

Church Growth Through Discipleship



By Paul Jinadu

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the summer of 1983 some 8,000 evangelists from around the world were invited to Amsterdam, Holland, by Dr Billy Graham, to participate in the World Congress on Evangelism. I was privileged to be there. We were given many books on evangelism. We were granted permission by the various publishers of these books to make use of their material as we saw fit. The only stipulation being that we should acknowledge the authors.

One theme that arrested my attention throughout that conference was the subject of discipleship, and I took away with me a number of books on the subject.

I want to express my gratitude to the authors whose work have been of tremendous blessing to me ever since, and whose thoughts have shaped my views and understanding on the subject of discipleship.

In writing this book I also want to acknowledge my indebtedness to one of my co-workers in our local church in London, Rev Peter Magbadelo. I entrusted to him the monumental task of sifting through numerous books and programmes on discipleship, especially as it relates to church growth. His hard work and research on the subject have given me enough ammunition to put together this programme.

I am also grateful to my wife who has skillfully read the manuscript and made some adjustments here and there, as well some suggestions. I am highly indebted to Gbile Akanni, and his publishers, Peace House, for permission granted to adapt and reproduce some of his work on Discipleship. I give credit to the committee appointed by the board of the American Assemblies of God, as well as other individuals, on their investigations into and recommendations for best way to participate in the vision of G-12 as a church growth model.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to my fellow-labourer and long term friend Rev Emmanuel Ajao, who has been my disciple for the past forty years. I have never seen anyone so tenacious and loyal in following another man in our common pursuit of knowing and following Jesus better.

His catch phrase used to be: "Sometimes I may not know where I am going but I know when I'm being led astray". He also has made many disciples for the Lord, and so continued the multiplication process, and we are both growing old gracefully and still bearing fruit to the glory of God.

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Preface

MY PRAYERS

The real cry of our hearts, my wife and I and that of many people around me, is for a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit in revival fire. But as we all know most revivals don't last long, though some leave a lasting legacy. I am hoping and praying this effort to encourage church growth through discipleship will go some way to fan the flame of revival in our time, and to keep the flame going for a generation or more.

I am also aware that similar efforts to get the church growing have fallen foul of man's tendency to build a monument around the move of God. This is certainly true of the G12 vision, which has degenerated into a pyramid system in some churches, where a few men are lording it over the people of God.

So it is my prayer that we can achieve a balance through this effort. The programme is not cast in stone. Everyone who chooses to adopt it is at liberty to make necessary adjustment to suit his situation and goals. I am sure there would be need to tweak it here and there as we gain more experience in putting the ideas into practice, as we have not gone this way before.

Whatever the case some form of disciplined approach must be found to evangelism, discipleship and church growth. Otherwise we could be accused of praying for revival as an end in itself, rather than as a means to an end.

- Brother Paul

Chapter 1

MAKING DISCIPLES

It is amazing that as Christians we profess to be followers of Christ, yet down through the centuries we have neglected to follow His pattern of winning souls and assimilating them into the Church.

The result of our chosen path is plain to see. Though many people claim to be Christians nowadays, we still need to qualify their stand by asking whether they are born again or just nominal Christians.

There are many mega-churches everywhere but the town or community is unmoved because we are not making disciples, only converts.

In the Early Church a person claiming to be a Christian had a personal experience of salvation, and was about the Master's business of making disciples. However, down through the years as the church became big and powerful, going to church became a way of life rather than living a life-changing experience of Christ.

In addition to the central role a place of worship played in the life of Christians, there developed a class of clergy who took responsibility for the work of the ministry. Members were expected to just attend meetings and be on the receiving end.

This state of affairs was completely contrary to the pattern of ministry set out by Paul when he instructed Timothy, "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others" (2Tim 2:2).

According to Paul there should be no break between a person becoming a believer and their developing into a leader. The use of the word "entrust" hints at a system developed to pass on the same message. The phrase "qualified to teach others" is also a pointer to some form of training. It is a chain reaction, and a break in the chain would result in a breakdown of the system.

The Place of Apostles and Prophets

In a balanced local church the five-fold ministries should operate in one degree or other.

The apostle to govern

The prophet to guide

The evangelist to gather

The pastor to guard

The teacher to ground

What God designed for church growth has actually turned out to be the route to church rot, because a simple statement was ignored or neglected over the years. I am talking about Ephesians 4:11-16,

“So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **12 to equip his people for works of service**, so that the body of Christ may be built up **13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.**

14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”

I have highlighted three important aspects of the role of the apostolic team. Whilst there are many highly gifted and mightily anointed servants of God through the years, some of whose ministries shock many large cities of the world, one important ingredient was missing in the way they conducted their work, and still do.

According to Ephesian 4:12, the major task entrusted to, say, an Evangelist, was not only to shake “my” city for Christ by attracting hundreds of thousands to a stadium. His main role is to **equip me to do the work of an evangelist**, if that was my calling or gifting.

When he has finished and moved to the next town or country, he would have left behind perhaps many hundreds of new believers,

but no evangelists. He has come and caught many fish, but failed to teach anyone how to fish. So what are we supposed to do now? I guess wait for another big outreach.

The same could be said of a pastor. Every new member wants to know who is the pastor of the church. One man has to overstate his importance and stretch himself beyond his gifting in order to play a role. How can one man be the 'father' of 1,000 people? It's not natural. No one person has the energy or the ability to meet the diverse needs and demands of a large congregation.

