made through divine appointments.

Out of prayer comes action! Regular committed prayer based on the Word of God leads to fruitfulness, that is, the salvation of many souls, and the encouragement of many other saints to become fruitful.

PRAYING IN THE VISION

Habakkuk 2:1-3 gives us an example of what we are to do in prayer.

v.1 ***“I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart, and watch to see what He will say to me. And what I will answer when I am corrected.”***

We are to watch in prayer, the Lord may want to show us something in a vision. We are to wait on the Lord to speak, listen for His reply.

v.2 ***“Then the LORD answered me and said: ‘Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it.’”***

We are to record the vision that the Lord shows – the will of God.

v.3 ***“For the vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry.”***

We are to wait for the fulfillment of the vision – praying in the will of God – praying the vision into being. It won’t fail because it is the will of God.

THE CONTINUING PRAYER BASE

We lay the foundations of all that we do in prayer and build upon these foundations as God directs and empowers. The house church, gathering for prayer, becomes the sending body. The labourers go out into the harvest empowered from their meeting with the Lord in the house church. Prayer continues until the task is complete. The Lord will come when the task of personal worldwide evangelism is complete.

EVANGELISM

The next major step is evangelism. The church has already been planted, and it is functioning with two or three members. Out of the prayer comes evangelism. God begins to bring in new souls. The evangelist gathers the new souls, but every disciple of Jesus is to witness, having received the power of the Holy Spirit, (**Acts 1:8; Lu.24:48-49**).

GOING OUT WITH THE MESSAGE

Evangelism means *'going out with the message'*. We are to go out with the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. When Phillip went to Samaria, (**Acts 8:12**) he preached the name of Jesus and the kingdom of God. The whole city heard and saw the mighty signs and wonders that were done through his hands. Out of the prayer God will direct because you have come together to prayer in agreement concerning the will of God. Out of binding and loosing you go out and take the ground that you have claimed in prayer.

Mark 16:15 ***"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."*** This is the literal command of the Lord Jesus Christ and it is to be obeyed. He says ***"if you love me you will obey My commandments."*** We are to obey the Great Commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel.

FAITH PLUS BAPTISM EQUALS SALVATION

v.16 ***"He who believes and is baptised will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*** There will be those who do not believe. But the command is for us to go out and preach the gospel. The Word is to go forth. The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church of God being planted and raised up.

THE BIRTHING PROCESS

The *'birthing process'* clearly presented in the New Testament needs to be adhered to. In **Matt.28:19** and **Mark 16:16** Jesus clearly commands water baptism as a vital part of the salvation experience. New converts are water baptised (immersed) on the day they believe (**Acts 2:38-41, 10:44-48, 19:1-6**). As well, new converts are meant to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 2:38, 8:14-17, 10:44, 19:6**). It is time to question our practice of *'saving souls'* by only *'leading them to Christ'* and not commanding the new converts to be water baptised and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Can you imagine how much stronger new Christians will be immediately if they are offered full Scriptural new birth: repentance, faith, baptisms.

SIGNS FOLLOWING

v.17-18 ***"And these signs will follow those who believe; in My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."*** These are the signs we can expect to follow every believer. These signs are found in the house, in the Temple, in the school of Tyrannus, and in the streets in the record of the book of Acts.

v.19 ***"So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God."*** Jesus was received up into heaven and the apostles, ***"went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs,"*** **v.20**. The Lord will always confirm His word with accompanying signs.

AN ANOINTING FOR EVANGELISM

We need to be aware that there is a different anointing in the church meeting to the anointing for going out on the streets. We need to go out in the anointing for evangelism, not the anointing we have when we are worshiping in the Holy Place. However, in the house-church meeting when unsaved folk are present, the LORD's anointing enables the house-church to become the seed-bed of new birth for all unsaved present.

