

OMF Thailand

IBCM Guidebook

Fourth Edition
2012

OMF International Vision

By God's grace . . .

We aim to see an indigenous biblical church movement in every people group of East Asia evangelizing their own people and reaching out in mission to other peoples.

OMF Thailand Vision

A movement of indigenous, biblical churches reproducing among their own people in Thailand and reaching out in mission to other peoples

OMF Thailand Mission

To glorify God through the urgent evangelization of Thailand

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INTRODUCTION

The words church planting are not found in the New Testament. In fact no where in the New Testament do we have a command to go plant churches. So why do we make so much of planting churches?

In Matt 16:18 the Lord Jesus Christ states his purpose, “I will build my church.” So the church is at the heart of what the Lord Jesus intends to do in this world. The word that our Lord uses here is important – ekklesia – assembly, congregation. It is a people focused word. The foundation of the church is faith in the revelation of the Father about the Son, as indicated by Christ’s response to Peter, “this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.” The essential elements of the church Jesus is building are: the revelation of God about Christ, faith in that revelation, and people of faith meeting or gathering.

We understand the great commission as the Lord explaining our part in his great purpose. The great commission is given five times in the New Testament. Each occasion the Lord Jesus gave it, indicates slightly different concerns. Mark 16:15-ff emphasizes going and preaching the gospel to all creation. We do well to remember that Mark tells us his book is the gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God. In John 20:21-ff the emphasis is that as Jesus was sent by the Father so he is sending the apostles. They will need the Holy Spirit for this and they will have the authority to forgive in the gospel message. Luke 24:45-ff looks at the results of obedience, the gospel (Christ’s suffering and resurrection, repentance and forgiveness) will be declared to all nations starting in Jerusalem as soon as they receive the Holy Spirit. In Acts 1:8 the Lord Jesus reaffirms the commission putting the emphasis on “my” witnesses. The Holy Spirit will empower them to be witnesses to Christ starting in Jerusalem but encompassing the whole world. Matt 28:16-ff. gives a slightly different emphasis. First our authority to act comes from the risen Christ. The main verb is ‘make disciples’ with the verbal participles “go,” “baptize” and “teach” all explaining how we make disciples. We must go to the nations, to all the nations (ethnic peoples). We must baptize then as they responded in repentance to the gospel (the story of Jesus Christ the Son of God who suffered and died as a ransom, was made alive again by the power of God and now has authority to forgive and to give the Holy Spirit). We teach them to obey the great commission (and great commandments) namely to go make others disciples who obey Christ and live in harmony with his resurrection authority. All this is to be done until Christ returns and in the knowledge that He is with us as we do this.

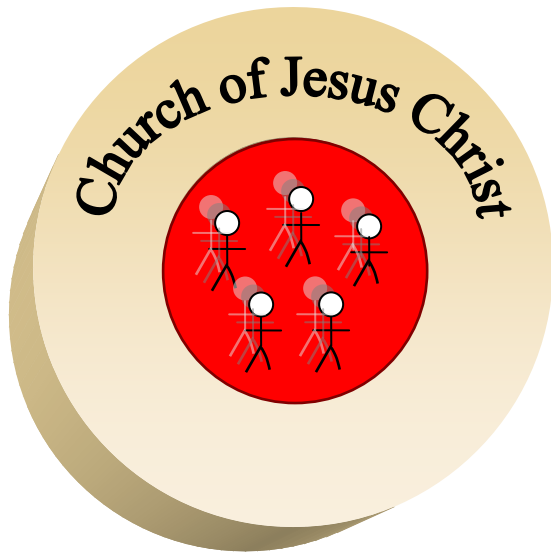
The Book of Acts is then an illustration of the disciples obeying all facets of the Great Commission. As they obeyed “ekklesia” were formed in every place. These were groups of believers who meet together, ate together (communion), mutually encouraged and instructed each other to follow the Apostle’s teaching (Great Commandment and Great Commission), and prayed for all men. They meet in homes. They most likely remembered the Lord’s death by a communion that was part of a normal meal. They had simple participative meetings where dialogue was the norm and monologue was rare. They did meet at many times and many days in the week.