Doubtless there are many men and women endowed with pastoral gifts, and have the call of God to the ministry. But they are not the only ones in the church with the same calling or to a lesser degree the same gifting. The role of pastor therefore, like that of the evangelist, is to identify and train (equip) people in the congregation to carry out this ministry along with him.

So you might find in a leaders' cell team of a city church, for example, people with different complementary ministry gifts to build up the cells under their supervision, and to duplicate themselves in more leaders. This will help the church to **grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the head**. The ultimate goal of the ministry is to bring every member to maturity, so they are no easy prey to false doctrine and unscriptural practices. Each member knows what he believes, what his rights are in Christ, and how to have a fruitful, Christ-centred purpose in life. The apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are part of the local church, and they are meant to duplicate themselves in the people. The common practice of segregating the clergy from the laity over the years is not working. We are not making men for God, we are just entertaining them with religious programmes.

We are teaching people, but we are not training them to become teachers. We are building people, but we are not turning them into builders. The church is supposed to build itself up: **grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work**.

The ideal situation is when the minister engages in his area of gifting and at the same time multiplies himself by training others through the cell group.

Chapter 2

BUILDING CITY CHURCHES

Over the years it has become clear to me that our conferences with their satellites have many shortcomings. These require that we make some adjustments to make them fit for purpose. The success stories among the satellites have given us a false sense of achievement, and we fail to acknowledge or turn a blind eye to the vast majority of our branches that continue to struggle with small numbers and inadequate leadership.

At the heart of the problem is placing a man or a couple at the head of a new plant, where their ministry gifts are not sufficient to meet the challenges they are bound to face. A man may be a good pastor and functioning well in a large congregation. His maturity and submission to authority may prompt the leadership to send him and his family to plant another centre, perhaps closer to where they live.

In fairness they may be given a couple of families as support members. However, cracks may soon appear for two or more reasons. One reason for stagnation and stunted growth may be because the leaders have never worked together at the large church. And even if they had worked together they may have competing gifts rather than complimentary ones. So you get two pastors in a congregation of 15 adults. No youth or children's workers, no one with the gift of an evangelist, and the struggle begins, which may lead to stagnation.

The big church quickly replaces those it had sown as a new plant, and believes it's because they are fulfilling a spiritual principle: sow and you shall reap. But the new plant may grow at a modest pace if at all. Whereas the reason behind the continuous growth of the larger church is because it has all the right ingredients in place, since it has a full compliment of able leaders.

As the large church continues to grow it faces accommodation problems, and may resort to same old remedy of planting more satellites, which are separate and indigenious. These in turn may struggle or thrive, if the mix is right. Here then comes the idea of a city church.

Because the city church is working the cellular vision, it can grow as large as it wishes without losing its effectiveness. When one building is full to capacity, even with multiple services, it just expands into another building wherever it wants and can within the city; the leadership structure, the training, the finances and the facilities are shared. It is one church meeting at different venues.

This approach to church life is possible because of one fundamental difference to traditional ways. The emphasis is on 'go and give' and not 'come and get'. The focus is on the cells: the people. When and where they meet are not as important because the leader is making disciples. It would be a different matter if he was only trying to get them to attend meetings, where the venue and what goes on in it are crucial to a new man's decision to stay or walk away. It is the cell leader and his ministry of discipleship who is key to retaining disciples and not what programmes are going on in a building.

Some cell groups may decide to hold their services on a Monday lunch hour near their work place, while others may meet at nine Saturday evening. It's groups of 12 meeting: that makes it easier to find places to meet. A person thus committed by association and thorough grounding in Christ will follow you anywhere for Sunday celebrations. In Yonggi Cho's congregation of 1 million in Seoul, South Korea, each member can only make appearance at the Central Church perhaps once a year. Yet the church is increasing in number at the rate of 10,000 people a month. Each cell continues to develop and grow into more cells because they all share from the same pool of ministers and resources.

Periodically the whole congregation can meet for a time of convocation and celebration, so they can receive the same food and fresh directions from the core leaders of the city church.

The Missed Opportunity in Turkey

This was precisely what the church stopped practicing 1,500 years after Pentecost in Turkey. Christians had become complacent, lost their focus, paid more attention to their personal goals than the Great Commission, built large and impressive edifices, gloried in their large numbers, and stopped making disciples.

A country of the seven churches of Revelation, where Paul the apostle was born, has now become 98% Islam. A salutary warning

to us all that once corruption and apathy set in the demise of the church is only a matter of time. In fact Satan does not need to do anything to destroy the church. We are quite capable of doing it ourselves. Just by deviating from New Testament pattern of Church growth, even if only by a small degree over decades, the rot will have set in with its inevitable consequences.

The dynamics of the church is that it must be making disciples: we must win them, instruct them, involve them and invest them. Our physical bodies would be in a serious condition if any of its part was not receiving blood supply or neural signals from the brain. Yet in the Body of Christ we have people who are totally detached; they just attend meetings.

Discipleship and church growth go hand in hand. That is why it is one of the cardinal doctrines of the New Covenant Church. In spite of our stand on the subject however, the desired result of sustained and substantial growth has eluded us. So I have been looking for ways to get the job done more effectively by putting together a package that is easily transferable from one member to another.

Chapter 3

Here is how Robert Coleman puts it in his article: **SELECTION OF DISCIPLES.**

Multitudes Aroused

The ability of Jesus to impress the multitudes created a serious problem in His ministry. He was so successful in expressing to them His compassion and power that they once wanted “to take Him by force, to make Him King” (John 6:15). One report by the followers of John the Baptist said that “all men were clamoring for His attention (John 3:26). Even the Pharisees admitted among themselves that the world had gone after Him (John 12:19). However one looks at it, the Gospel record certainly does not indicate that Jesus lacked any popular following among the masses, despite their hesitating loyalty, and this condition lasted right on down to the end. Indeed, it was the fear of the friendly mass feeling for Jesus that prompted His accusers to capture Him in the absence of the people (Mark 12:12; Luke 20:19).