FROM BABYHOOD TO MATURITY

The apostle John writes to three age groups in the church in **1 Jn.2:12-14**. He writes to "*little children*", to "*young men*", and to "*fathers*". These three ages also apply to the church; the infant church, the church that grows into young adulthood, and the mature, perfect church that has grown up in all aspects into Christ, the head (**Eph.4:15**). John's teaching helps us to understand the planting, growing and maturing of the church. Little children are the new born who need the milk of the word to grow thereby. Young men represent those who have been disciplined in the Word and have overcome the evil one. The fathers are the mature ones who have come to a deep understanding of the relationship with the Father. The young men can lead others to Christ and teach foundations to the new Christians. The fathers are ascension gift ministers [apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers] who bring the church on to perfection.

The **infant church** is the two or three gathering, praying for the lost. This is the church that is **fruitful in winning lost souls**.

The **youthful or young adult church** is the church that is meeting in houses **nurturing and discipling all the new Christians**.

The **mature church** is the apostolic church where **all the gifts and ministries are functioning** publicly and from house to house, bringing the whole church to maturity. the new Christians.

Chapter 3:

Growing

The

Church

GROWING THE CHURCH

WHAT IS GROWTH?

The word 'growth' in the Bible is used rarely in the context of 'more people'. It is used mostly in the context of growing from babyhood to maturity. Church growth is the growth of the whole body and every individual member into maturity. To grow the church we take hold of the newest member and help them to grow up, to become a minister, an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher or miracle worker or whatever gift God gives. Effective growth is seeing the baby Christian growing up to become an effective minister in the body.

TAKING THE STEPS TO FRUITFUL MINISTRY

There are seven steps to fruitful ministry in obeying the Great Commission and establishing New Testament churches. In the previous session we looked at the **foundational work of prayer** in establishing the house-church. Out of the prayer comes the action of evangelism and new souls are brought in, who need to be nurtured. The Lord answers prayer by adding the lost. Prayer brings about the **fulfillment of the vision to win the lost**. **We plant the church through prayer.** Out of the prayer we begin to make contacts. This results in new souls being added. People get saved, baptised, filled with the Holy Spirit and begin to function as members of the body. **Prayer leads to evangelism** – new souls are brought in who need to be nurtured.

The church is **planted through Prayer and Evangelism;**

The church **grows through Nurture and Discipling.**

NURTURE

The third step in fruitful ministry is to nurture the new believers. **Nurturing is caring for baby Christians.** The Apostle John addressed new Christians as little children, and in **1Jn.2:12-14**, he notes two key facts about them:

1. **their sins are forgiven** for His name's sake, and
2. they have **come to know the Father.**

When a person is born again (**Jn.3:3-6**) they become a member of God's family, "***Born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God,***" **Jn.1:13**. The Holy Spirit enters in to the spirit of the person and He gives to the new believer, "***the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba Father,***" **Rom.8:15**.

"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God," **Rom.8:16**.

HOW DO WE NURTURE BABES IN CHRIST?

THE MILK OF THE WORD

By feeding them: Jesus commanded Peter "***feed my lambs***" (**Jn.21:15**) and "***feed My sheep***" (**v.17**). Babes need milk, so we must feed them **the milk of God's word**. Sheep need **solid food**.

1 Pet.2:2 "***as newborn babes desire the pure milk of the word that you may grow thereby.***"

This is the good news of salvation: as the apostle John said, knowing your sins are forgiven.

FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES

In **Heb.5:12**, the Apostle says "***the first principles of the oracles of God***", that is, "***the principles of the doctrines of Christ***", or the foundations (**Heb.6:1-2**) are the milk of God's word. He is exhorting the Hebrew believers to go on to maturity, not having to lay again the

six foundations. So it is clear from **Heb.5:12 – 6:3** that the **teaching of the foundational principles is feeding the milk of the Word of God.** The **solid food is the word of righteousness** (Heb.5:13) and the solid food is for the mature.