Passage	Emphasis
John 20:21	The Model
Mark 16:15	The Magnitude
Mathew 28:18-20	The Method
Luke 24:44-49	The Message
Acts 1:8	The Means

Table adapted from [Commissioned](#) by Marvin Newell.

In the Great Commission there is a cycle and in the book of Acts there is a cycle. Go and share the gospel, leads to repentance and baptism as people respond to the gospel, which leads to teaching them to do all that Jesus commanded, which lead to groups of believers loving each other, remembering the Lord's death and resurrection and declaring it, which leads to more going out to share the gospel, and others responding in faith, and then being taught to go out share the gospel and make disciples. (Please reflect on the Purpose, Process and Pattern diagram on the next pages. These are available as files or as a PowerPoint on the OMF Thailand Intranet.)

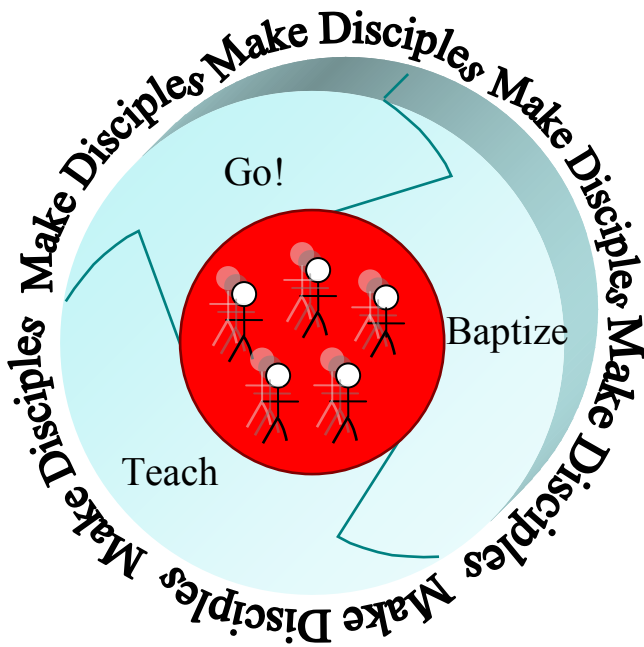
The beauty of this pattern is that it is so simple, flexible and reproducible!



Purpose

Matthew 16:18

“I will build my church”



