

# A Unique Model for Training Nationals on the Mission Field

Bud Rader

## I. New Testament Model

### *Clearly Stated*

#### A. The Apostle John

##### 1. Basic information about the Apostle John

- a. He is said to have been the youngest of the disciples.
- b. He is called the apostle Jesus loved (Jn 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7,20).
- c. He seems to have had a special relationship with Jesus (Jn 19:26).
- d. He penned five books of the NT and he did this in his later years 85 to 96ad.  
III Jn is believed to have been the fourth of these (90ad).
- e. He almost certainly was the last surviving apostle and one of the few living disciples of Christ at the time of his III Jn 4 declaration. Besides III Jn 4 being God's Word it would behoove us to consider the words of a man of such vast experience.

##### 2. His Declaration

III Jn 4, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

John is talking about his "children" believers he most likely discipled to some degree. Seeing disciples of Christ continue on, thus demonstrating they are true disciples, was the most joyful of experiences to John.

#### B. The Apostle Paul

1. I Ts 2:19,20--Here the Apostle Paul says it a bit differently, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy."
2. I Ts 3:7,8--When Paul and his companions were distressed by afflictions he had this to say, "Therefore, brethren, we were comforted over you in all our affliction and distress by your faith: For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord."

Dcl: It can be concluded that both the Apostle John and the Apostle Paul maintained that participating in the discipleship process and seeing discipleship evidenced by faithfulness to Christ was the most joyful result of their long and fruitful ministries.

### *Clearly Mandated*

#### A. By Jesus Christ

Mt 28:19--"Go ye therefore and teach all nations..."

"Por tanto, id, y haced discípulos a todas las naciones..."

20--" Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:

..." is best accomplished, if not only, in the context of a local church.

Christ is not commanding His followers to establish schools, aviation ministries, hospitals, camp ministries, construct buildings, and etc. These ministries are well and good and perhaps complimentary even necessary to establishing churches but what He commands His followers to do is to go and make disciples and establish churches around this core group!

#### B. By the Apostle Paul

II Tm 2:2--This is discipleship. God's statement through Paul supports what Christ has already said.

Dcl: The clear mandate is to establish churches by making disciples of Jesus Christ.

### *Clearly Modeled*

#### A. By Jesus Christ

Mark 3:13,14--"...that they should be with him..."

Jesus spent time with those He disciplined. It is known that Christ traveled, ate, and lived with the disciples. He prayed with them. They saw Him teaching, healing, and debating. They knew Him when under great stress and attack. Christ was always teaching, always giving of Himself. He was always available and approachable.

## B. By Barnabus

1. Acts 9:26-30--"But Barnabus took him,..." v27.
2. Acts 11:19-26--"Then departed Barnabus to Tarsus, for to seek Saul:" v25.

It appears that Barnabus and Saul did a favorable job in Antioch, v26.

3. Acts 15:39--"and so Barnabus took Mark..."

II Tm 4:11 evidences Mark's later usefulness. Barnabus probably had something to do with this.

## C. By Paul

1. Acts 15:40--"And Paul chose Silas..." While Silas was already serving the Lord before his contact with Paul it is easy to assume that Paul continued the process, Acts 16:19,25,29; 17:4,10.
2. Acts 16:1; I Tm 1:2,18; 6:20; II Tm 1:2; I Cor 4:17--Timothy.

Note: Many times one is not the sole discipler. The process often, but not always, involves many Christians along the way. Aquila and Priscilla seem to demonstrate this with both Paul and Apollos in Acts 18:2,18,26.

3. Philemon 1:10--"I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten in my bonds:"  
Col 4:9--"With Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother..."
4. Even in the OT examples of this are seen, at least to some degree. Consider Moses & Joshua, Eli & Samuel, and Elijah & Elisha.

Dcl: Discipleship is clearly modeled by Jesus Christ, Barnabus, the Apostle Paul and others in the NT. This should arrest our attention.

## II. Questions Concerning & an Illustration Supporting the NT Model

### A. Questions

1. What are some of the differences between the church of the NT and that of 2009?

Today the church is much more organized. She has the entire canon of

Scripture available for study. She can take advantage of modern technology to further the Gospel. Technologies such as:

- a. Mass media via radio, television, printed material, internet has facilitated the spread of the Gospel.
- b. Rapid transportation is used to move missionary personnel to and from the field, and into remote areas as never before.
- c. Computer programs enhance language learning, Bible study, and translation work.
- d. Modern medicine helps to keep missionaries healthy and to live longer lives.
- e. The financial affluence achieved by the church has made more funds available for mission endeavor.
- f. Improved education for missionaries.
- g. In most cases a relatively safe environment in which to minister. I doubt the emperor has his henchmen looking to arrest many Christians today.

2. With all the above-mentioned advantages (there are more) why has the church not repeated what the NT church achieved in about a fifty-year period? One of the reasons is because many rely on an extra biblical methodology.