TO BE ABLE TO TEACH

“By this time you ought to be teachers” (Heb.5:12)

These Christians that the writer to Hebrews is addressing should have grown up, but they have not; they still need to be fed on milk. Milk is for the immature. The apostle wants them to have solid food. The proof that they haven't grown up, is that they are not able to teach others the foundations. Everyone needs to be well taught the first principles of God's word. Once you have been given the milk you begin to grow, and then are able to teach others and to recognise false doctrine.

GROWING UP

The goal that the Lord has for us is for us to grow up in the Lord so we can teach others. **2Tim.2:2** *“The things you have heard, commit to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”*

Heb.5:13 talks about the one who *“is unskilled in the word of righteousness”*; this one is still considered a babe. The word of righteousness is the solid food. Being able to understand and to preach and teach and live by the word of righteousness is to be a mature Christian.

NO LONGER CHILDREN

Eph.4:14 *“no longer tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine”*; no longer following after some man and his teaching, but being a **disciple of the Word yourself**. Checking the Scripture for yourself to know whether what you are hearing is true or not. See the example of the Bereans in **Acts 17:10-12**.

“Solid food belongs to those who are of full age” (Heb.5:14). Those who can discern between God and the devil are those who have the Holy Spirit and especially those who have become mature in the Word of God.

HOW DO WE NURTURE THE YOUNG CHRISTIAN?

SALVATION, HEALING, RESTORATION

We feed them the word of God. Young Christians need to be trained even as young children need to be trained and disciplined. It is the teaching of the Word of God that teaches, trains, corrects and reproves the believer (**2 Tim.3:16**). They need to be taught the word concerning **salvation**, the word concerning **healing**, the word concerning **restoration**.

FOUNDED IN THE FAITH

Heb.6:1-2, lists the six foundations, and says that until we have these foundations properly laid we cannot go on to **perfection/maturity**. These foundations are: **repentance from dead works**, **faith toward God**, **doctrine of baptisms**, **laying on of hands**, **resurrection of the dead**, and **eternal judgement**. Nurturing means leading the new Christian through these foundations ensuring that each one is properly laid. When new believers are well grounded in their faith and well grounded in the Word of God they will grow. This will lay a proper foundation for the whole church to grow into maturity.

CONTINUING STEADFAST IN THE FIRST WORKS

On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out, and 3000 men were converted. These new believers continued in four things: **the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, the breaking of bread and prayers**, (**Acts 2:41-42**). Herein we have the perfect prescription for nurturing new believers, that they may grow and be established in the faith. In a biblical house-church

these four things will be happening. In the book of Acts the apostles taught in the houses as well as publicly. The very ones Jesus trained came and shared in the houses. Signs and wonders happened in the house meetings. They broke bread from house to house. See **Deuteronomy 6:4-8** for house-church under the Law of Moses.

Everything that is vital and important in the life of the believer is received through being baptised into the body, (**1 Cor.12:13**). The young Christian grows up in all aspects into Christ because of the experience of being saved and through baptism joined to the church and baptised by the Spirit into the body. The church that is functioning according to apostolic doctrine and practice is the church that provides a daily experience of doctrine, fellowship, communion and prayer.

DISCIPLING

All believers need to be discipled. Jesus said in **Matt.28:19** that we are to *'make disciples'*, by leading them to observe all that He commanded.

The goal of discipling is:

1. **To have each new Christian discipled to the word of God**, not to a person or a great leader, but to the word of God.
2. **To teach every believer the precepts and principles of the word of God**, that they may grow thereby.
3. **To teach the disciples how to do basic Bible studies.**
4. **To teach the disciple to hear the *'rhema'* word of God, (Rom.10:17).**
5. **To set the disciple basic assignments of Bible reading and study, prayer and witnessing.**

MAKING DISCIPLES

'Disciple' comes from the same Latin root word as *'discipline'*, both coming from the Latin word meaning to speak or to teach, in the sense of instruction. So discipling is a teaching form of ministry. It fulfills that part of the commission, to teach the new Christians the word of God, (**Matt.28:20**). Every new believer is expected to have come through water baptism and according to **Acts 2:38** to have received the gift of the Holy Spirit. That is the work of evangelism. Then every believer is to be nurtured in the faith through receiving the milk of the word. Now the believer is ready to become a disciple, a wholehearted follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is committed to receiving His commandments through the Word of God.