Had Jesus given any encouragement to this popular sentiment among the masses, He easily could have had all the kingdoms of men at His feet.

But Jesus would not play to the gallery, quite the contrary. Repeatedly He took special pains to allay the superficial popular support of the multitudes which had been occasioned by His extraordinary power (e.g., John 2:23-3:3). With the disciples following His transfiguration on the Mount “He charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen” until after His resurrection (Mk 9:9). On other occasions when applauded by the crowd, Jesus would slip away with His disciples and go elsewhere to continue His ministry (John 1:29-43).

His practice in this respect sometimes annoyed His followers who did not understand His strategy. Even His own brothers and sisters, who yet did not believe on Him, urged Him to abandon this policy and make an open show of Himself to the world, but He refused to take their advise (John 7:2-9).

His Strategy

Perhaps His total number of devoted followers at the end of His earthly ministry numbered little more than the 500 brethren to whom Jesus appeared after the resurrection (1Cor 15:6), and only about 120 tarried in Jerusalem to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:15). If at this point one were to measure the effectiveness of His evangelism by the numbers of His converts, Jesus doubtless would not be considered among the most productive mass evangelists of the church.

So why did Jesus deliberately concentrate His life upon comparatively so few people? Had He not come to save the world? With the glowing announcement of John the Baptist ringing in the ears of the multitudes, the Master easily could have had an immediate following of thousands if He wanted them. Why did He not then capitalize upon His opportunities to enlist a mighty army of believers to take the world by storm?

The answer to this question focuses at once the real purpose of His plan for evangelism. Jesus was not trying to impress the crowd, but to usher in a Kingdom. This meant that He needed men who could lead the multitudes.

Jesus was a realist. He fully understood the fickleness of depraved human nature and was well of the satanic forces of this world amassed against humanity. In focusing on twelve “unlikely” men He knew exactly what He was doing. Just a few short years later these eleven disciples and Paul had “filled Jerusalem with the knowledge of Jesus” and “turned the world upside down.”

Chapter 4

THE PRINCIPLE APPLIED TODAY

There is an article by Colin Dye of Kensington Temple London, which sheds more light on this subject. His statements so express my feelings and aspirations that I felt I couldn't have put it better myself. I am sharing it with you now to show how this principle of discipleship as practiced by Jesus and Apostle Paul is working today.

For years we have been pioneering new ways of "doing church" in London. The London City Church vision is unique. From 1985 - 2000, we planted around 150 churches together with 450 other groups and ministries networked together in one fellowship, one church - LCC. This meant we had achieved 30% of our total goals.

The underachievement of our goals, however, meant we needed to find new ways of mobilizing God's people. The goal is for every member of the Kensington Temple KT/LCC network to be serving Jesus and fulfilling the vision of Christ - to make, mature and mobilize disciples of all nations. We fulfilled our vision for the 1990's, to become a fully functioning City Church. Now, the church is moving forward in the new cell strategy, continuing to win London for Christ and reaching out into the unevangelised nations of the world.

The focus is now on the cells as the principle means of becoming the church of influence which Christ has called us to be. We want to become a very effective discipling force in London.

In the summer of 2000, Colin and Amanda Dye led a team of leaders to Bogota, Colombia in South America. They went to look at the ministry of Pastor Cesar Castellanos. His church, "The International Charismatic Mission," had grown from 8 members to well over 120,000 in just 18 years. By the year 2004 there were 55,000 reported cells taking the church into the hundreds of thousands. What was the reason for this explosion? The Lord gave Pastor Cesar a vision of the multitudes and a strategy to reach them. It is a cell church ministry based on the Government of 12 (G 12). Colin said that this strategy was the best method of training, releasing and mobilising the body of Christ that he has

ever seen. It was a God-given strategy for the Church of the end times. But he saw it was much, much more than a strategy or a method. It was a vision from the Lord. The team came back from Bogota full of joy and ready for the public launch of KT's own G12 vision - Discipleship Cell Explosion.

In line with the national vision of the Elim Church, Colin Dye has always emphasised the growth of the church by discipleship. This was his motivation in moving to a cell church model. Jesus never told us to build His church - still less our church! Instead he told us to 'Make disciples.' That means as we get busy with the business of building people, He will be about the business of building his church. When it came to the needs of the multitude, Jesus said, "the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few!" Again, the emphasis is on building people, and making them ready to go out and reap the harvest. The cell vision takes this emphasis of Jesus seriously and gives us a strategy in which the whole church can be built up, trained and released into the work of Jesus.

Kensington Temple has seen remarkable growth seeing a retention rate for new believers grow from under 10% to over 60%. New believers are being added to the cells every day and hundreds of new leaders are raised up each year. The cell strategy according to the model of 12 is also being adopted by churches all over Europe where there are early signs of fruit as some churches transitioning to cell church are reporting a doubling and trebling of their numbers. The strategy is proving to be adaptable to cultures outside Latin America.

In September 2003, Kensington Temple, London City Church completed a three-year transition into the G12 model of cell church, having grown to 11,000 people in 1,800 cells. With around 70% of the church active in cells the leadership were well on their way to achieve their goal of maximum mobilization.