Process

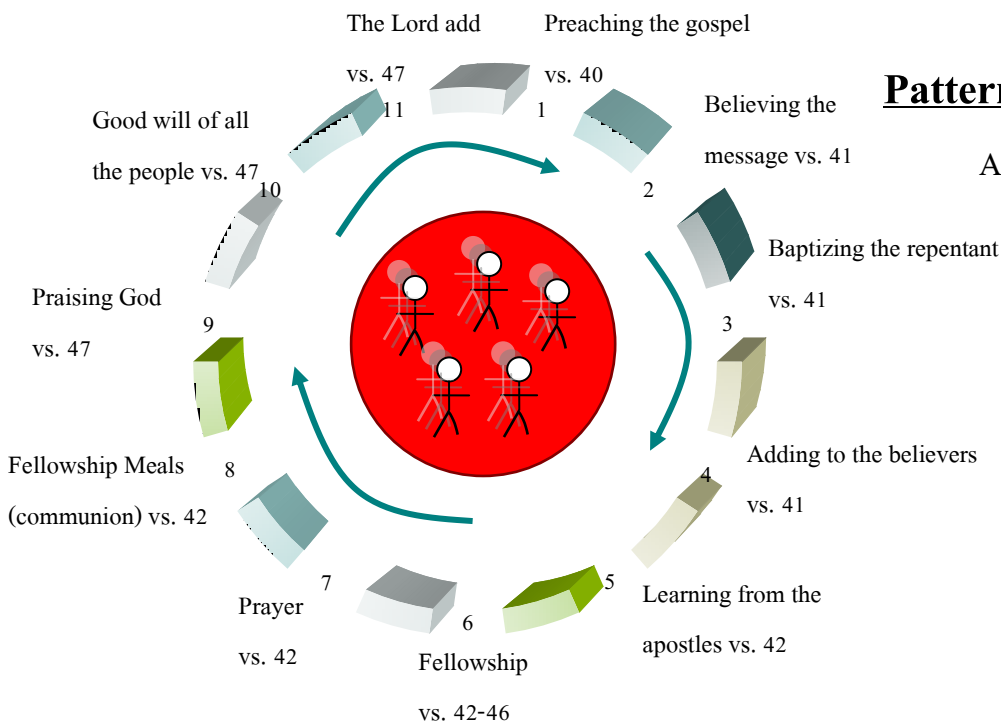
Matthew 28: 16-20

Mark 16: 15-16

Luke 24: 44-50

John 20: 21-23

Acts 1: 6-8



Pattern

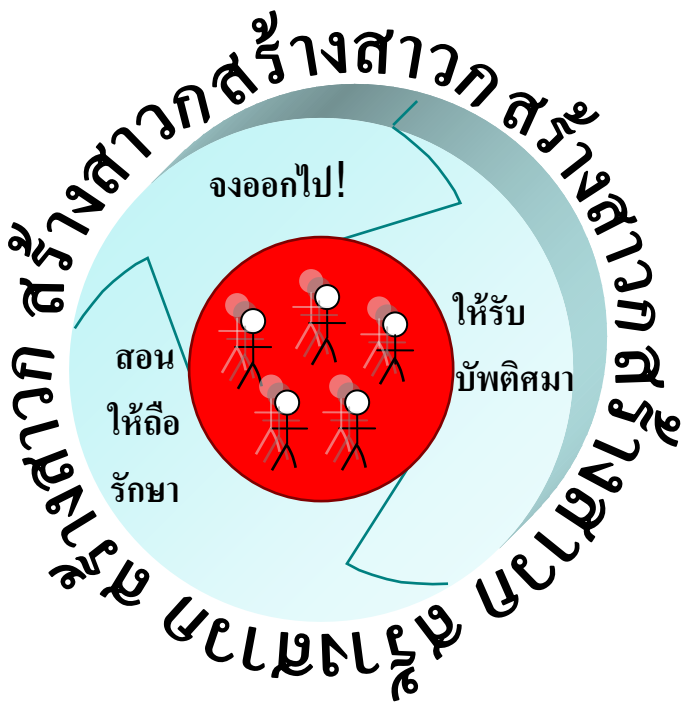
Acts 2: 40-47



จุดประสงค์

มัทธิว 16:18

“เราจะสร้างคริสตจักรของเราไว้”