A BASIC PLAN FOR DISCIPLING

1. **Commit to reading Scripture every day, 3 – 5 chapters.**
2. **Keep a journal, writing down the chapters read each day, making a summary of what has been read.**
3. **Ask the Lord what He is saying from the chapters read; allow Him to speak from His Word. Write down what the Lord is saying.**
4. **Learn three verses of Scripture off by heart each week.**
5. **Share your faith with at least 2 people each week.**
6. **Pray for the lost by name. Keep a record of the names and of the Lords answers.**
7. **Meet in a small group each week for one hour with others who are also being discipled, and with a leader. This is an accountability group, to feed back and share what God has shown and to ask questions.**

GOAL/PURPOSE

The goal and purpose in training up disciples is to plant more churches that will witness to the power of God. There needs to be an active, bible-based, soul-winning church characterised by the power of God manifest in the midst of every locality so that every soul is contacted and impacted by the gospel.

What is a church plant?

A family or small group who start to meet together with Jesus (**Matt.18:18-20**) and seek the salvation of the lost. The church grows as people are saved and joined to the community of believers, not as people transfer from other church fellowships.

What constitutes a church in the New Testament?

The simplest model is in **Acts 2:42-47**. The new believers along with the apostles and others who already were Christians devoted themselves continually to four things, i.e.:

- sharing the word of God [the apostles' doctrine]
- fellowship
- the breaking of bread [communion]
- prayer

They did this in houses daily. There was also a public proclamation of the Gospel, and Paul taught in training schools at times.

A church begins with two or more people who devote themselves to sharing the Word together, praying, breaking bread and entering into a real partnership (fellowship). In **Acts 2:43**, this led to “*great fear coming upon every soul*”, and “*many signs and wonders...*”. Believe the Lord for signs and wonders; signs of His Presence in the midst. The Lord uses signs and wonders to attract people to hear the gospel.

v.44-45 a depth of sharing in practical ways (fellowship) is demonstrated. The church is to continue daily in these things, (**v46**). The result is a praising people, switched on and tuned into the Lord and His purposes, and He adds daily those who are being saved, (**v47**).

The church grows through soul winning, nurture and discipling.

In summary the church has two great ministries in fulfilling the Great Commission: **EVANGELISM and TEACHING**.

To make disciples we need to preach the Gospel; those who believe and are baptised will be saved and will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Then the new believers are to be taught all that Jesus has commanded. The making of disciples is the fulfilment of the Great Commission. Having made disciples - all the foundations properly laid – then the completion of the church can follow quickly. The Lord will return and usher in the seventh millennial age.

Chapter 4:

Maturing

The

Church

MATURING THE CHURCH

The goal of discipleship is to train and equip men and women and release them into meaningful ministry.

Every church is meant to be:

a ministry training school,

a house of prayer for all nations,

a place where new believers are nurtured in the faith,

a place where believers are disciplined in the Word.

The goal for new believers is not to make them good church members. God Himself sets each member in the Body (**1Cor.12:18**). Jesus commanded us to make disciples!

Jesus said, ***“Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature”!***

Jesus said, ***“Tend My lambs”!*** That is the nurture of new-born Christians.

Jesus said, ***“Feed My sheep”!*** That is the teaching ministry – discipleship.

Doing the ***“work of the ministry”*** is training and equipping disciples to become fully functioning members of the Body of Christ. God has set in the church, ***“first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues”***, **1Cor.12:28**.

The fifth step in fruitful ministry is: **training and equipping the saints**.

We bring the church on to maturity by **training and equipping** the disciples.