Since then, the main thrust of the life and ministry of the church is through the cells. These cells are considered tiny units of 'church' doing everything that 'church' should be doing. Cells are now where the evangelism, discipleship, pastoral care and prayer life of the Kensington Temple takes place.

This new emphasis on cells highlighted the missing element in the KT/LCC strategy up to the year 2000. Colin says, "While we have always had a vision for cells, we had not in the past made them

our central focus. We didn't find a model that worked well or was adaptable to our needs. All that has now changed. We are now well on our way to becoming a 'fully-functioning cell church' with thousands of cells penetrating London and networking across the city. We have a godly goal of becoming the most effective disciple-making centre in London. We are moving forward in a united vision to win the lost, consolidate them as new believers, disciple them as leaders and send them into the harvest fields of the world.”

Chapter 5

THE VISION FOR MULTIPLICATION

There is another article, which sheds yet more light on the subject. It's called: The Vision for Multiplication, by Billie Hank, Jr.

“On a sunny Florida afternoon years ago, I heard the haunting and unforgettable words of a leading evangelical British minister who said, “Mark my words, North American Christians: Your large church buildings will be as empty as the cathedrals of Great Britain within a span of twenty-five to fifty years if you do not change your methodology.”

The well-known cleric spoke with assurance of a prophet, yet the humility of one who had been mellowed by many years of Christian service.

Our Traditional Methodology

After hearing the English pastor speak, I decided to investigate his claims. In subsequent years I spent considerable time in England and in Europe and learned to appreciate the wisdom of his words. I discovered striking similarities between declining spiritual vitality and decreasing church membership in Great Britain decades ago and what we are seeing in large segments of the church in North America today.

One day while I was working in the Billy Graham crusade in London I was invited to lunch by one of England's leading young evangelists. Over the meal we discussed evangelism in our two countries and denominations, comparing various approaches and methods from the Anglican perspective and my Southern Baptist background.

After graciously complimenting my denomination as one of the world's most evangelistic, he asked me a most penetrating question: “What percentage of your Baptist laity would normally win someone to Jesus Christ during any given year?”

I had to tell him that even in our best years fewer than 5% of the laity and clergy combined lead anyone to a saving knowledge of Christ.

The Evangelized as Evangelizers

Dr Herschel H. Hobbs has wisely said, “The work of evangelism is never complete until the evangelized becomes the evangelizer.” Amplifying this statement, if the process of making disciples is to be complete, all new Christians should be trained to be active in evangelism themselves. This full-circle apprenticeship process requires time, love, discipline, and personal instruction. The added work of discipleship is well worth the investment, because the fruit remains and multiplies.

The Gospels show us that Jesus trained His disciples by association before giving them the Great Commission. Being with them was their primary means of learning how to minister. Mark tells us, “He appointed twelve – designating them apostles – that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach” (Mark 3:14).

The disciples’ evangelism grew out of a lifestyle seasoned by many hours in Jesus’ presence. They were apprenticed in real-life situations. They saw evangelism, counseling, preaching, teaching, and every other form of ministry firsthand.

Our lack of training through apprenticeship leaves vast numbers of laypeople unfulfilled, because their spiritual gifts are never developed and remain unused. These people fail to receive a workable strategy for personal evangelism, so they settle into a life of churchmanship rather than disciple making.

In many instances they are left wide open to an assortment of false doctrines that thrive on the biblical ignorance of immature but well-meaning church members who never received the sound instruction or loving care of a more mature Christian.

If we learn to be **with people, equipping them as Jesus did**, and long to see new Christians perfected in Christ as Paul and Barnabas did (Acts 14:21-23), our generation can expect to see the greatest multiplication of converts and congregations since the early days of the Church.

Chapter 6

THE G-12 VISION

Down through the years there have been numerous attempts to rediscover the method Jesus used to train and deploy His disciples. One such recent attempt is the government of 12, popularly known as the G-12 vision. I intend to adapt and adopt some of their format.

G12 Cells

Broadly speaking, the G12 strategy employs a four-step method called the "**Ladder of Success:**" winning, consolidating, discipling, and sending. At its most basic level, the initial twelve chosen by the pastor should seek a host who will open his house or office to start a cell group. A leader coordinates the group, assisted by a "**Timothy**" who is responsible for opening new cells once the initial group exceeds twelve participants. A cell may begin with six people. At each gathering, the strategy of the vacant chair is used, in which participants commit to inviting someone so the seat will be occupied by a new person at the next meeting. "**The cell should aim to win at least one new believer every week.**"

Unlike traditional cell-church models, the G12 system demands each cell leader and his or her assistants set ambitious "**growth goals.**" For example, the target might be set on a weekly basis (in which a new believer must be won every week), or a monthly basis (in which the cell leader is expected to open one new group per month). Thus, after twelve months, each leader would have at least 12 cells; and after 24 months, there would be an average of 144 cell groups.

In the G12 "**cellular vision,**" discipleship is the key to church development. In this system, before a Christian can be considered a disciple, he or she should be directing at least one cell group. Otherwise, he cannot be part of someone else's "**twelve,**" and should submit himself to the authority of the leader who chose him. When this disciple has his own twelve, these will also submit themselves to him.

Responsibilities of a Cell Leader

Each leader has three main responsibilities. The first is to meet once a week with his or her own leader (to whose group of twelve he or she belongs); second, to direct his or her own weekly cell group; and third, to meet with his or her own twelve disciples once a week. Once a leader has his or her twelve, he or she will have to help his or her twelve to each select their own twelve, until the number of people under him or her reach 144 cell leaders. At that point, the leader no longer directs his or her own cell group, but continues to supervise his or her own twelve to make sure that all is running correctly.