วิธีการ

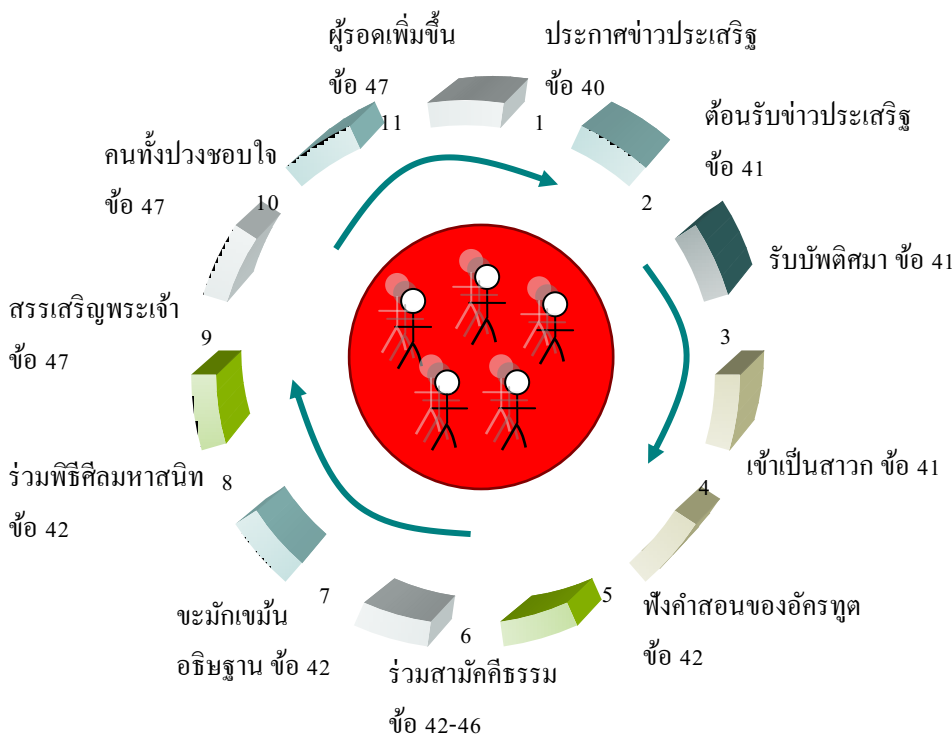
มัทธิว 28: 16-20

มาระโก 16: 15-16

ลูกา 24: 44-50

ยอห์น 20: 21-23

กิจการ 1: 6-8

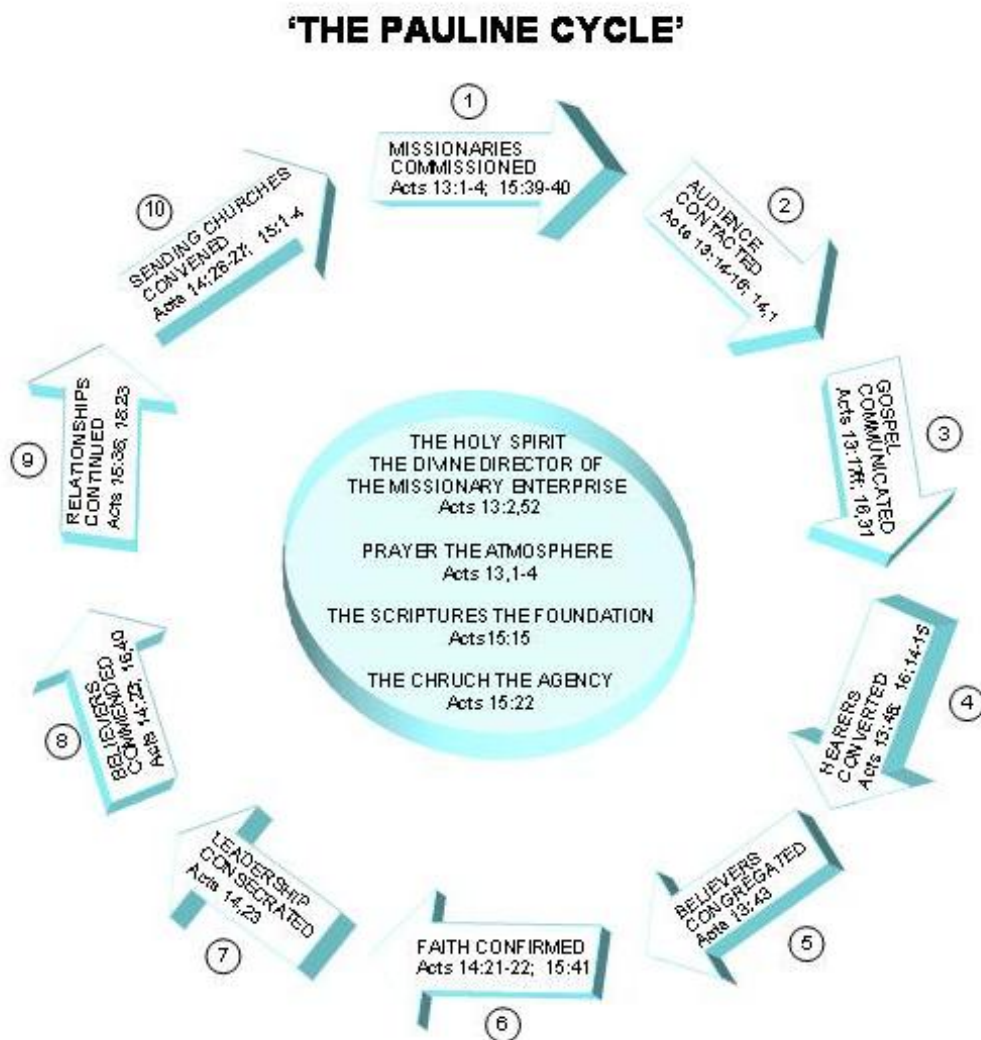


รูปแบบ

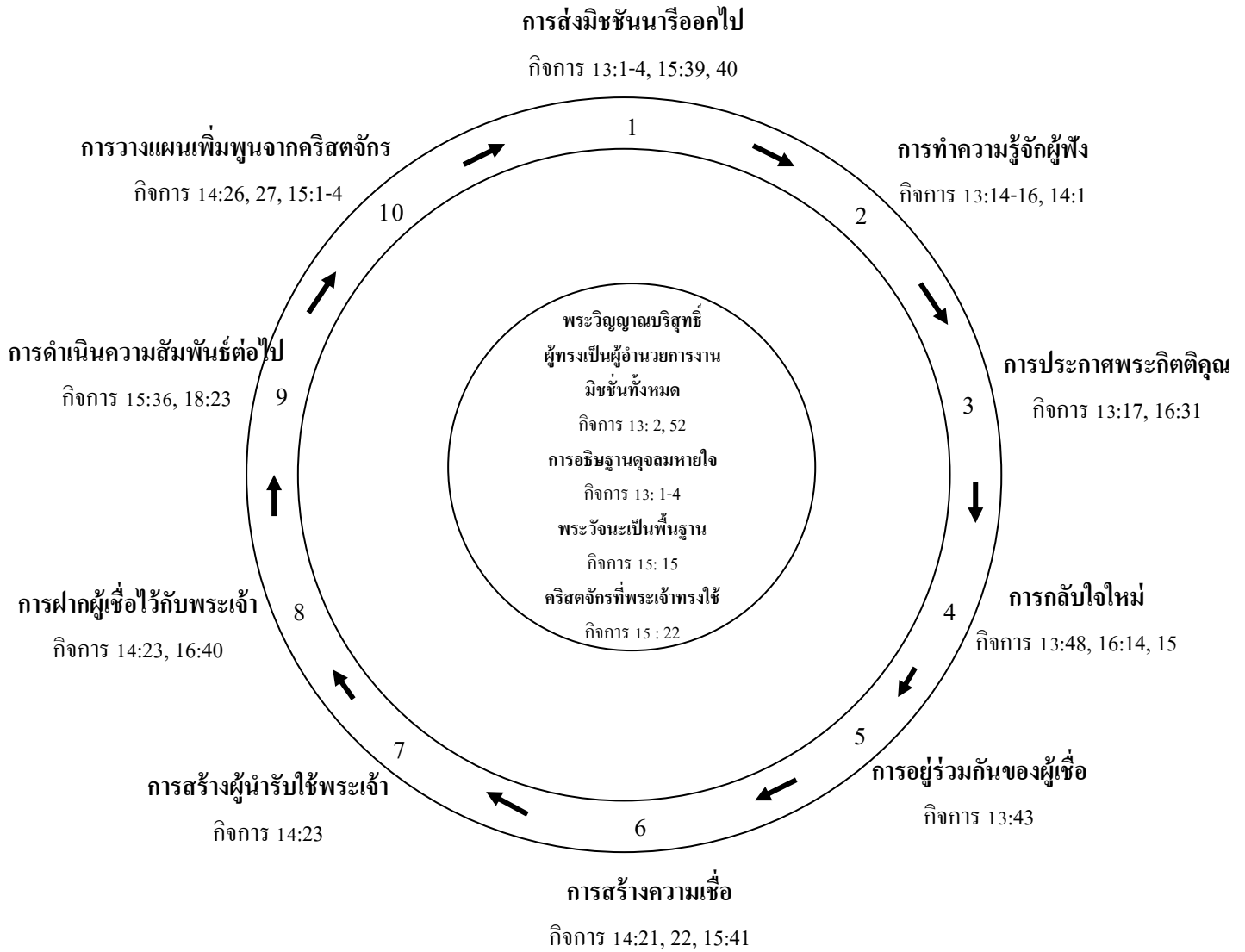
กิจการ 2: 40-47

David Hesselgrave in Planting Churches Cross-Culturally (1980) sets forth the Pauline Cycle. Please note this cycle breaks the pattern of Paul’s mission work into logical elements. It is not meant to suggest that each of these elements can be done separately from the others or can only be done sequentially. It is a cycle that is an on-going and continuing process. Please examine the 10 elements and reflect on Paul’s methods. For example; in Paul’s work in Ephesus only the first and last elements are not clearly there (although the first element is implied) Act 18-20, 1 Tim and Eph.