Dcl: An about face and an aggressive implementation of Bible discipleship will go a long ways to getting the church and missions back on track.

#### B. An Illustration

Two dedicated Christians on the mission field. One is a "Super Evangelist" who legitimately leads 500 people to the Lord every day. That's 182,500 every year. The other is a "Faithful Discipler" who disciples 1 Christian to the Lord per year. That's 1 person every year. Not very impressive but since he makes a true disciple that disciple makes a disciple every year. Numbers are numbers and there is plenty of room for both of these Christian workers to fail but if everything went right this is how it could develop.

Year	Super Evangelist (500/day)	Faithful Discipler (1/year)
1	182,500	2 (including himself)
2	365,000	4 (reproduction)

3	547,500	8
4	730,000	16
8	1,460,000	128
23	4,197,500	4,194,304
24	4,380,000	8,388,608
26	4,745,000	33,555,032

If "Faithful Discipler" ceased to disciple others and all those directly and indirectly disciplined by him ceased to disciple it would still take "Super Evangelist" another 183.8 years of leading 500 people to the Lord every day to catch up with what "Faithful Discipler" accomplished in 26 years.

Obviously, this is an exaggerated illustration and it is likely that neither of these men could achieve what is presented, however, "Faithful disciple" is much closer to the NT model than "Super Evangelist" and is more likely to succeed. Now I've pretty much lived by this formula and I've not come close to accomplishing this. So what's the point?

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." III Jn 4

Dcl: One should be moved to follow the NT Model that is STATED, MANDATED, and MODELED in the Scriptures. Determine to make a disciple for Christ this year and every year following teaching him/her to make disciples, as well.

### III. Implementing the NT

#### A. Comments

Academics are extremely important. For the most part many training institutions do a good job in this area. A good academic program without discipleship will accomplish much but it will never really fill the gap. Academics and discipleship must be brought together. It is often assumed that this happens automatically but it does not.

Note: Any program or plan will be successful only as the Holy Spirit works and men respond. God's favor is always needed.

1. One on one.

This is probably the single best way to make disciples.

a. Good materials available.

b. The investing of one's life on behalf of another.

Working through a disciple guide is not disciple making. It takes time. This can be very rewarding and heartbreaking, too. Remember Mark 3:14.

2. A training institution with a disciple making emphasis and that has a student teacher ratio that is favorable to disciple making. Preferably as a ministry of a local church. The local church is part of God's plan and provides many safeguards and practical training opportunities. It can be done well in other ways but a strong local church position is recommended.

On the field most training institutions are not able to reach the academic level of those Stateside, however, in the area of disciple making they can do as good a job as anyone anywhere. Don't forget, the Holy Spirit is the real teacher.

B. What BPM is doing in Bolivia

1. The Mobil Bible Institute.

a. History: Began in Postrevalle to meet the need of training nationals without losing them to the city churches.

b. Development: Block classes.

2. Independent Baptist Institute of Discipleship

a. A local church ministry: The Independent Baptist Church of Vallegrande.

b. Interested in the total preparation of the students.

c. Classroom approach: 2 years with OT emphasis and 2 years with NT emphasis.

d. Student attitudes are all important. They cannot graduate if they fail in this area.

e. Work (physically) together.

- f. Travel and minister together.
  - g. Play together.
  - h. It is composed of 3 study periods of 11 weeks each.
- The students and teachers develop an uncommon relationship. One that lends itself toward disciple making. By the way, it's a 2-way street.

Note: We are considering adjusting this program to facilitate foreign students. Possibly Americans Christians who desire to learn Spanish and prepare for ministry either on the foreign field or with Spanish speakers within the U.S.

### 3. The Training to Reach Outlying Areas Today Program (TROTT).

This is an intensive 10-week training program for prospective missionaries. It is designed to help prepare servants of God for full-time, long term, "Pioneer" missionary ministry. TROTT is not a tourist experience. It is real life, down to earth, hard working, hands on missions. The TROTT program offers a mix of academic and practical studies.

Conclusion: It is said there are many ways to skin a mule and there is more than one acceptable approach to training nationals while still applying the NT Model. What is being done on mission fields the world over is in constant flux. The approach used in Bolivia is developing all the time and one prays that it is improving. Determine the Scriptural principles that one must submit to and move forward as God leads.

*Lance, "Bud," is a genuine Yooper, born and raised in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. His family has been involved in "back country" church planting since 1982. The Lord has used the Raders to establish 5 churches in the Bolivian Andes, with a couple more works in progress. In addition to church planting, they are involved in a Bible institute, aviation ministry, orphanage, Bible camp and a hands-on missionary training program. He met his wife, Karen, at Northland Baptist Bible College and God has blessed them with 6 children, several of which are serving the Lord as missionaries.*