Consolidation

Typically, the nonbeliever who begins to attend a cell group and receives Christ as Saviour will attend church on Sunday and respond again to the altar call. The three steps that follow -- "**Pre-Encounter**," "**Encounter**," and "**Post-Encounter**" -- are called the "**Consolidation Process**" and should begin "**immediately after the new believer has made his decision for Christ.**" To prepare for the Encounter, the new convert should participate in a series of four weekly, one-hour studies:

- The new birth
- Principles of deliverance
- Assurance of salvation
- Power of the Scriptures

Next the convert is strongly encouraged to participate in a Weekend Encounter. Pastor Castellanos, who received the vision of the G12, declares, "**We have proved that an Encounter is equivalent to a full year of church attendance.**"

At this stage, everyone is encouraged to attain a leadership qualification through the School of Leaders.

- Consolidate Them: Consolidation is the foundation on which new disciples are built. This process usually takes place in the cell or in the church with a team of specially trained leaders. Members of the consolidation team are assigned to new believers to enroll them in weekly Life Cell gatherings and guide them through a short "Pre- Encounter" course. They are then registered in an "Encounter Weekend." During this weekend they "Encounter God" through teachings on inner healing, deliverance, generational curses, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and the vision of the church.

Following the retreat, they are encouraged to attend a ten-week new believers' class called "Post-Encounter." The purpose of this is to verify the conversion experience and to teach "correct" attitudes toward life.

- **Disciple Them:** Immediately after the completion of the consolidation process, the new disciple enters the School of Leaders. This consists of three ten-week trimesters of study. During the second trimester, the individual will begin their own cell group. However, they will also continue meeting in their original group which now becomes their leadership or G12 group.
- **Send Them:** As the disciple progresses through the School of Leaders, he begins his personal Cell Group and starts to develop his own twelve. The process begins again and he leads each member through each step of the process of the G12 vision, winning them, consolidating them, disciplining them, and eventually sending them out.

We must acknowledge that this church has been expanding at a phenomenal growth rate. From 70 home groups at the beginning, MCI (Mission Charismatic International) now claims over 30,000 cells.

Chapter 7

THE FAILURE OF THE TRADITIONAL METHOD

Here is the observation of an Assemblies of God minister.

“It is probable that every pastor in our movement claims a passion for souls and for multiplication within the church. However, the facts of a 2004 research project led by Thom Rainer are sobering. He found that it presently takes 86 church members in America one year to reach a person for Christ. I realize that these kind of statistical studies are imperfect. However, if it is even close we must face the reality that the church is not reproducing itself.”

Someone has described today’s church as being very similar to Super Bowl Sunday; this is a day where 22 men desperately in need of rest are being watched by 22 million men desperately in need of exercise!

The stated goal of the G12 movement is, “To form every believer into a leader.” This is accomplished through participation in the School of Leaders.

After completing the consolidation process the new disciple enters this intensive training venue. This school consists of three ten-week trimesters of study. During the second trimester, the student will actually begin their own cell group. The reality of this process is that new converts move from their initial conversion experience into church leadership within a six month period.

While it can (and should) be argued that this is not enough time to effectively develop spiritual leaders, it does provide a scenario that intentionally moves the new believer from audience to participant. It seems to me that this is a goal we should all strive for.

Structure for Growth

If you are not winning souls and making disciples on a regular basis then the rot has begun to set in. Life’s problems begin to pile up. Challenges upon challenges queue up at your door to occupy your time and energy. Then you may join the merry-go-round crowd of looking for places to get your “breakthroughs”.

We have seen earlier that it is our role to build the people, and it is

Jesus' role to build His church. The two missions are intertwined. Jesus will build His Church by the way I build His people, which is why He told us to "make disciples of all nations". So we must:

- a) Win them
- b) Consolidate them
- c) Disciple them
- d) Send them

This is the ministry of every believer, not just for those who are "called" or who have more time on their hands. It's for every member of the body of Christ.

There are many ways people want you to show them you love them:

Some want to be hugged.

Some want to hear endearing words.

Some want to be showered with gifts.

Jesus just wants you to obey His commandments.

"If you love Me, keep My commands", He said in John 14:15.

If I claim to be saved, what am I saved from? The answer clearly is: sin. And what is sin? It is rebellion against God. So to be saved means to stop rebelling against God's demand on my life and to start obeying Him.

Discipleship is really at the heart of our faith. If I am not willing to be discipled, or ready to make disciples, then surely I cannot claim to be born again, and free from sin.

"We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. 4 Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. 5 But if anyone obeys his word, love for God is truly made complete in them" (1 John 2:3-5).

When we come to faith in Christ and get born again we all come with a lot baggage. The obstacles to growth in the spirit are the flesh, the world, and the devil. The principal enemy of all three is the flesh; it's the enemy within. It must be put to death, or it will ultimately rob us of our inheritance in Christ.

"Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind

governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. 8 Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:5-8).

Putting to death the works of the flesh, and putting on the new life in Christ is at the heart of disciple-making. However, as we have seen so far this work cannot be done through the conveyor belt method of attending meetings alone, or through self-help. The method Jesus adopted was to call to Himself the twelve, and "make" them. We, too, need to be made into the image of Christ through somebody, and be ready and equipped to help somebody else become like Christ.

Tools and Strategies

There are tools and strategies to help us achieve these goals in a structured manner, because discipleship is for life. Paul will always need a Barnabas and a Timothy will always need a Paul.