THE MATURING CHURCH

The maturing church is growing unto perfection because the saints [the members of the body] are being equipped for the work of the ministry that God has pre-ordained for them (**Eph.2:10**), and are being built up and growing in the ***“knowledge of the Son of God”*** (**Eph.4:13**).

Ephesians 4:7-16 presents a picture of the maturing church.

Verses 7-12: each member of the body receives grace through the ministry gifts Christ has given.

Verses 13-16: growing into maturity, the unity of the faith, the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; no longer children tossed to and fro; speaking the truth in love, growing up in all aspects into Christ ; the whole body fully functioning in love.

EVERY MEMBER A MINISTER

There is no clergy/laity division in the church of Christ. The leadership gift ministry of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher is given for the purpose of equipping and edifying the saints, the members of the body, bringing them into the ministry work that God has called them to and graced them to do.

The goal of the ministry is to train and equip many more ministers. Every member of Christ’s body is to be equipped to minister. Every member is to be trained, anointed and ordained. We are a kingdom of priests; our only high priest is the Lord Jesus Christ. Even though many give lip service to this tenet of the faith, few practice it. We still have all sorts of divisions in the church based on perceived ministry callings and levels of anointing and priesthood.

THE TASK IS TWOFOLD

Firstly **to raise up workers for the harvest – training and equipping, releasing and ordaining.**

Secondly, **doing the work of evangelism – planting many new churches.**

TRAINING

Once a new Christian has been nurtured [all the foundations properly laid, **Heb.6:1-2**] and disciplined [adequately taught and related to the WORD, **Matt.28:20**], there is **a time of teaching and training that leads to maturity.**

The Christian is weaned from the milk (**Heb.5:12, 1 Pet.2:2**) and introduced to the meat, the solid food (**Heb.5:12-14**), the deeper wisdom (**1Cor.2:6-16**), being trained in the ways of righteousness.

The first level of training is for each saint to be able to *“teach the first principles of the oracles of God”* **Heb.5:12.**

From there the trainee needs to understand the *“deeper wisdom”* concerning God’s eternal purpose (**Eph.3:8-11**);

having been taught to interpret the law, the prophets and the writings (**Lu.24:44-45**);

growing in prophetic understanding of the tabernacle of Moses (**Heb.9:1-5**),

the feasts of Israel, the order of Melchizedek

and all other things taught in the book of **Hebrews.**

Paul said to Timothy *“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others”* **2 Tim.2:2.**

Paul received his revelation from Jesus. Paul trained Timothy, among others. Timothy is to teach faithful men and women; he is to train them so they can teach others what they have learnt. These ones will in turn go out and teach others; start a house-church; teach foundations etc.

**Training is being taught the word until the trainee is studied
in the word and able to teach others!**

EQUIPPING

Equipping refers to **training in ministry; understanding and exercising ministry in the Spirit, (2 Cor.3:2-6) and moving in the gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor.12:4-11).** It includes understanding the operation of the grace gifts of **Romans 12:4-8** and recognising these gifts in the lives of the saints, **encouraging each one to function in the gift** or gifts they have been given. There needs to be **teaching and practice of the five-fold ministry gift of Eph.4:7-12**, so that the trainees can begin to function in the ascension gift Christ has given them. Not all the saints are called into ascension gift ministry but all need teaching concerning these ministries and need to see these gifts functioning so that they receive the grace to grow into maturity.

**Equipping is being able to know and understand and move in the ways of God
in the Spirit; to minister in the power of the Spirit of God.**

Training and equipping includes **teaching, practice and experience.** It includes completing specific seminars and teaching courses, being on ministry teams, learning to *‘do the stuff’*, to do *“the work of the ministry”* **Eph.4:12.**

MINISTRY IN THE SPIRIT

What is ministered?

Through the laying on of hands, the **gifts of the Spirit** are ministered; others can be released in the ministry of the gifts; some can receive a particular gift that God gives to them such as healing. This member of the body is then able to function in the healing ministry in the church.