For us to adopt the G-12 vision there has to be a transition period. Kensington Temple, London, found themselves transitioning from 30% to 60% after a number of years. Every pastor's dream, of course, would be to have 100% participation by the congregation. That is quite a tall order, as the human nature has the tendency to look for the comfort zone. But all efforts to achieve maximum participation are well worth it.

Chapter 8

MULTIPLYING YOUR EFFORTS

Walter A Hendricksen made some observations in his article: *Multiplying your efforts*.

The cost involved in multiplication can be seen in the fact that it is initially slower than the process of addition. This is particularly important as we apply it to fulfilling the Great Commission. Let's say for example that a gifted evangelist is able to lead 1,000 people to Christ every day. Each year he will have reached 365,000 people, a phenomenal ministry indeed.

Let's compare him with a disciple who leads not 1,000 people a day to Christ, but only one person a year. At the end of one year, the disciple has one convert; the evangelist, 365,000. Suppose, however, the disciple has not only led his man to Christ, but has also discipled him. He has prayed with him, taught him how to feed himself from the Word of God, gotten him into fellowship with like-minded believers, taken him out on evangelism and showed him how to present the gospel to other people. At the end of that first year, this new convert is able to lead another man to Christ and follow him up as he himself has been followed up.

At the start of the second year, the disciple has doubled his ministry – the one has become two. During the second year, each man goes out and leads not 1,000 people per day to Christ, but one person each year. At the end of the second year, we have four people. You can see how slow our process is. But note, too, that we do not have only converts, but disciples who are able to reproduce themselves. At this rate of doubling every year, the disciple, leading one man per year to Christ, will overtake the evangelist numerically somewhere in the nineteenth year. From then on, the disciple and his multiplying ministry will be propagating faster than the combined ministry of dozens of gifted evangelists.

Quality is the Key to Multiplication

The key to success in the multiplying process is training the disciple in depth. Each time one person fails to “reproduce spiritually” you cut your results in half. Note what Paul says to

Timothy, his son in the faith, “And the things that thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2, KJV). Four generations are clearly seen in Paul, Timothy, faithful men, and others also. Multiplication is assured only when there is proper training of faithful people who can carry the training process into succeeding generations.

It is easy to see that the training process needed to ensure multiplication is slow and costly. It takes a tremendous amount of time. And whenever you endeavor to insert a shortcut, you jeopardize the whole process.

A friend of mine and I were talking about a discipling ministry, and he said, “I am in the process of discipling fifty men right now”. At that point I realized that he and I were talking about two entirely different things, for it is impossible to train fifty people at the same time. Disciples cannot be mass-produced.

Chapter 9

CHURCH ON THE MOVE

In all our church activities we must never lose sight of the main objective of our salvation. A Christian is a follower of Christ, pure and simple. That is why in these training programmes our emphasis is: following in the footsteps of Jesus in His character, and doing what Jesus did in the way He did it.

When Jesus called His disciples, He said to them: “Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.” The discipleship programme must not become an end in itself, a mere church programme, something people who join the New Covenant Church are expected to do. The programme must lead to winning souls and making disciples of them. It is an ongoing, life-time commitment, no matter the size of the building or the challenges some people are facing. It is a task that must be done. Its what we are born to do – reproduce people after the image of Christ.

For this enormous task we need the power of the Holy Spirit and the right tools. If every member can be trained and given the right tools, we can still fulfill the Great Commission in our generation. The problem is not with the world, it's the church that needs to be totally committed to the task at hand.

“Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Mt 9:35-38).

We can see clearly from this scripture that there is no problem with the harvest. Jesus says it is ripe, ready and plentiful. The missing link is the readiness of the church.

This discipleship programme through the cell group is to replace our normal house fellowship. In many ways the two systems resemble each other, and in another sense they are diametrically opposed.

In the house group:

- a) church members are divided into small groups, meeting at a place convenient for those who live in the area.
- b) The house fellowship co-ordinator appoints a leader, and directs members living close together to attend the weekly meeting.
- c) A theme or topic of Bible passage is treated throughout the year. This is followed by prayers and general fellowship.
- d) At regular intervals some form of evangelistic outreach is undertaken to try to win more people to Christ and added to the church.
- e) Over time a lot of bonding takes place among the members of the fellowship, which can often result in support and assistance to member in need. We then find that good and successful fellowships do retain their members, and enjoy a lot of deep loyalty to the group. However, the more they bond the harder some find it to subdivide, and multiply.

This pattern of meeting serves primarily to keep members in touch with one another, and engage people in ministry who might not have the opportunity to make any contribution on Sundays.

In the G-12 style of cell group:

- a) The cell leader is a product of discipleship from another cell group, whose primary aim is to train, disciple and send out all its members.
- b) Here the meetings have a deliberate purpose.
- c) The cell leader is the one who goes out to find his own 12 people. He wins them, instructs them, involves them and then invests them, by sending them out to start their own groups.
- d) This group is more dynamic. On average members will not be together for more than nine months before each one is ready to be a leader of his/her own cell.
- e) Where and when they meet are in the hands of the leader. Crucially the big difference here is that while the cell leader is running his group of 12, he himself is a member of another 12 leaders in fellowship and in training.

Every member of the church is being disciplined, while they themselves are making disciples. Where there is maximum participation in a church, no member will be idle and playing church. We'll get soldiers ready for war rather than patients with war wounds. The church will be back to the way Jesus intended it, a powerful, purposeful followers. We must hit the devil hard where it hurts so he would have no time or resources to keep on afflicting Christians.

Chapter 10

HOW TO TAKE OFF

To kick off the programme and take the church through the transition period:

A pastor is to train twelve people from his congregation in the G12 strategy; this group will be "**the pastor's twelve.**" Next, each one of these twelve must go and do likewise by choosing twelve disciples of their own who will, in turn, seek twelve more disciples via cell groups.

After the pastor's 12, which forms the bedrock of the programme, subsequent cell groups can be made up of about six members of the congregation. The rest will be added through non-members joining the group through aggressive evangelism.

Established members will go through the School of Leaders (training in discipleship) from where they, too, will start their own cell through evangelism. There is no room for a cell system where we are just recycling members. We are to go out and make disciples of all nations. It is our calling as Christians. Here and there you will have cell groups joining hands in concerted efforts to put on outreach programmes. Each cell must endeavor to win one new person to Christ every week. If a shop-keeper is not making sales on a regular basis he will soon be out of business.

Jesus said, "I will build My church...". That's what He does, but we must provide Him with the building blocks to work with.

Material:

Understanding The Concept and Conditions for Discipleship
By Gbile Akanni

Permission has been granted to adapt this study guide for our use. The book has 12 study chapters with questions, which we have broken up into 12 separate worksheets for ease of use.

Each member of this **School of Leaders** is then expected to start his/her own group of 12 people, made up of about 6-8 church members and the rest from new converts or new people joining the church. Once every member has his/her own group of 12 running the **School of Leaders** 12 becomes the **G-12**. This

means that while they are in a group of 12, they themselves are running their own group of 12.

This vision of maintaining the number 12 in a cell group is following our Lord's example of 12 disciples. It has also been shown by psychologists that 12 people in a group is just the right number to manage: not too small and not too big to be effective in bonding among the members as well as ease of meeting their objectives.

In summary we have two sets of 12:

- a) The initial 12 set up by the pastor in the School of Leaders.
- b) The group of 12 set up by each member of the School of Leaders. This is made up of 6-8 members of the church, while the rest are new converts (or new comers).
- c) When we reach full participation in the church all members of the **Consolidation Group** will be new converts. This will make our growth rate faster, as new converts are added every week.
- d) After graduation the consolidation group becomes the **School of Leaders**, from where each member is expected to start his/her own consolidation group of 12.

Conducting the cell group meetings is done on the same line as the way we presently run the house fellowship. There should be worship, a short word of exhortation, doing the lessons, sharing testimonies to encourage one another, and praying for personal and church needs. Full participation should be aimed for, so that one person does not hog the limelight and exclude others. On occasions light refreshments or social activities can be added. The group may even decide on a fun day to relax and enjoy each other's company.

Cell group meetings should be a fun place to be, a place to where people, especially new people, will enjoy coming. If you as a leader have to 'force' or coerce people to attend your meeting, and you don't see growth, then you must examine the reasons why, and seek help from your own group for a solution.

Chapter 11

JESUS AND HIS METHOD

How did Jesus go about getting His 12 disciples? Knowing his method of recruiting men will help us immensely to follow in His footsteps.

1. Jesus Prayed All Night

His evangelistic method started with prayers, and intensive prayers they were, lasting all night. Before He spoke to men about God, Jesus first spoke to God about men.

He said, “No man can come unto Me unless the Father draws him”. Witnessing to people that bears fruit is a direct result of prayer. For it is only as the Spirit of God works in the hearts of men that they can be saved. To give men a remedy they must have a sense of need for it, otherwise our words will fall on deaf ears.

Besides, it is the work of the Holy Spirit to “convict of sin”. Thereafter the message of the gospel, in whatever ways we deliver it, will reach the hearts of men.

Because Jesus saw His disciples as God sent, He said in His prayers for them, “Of all that You gave Me I lost none”. So it is God, in answer to fervent prayers, who will give you the 12 people to disciple. God will lead you to people whose hearts He has prepared.

Praying all night for souls to be saved, and seeking all day and everyday to find someone to share the gospel with sounds all well and good on paper. In reality it has many problems attached to it. It won't last if it's done out of a sense of duty or guilt. We want something that can become a lifestyle more than an obligation.

Because it is spiritual work we can look to the Holy Spirit to come to our aid, as always. Jesus ministered to the masses because He was moved with compassion for them. It was this compassion that led Him to feed the 5,000, to heal the cripple man stranded by the pool of Bethesda, to raise the dead son of the widow of Nain, and to call Lazarus back from the grave.

Compassion is not an intellectual notion; it is deeply emotional.

When Jesus heard about the death of Lazarus, He wept. Compassion for lost souls can move a man to tears.

Anyone who has studied past Revivals will tell you that above all else, it's the key elements of repentance and also heart rending, Spirit-fired prayer that first lead to Revival, and then keep the flame burning on.

However, to pray this way, we must have the Holy Spirit empowering and leading our prayers. This is why Charles Finney and others would talk about the "spirit of prayer" coming upon them. "...unless I had the spirit of prayer I could do nothing. If I lost the spirit of grace and supplication even for a day or an hour I found myself unable to preach with power and efficiency, or to win souls by personal conversation".

It's not natural to pray for men this way. We need to seek the Holy Spirit to help us in our infirmity. To see men heading toward a Christ-less eternity and be moved with compassion in prayer and effective evangelism is not sustainable without the help of the Holy Spirit. It is part of being in a state of revival ourselves; to feel this way at all times.