The **anointing of the Holy Spirit** is ministered; the anointing is released to others through the laying on of hands. Sometimes the anointing is so strong in a place of God's presence that the anointing is received sovereignly [without the laying on of hands]; everybody in the place is affected.

The **power of God** is released through ministry. Jesus came out of the wilderness "*in the power of the Spirit*" (Lu.4:14) to begin His public ministry. The power of God is released when the saints know the victory in Christ over the devil. The apostle doing the training and equipping needs to know the empowering of the Spirit of God to be able to equip others to minister in the power.

RELEASING OR COMMISSIONING

There comes a time when a person is ready to '*do the stuff*'. A person may receive the laying on of hands at this point and be set apart for a specific ministry expression; or they may simply begin to minister and in due course, recognition comes. It is a powerful experience to receive the laying on of hands after a time of training and equipping and to be sent out to minister. We see our Lord doing this with the apostles in **Mark 6:7-13**, and with the seventy in **Luke 10:1-12**.

ORDINATION

Ordination is the authorisation of a person to minister. Ordination should come as the public acknowledgment of ministry already being exercised: where a person demonstrates gifts and abilities that effect worthwhile ministry; where the person acknowledges the clear calling of God on their lives to be His minister; and their lifestyle qualifies them to be ordained (1 **Tim.3:1-7**, **Tit.1:5-9**).

The ministry to which we ordain people is the five-fold ministry gift of **Eph.4:7-12**. While most ministers are given the title pastor, and this is legitimate if the minister is serving as an elder giving oversight and shepherding the flock, we ordain people to the ministry and thus they are not limited in any way as to the exercise of the five-fold gift. This means a person can function as an apostle, prophet, evangelist, or teacher as well as in the pastoral ministry.

The scriptural context for ordination is:

1Tim.4:12 "*Do neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of hands of the eldership.*"

2Tim.1:6 "*therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*"

Acts 6:6 "*whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.*"

Acts 13:2-3 "*As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.' Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.*"

Exod. 28:41 “So you shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him. You shall anoint them, consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister to Me as priests.” Moses was instructed to put the priestly clothes on Aaron and his sons.

GOD ANOINTS, THE ELDERSHIP ORDAINS, A PERSON’S LIFE IS CONSECRATED.

In the New American Standard Bible, **verse 41b** reads, “You shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve Me as priests.”

An understanding of this verse: God anoints (**2 Cor.1:21**)

The eldership ordains with the laying on of hands (**1Tim4:14**)

The person being ordained has consecrated their life to God.

The word ‘ordain’ is a combination of two Hebrew words, literally meaning “to fill the hand”,

Ordination then is the releasing of gifts and ministry.

APPRENTICESHIP STYLE OF TRAINING

We understand that preparation for ordination is an apprenticeship style of training based on the biblical model. The person is first of all a disciple or trainee who attaches himself/herself to an ordained minister and accompanies that person into situations where teaching, preaching and ministry take place. The trainee learns through observation, instruction and practice.

DOING THE WORK OF EVANGELISM

– PLANTING NEW CHURCHES

The sixth step in fruitful ministry to fulfill the Great Commission is **planting new churches.**

Every disciple of Jesus is to witness, having received the power of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 1:8, Lu.24:48-49**). Witnessing includes a demonstration of His power and leads to souls being saved. In the Scripture souls were added to the church:

By responding to the word preached, **Acts 2:37**

By a manifestation of God’s power, **Acts 8:5-8, 12; 1 Cor.2:4-5**

By being drawn to a church that is fully functioning in the first works, **Acts 2:42-47**

Evangelism is the action that comes out of prayer: prayer evangelism. The way of evangelism is through prayer. The goal is souls saved. The strategy is to plant the church, so that the lost can be added.

There needs to be a witnessing, soul-winning church visible in the midst of every people group.