2. **Jesus Made Men**

"As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 19 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." 20 At once they left their nets and followed him" (Matthew 18-20)

Too often we witness to people about Christ, they give their hearts to the Lord and get saved, and then we leave them to grow up on their own. We expect them to grow up on the same diet we give to the rest of the congregation, when in fact they are still "babes in Christ".

Jesus made men to become future leaders. None of His disciples remained a follower; they all became leaders of men.

One interesting observation about Andrew and Peter is that Jesus promised to make them fishers of men, something they could relate to. They knew how to fish: they did it for a living, and were evidently good at it. So they could relate to becoming fishers of men. It would not have been appropriate for Jesus to say the

same thing to Matthew, for example. He would think, “O, I need to learn how to catch fish before I can be of use on this training course”. No, Matthew the tax collector needed a different approach to ministry.

The point I see here is that Jesus was not asking Peter to do something that would be out of his comfort zone. He was in familiar territory with the imagery of fishing. So with you and me, we don't have to become what we are not in order to become effective in personal soul-winning. Remember when Peter and his companions caught a great number of fish at Jesus' command, he beckoned to his friends in the other boat to help haul the catch ashore. You may be shy and timid in approaching people in evangelism, but you can help bring in the catch through the efforts of more confident workers.

I heard of a man who was scared of sharing his faith with strangers. So he always prayed that the Holy Spirit would let someone open up a conversation with him on matters of religion. Sensing an opening when they do, all he had to do was just simply tell them how he got saved. He apparently got many people saved that way than people who were more confident but less subtle.

3. Jesus Called Men To Be With Him

For Jesus, and also for Paul, making disciples was not done in a classroom setting. He associated with them, he took them with Him on missions, and they watched and learned from Him as He did His miracles. We read that after Jesus turned water into wine in Cana His disciples believed in Him (John 2:11). They learned more about Him by what He did than by what He said about Himself at this point.

Paul called Timothy his son in the faith. That is how close they were. The training and mentoring were carried out in this environment of love, trust and obedience. It is an exchange of life more than mere exchange of knowledge. When you disciple an individual you are using the material only to transfer your life and experience to him. It helps to keep the training within certain curriculum so that important subjects can be treated by all participants.

We can now understand why Jesus had only men in His twelve, as it would not be appropriate to be so close in a mixed group. Paul, in line with this ethos, directed Titus:

3 “Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. 4 Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, 5 to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God” (Titus 2:3-4)

You can see traces of some kind of discipleship going on among groups of women. I am not suggesting segregation on gender or age or profession basis for cell groups, but some research suggests that homogeneous groups grow faster and get along better. People who have a lot in common find it easier to attract those of like mind to the same group. Wisdom and flexibility is called for here.

Jesus put much store on this type of leadership training. He would have felt all was lost had the twelve disciples decided to leave Him, as others took to their heels and no longer walked with Him. “Will you also go?” was a cry from the heart, for He had no plan B. But it’s worth the effort. It’s these few men who later ‘turned the world up-side-down’ for God, and changed history.

Chapter 12

WIN THEM AND CONSOLIDATE THEM

There are three stages in consolidating the new converts, in order to make sure they have a genuine experience of salvation and are being grounded in their faith in Christ.

In the Cell Group of 12 use my booklet “New Life in Christ.” This is a 30-lesson and memory verse Bible study.

Enroll them in BBC (Believers Bible Class), where they will also get teaching on: Some training material produced around 3 of my books: Authority of the Believer, 7 Reasons Why Every Christian Should Speak in Tongues, and Freedom From Bondage.

The people will now be ready for an Encounter Weekend, where they will be put through their paces to have a Peniel-type encounter with God (Gen 32:30). Any past contamination with the occult, generational issues and healing of the whole man will be dealt with. The baptism of the Holy Spirit will be ministered, and prayers will also be offered for various personal issues and needs. They should come away from the weekend thoroughly prepared for a Spirit-filled life of service for the Lord.

After graduation from this consolidation cell group and BBC the new member goes into the School of Leaders cell group, so he/she can become a leader of his/her own 12. And the process starts all over again.

Dreams and Faith Targets

The world is not waiting for the church to grow up. People for whom Christ died are going to a Christ-less eternity everyday. Hanging around waiting for people to just walk into church services because they like our worship or invited by friends won't meet the need of the hour. We must engage in aggressive, targeted evangelism to win the lost for Christ on a regular basis. We must not allow ourselves to feel comfortable if new people aren't being added to our cell groups on a weekly basis.

To achieve any goals in life, especially in ministry, we need to know how to dream. The Bible calls it 'desire' of the heart. “Delight

yourself in the Lord your God and He will give you the desire of your heart” (Ps 37:4). One should set faith targets and see oneself achieving them in the mind’s eye. If it is God who gave the command to bring people to Christ then He will gladly fulfill all our dreams to make it happen.

As a cell leader your dream should be to have your own group of 12. After that your next dream is to see your 12 disciples start their own group of 12. You don’t stop dreaming of growth until there are 144 cell groups reporting to you.

One way to achieve this dream is by setting aside one empty chair in all your meetings, and praying for it to be filled the next time you meet. When it is filled you set up another empty chair. Aim to add a new member each week. Then dream about adding another cell to your own, thus making two under your care, repeating the same process until you are at the head of a set of 12 cells. This is your G-12, your ultimate goal.

The G-12 vision according to 2 Tim 2:2

Paul wins and disciples (12) Timothy - 1 cell
“Timothy’s” win and disciple (12) Faithful men – 12 cells
Faithful men win and disciple (12) Others Also –144 cells