CHURCH PLANTING:

Those who have been trained and equipped are sent out. The new church grows as a result of new souls being saved through the preaching of the Gospel. The church of the New Testament did not cease to preach and teach the Word of God, declaring the Gospel of Jesus Christ every day, publicly and from house to house. **Acts5:42** “*And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.*”

IN EVERY PLACE

We began this manual with strong exhortation to return to the Scriptures for our authority and guide to understanding the church, and planting, growing and maturing the church. The result of soul winning and preaching the Gospel should be: **new churches planted in every place.**

The current practice of drawing new believers away to other places to attend church rather than planting the church locally works against the Gospel being effective to seed every community. Church is seen in the community as something that happens elsewhere and has no relevance to them. Until the church is planted in every place the witness of the Gospel will be incomplete.

EMERGENCE OF NEW MINISTRIES

The seventh step in fruitful ministry to fulfill the Great Commission is the
emergence of new ministries

As the church functions in New Testament ministries, abiding in first love and doing the first works, the Lord will add to such a church those who are being saved. Every saint, will naturally/supernaturally, in the Lord, grow and function. Some will emerge as ascension gift ministers (**Eph.4:11**), others in various other gifts and ministries such as those listed in **1 Cor.12:28**. A key role of the emerging apostolic ministries in the church is to recognise the emergence of new ministries and raise them up, working with the local eldership to release and set these new ministries in place in the Body of Christ.

A NEW GENERATION OF MINISTERS

As those who have been trained and equipped are sent out to minister, new churches will be planted. The next step, once a group of people have been saved in a local area, is to **“ordain elders”**. This includes the raising up of ministry gifts in all areas of church life and evangelism into the community. As the trainees go out and begin to do the work of the ministry, specific gifts and ministries will be recognised in them as they function. A new generation of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, miracle workers, healers, helps and administrations and every gift given in the New Testament, will grow up. The work of the ministry of the ascension gift ministers is complete when the whole Body is fully functioning with every joint supplying, every part functioning, every saint ministering.

ALL THE EARTH WILL BE FILLED WITH HIS GLORY

Gen.1:28 *“Then God blessed them, and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’”*

The Great Commission that Jesus gave us to preach the Gospel to every person and to make disciples from every nation is to be the final outworking of the Creation Mandate given to Adam. It is through the church that the earth will be filled with the glory of the LORD (**Num.14:21**). It is through the preaching and teaching of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that *“the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea”* **Hab.2:14**.

When two or three gather in the name of the Lord and begin to pray in agreement, they will bear fruit – souls will be added.

As the Gospel is preached publicly and house-churches are planted to receive the lost in every locality, there will be multiplication.

As the full fivefold ministry is released and functions in all the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the glory of the LORD will be seen on the church and the earth will be replenished.

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SHILOH SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

is based at the SHILOH Centre in Toowoomba but can travel anywhere.

Short Term Training Schools [2 weeks in duration] are held at least twice yearly, at SHILOH Centre. The short term training provides a means for many saints to be equipped and released into fruitful ministry. Schools are held in other centres on request.

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TEACHING / STUDY MANUALS AVAILABLE

**1) *The Word and the Spirit;* 2) *Prayer a Way of Life;* 3) *Foundations of Our Faith;* 4) *The Power of Prayer;* 5) *This Gospel Must Be Preached;* 6) *Steps to Revival;* 7) *Strategy to Reach the Nation;* 8) *The Glory of the Lord shall be revealed;* 9) *Let us go on to Perfection;* 10) *And He gave some to be Apostles...;* 11) *The Cross to the Glory;* 12) *Planting the Church;* 13) *I will Build My Church;* 14) *Faith in Practice*
15) *Leadership in the Last Days;* 16) *The Spirit and Power of Elijah***

Youth and Young Christians: 1) *Prayer Attack;* 2) *Foundations of our Faith for Youth;*
3) *Born again to Serve;* 6) *Heroes of the Bible*

Children's Manuals: 1) *God Talk;* 2) *Joseph, Jesus and Me*
"Walking in Our Inheritance" a book by Paul Galligan