This Guidebook is structured by the Pauline Cycle. It gives us a framework for considering how to fulfill the commands of our Lord Jesus here in Thailand. If you have not read Planting Churches Cross-Culturally by Hesselgrave please put it on top of your books to read list and read it!



วัฏจักรของอัครทูตเปาโล (The Pauline Cycle)



There are four basic objectives for this Guidebook.

1. It gives new missionaries something to read and reflect on as they prepare for ministry in the Thai Buddhist context.
2. It can serve as a guide for teams working through the specifics of church planting in their locality. It should help teams plan their work and evaluate their work.
3. It can help our missionaries find resources to help them in their work.
4. It will support Project Paul: Empowering Church Planters Workshop and our vision.

We hope that all new missionaries will read this Guidebook in their first year in Thailand. This Guidebook provides guidelines that are foundations to church planting as approved by OMF Thailand. While we don't think this Guidebook has *all the answers* we do think it will have a great many answers for new workers who are trying to understand ministry in Thailand. We feel that as new workers read and reflect on this Guidebook they will be better prepared to fit in with an existing church planting team or a new one.

We also hope this book will be a helpful guide for teams as they work through the specifics of church planting. Almost all churches are started by more than one person. With two or three people the interpersonal dynamics start; opinions, various ideas, different priorities, expectations, values and so forth. It is not difficult at all for two or three people to use the same word and mean different things. And then with Satan to stir things up and our sinful nature to mess things up – Wow! Do we ever get anything done? The battles and difficulties are not all new and we don't work in a sterile environment. So we hope that this Guidebook will be helpful to keep teams on track, working together effectively to establish many “ekklesia” throughout Thailand.

A key part of this Guidebook is helping others find resources. One of the frustrations that many have expressed is that they feel like they are re-inventing the wheel. Or they don't know where to find things. We would like this Guidebook to contain accurate and current lists of resources or places to go to get help.

Finally, each year the Guidebook will be read and discussed at Project Paul. Each year the participants will review and suggest revision of the Guidebook from the participants point of view, would make it more helpful. The Strategy Council will decide which of these would be most useful and make the changes. Then a revised Guidebook would be issued and uploaded to the Thailand Intranet.

Chapter 1 Missionaries Commissioned

Our OMF vision is that people would be reached for Christ in order that they might reach out to other peoples in mission. This is also stated in our OMF Thailand statement. So right from the beginning we want people to understand they are part of God's effort to save all peoples – Christian mission.

In Acts there are two model churches, Jerusalem and Antioch. The Jerusalem church stayed in Jerusalem until they were driven out by persecution. But then when they were scattered they shared the gospel where ever they went. This eventually resulted in the establishment of the church in Judea, Samaria, Ethiopia and Antioch. The Jerusalem model of mission is to take the participle “go” in Matthew 28 to mean “as you go.” This model does not emphasize intentionality but responsiveness to the situation.

The Antioch church took initiative and sent people out. They listened to the Holy Spirit and took steps to obey. They prayerfully sent Barnabas, Paul and Mark out to preach the gospel and disciple people into obeying all that Jesus commanded. This model takes the participle “go” in Matthew 28 as an imperative. This model encourages all churches to actively participate in preparing, selecting, sending and supporting the efforts to do Matthew 28.

These two models both have validity and both need to be fostered. People are moving all the time and for all sorts of reasons. Persecution, economic problems and opportunities, education, war, marriage are all reasons people might move. All this movement does present opportunity for the gospel to travel to others. As we start churches there will always be people who move away and we need to help them see their movements from God's point of view. As they go they need to share the gospel. As they go they need to see how God might want them to start a new church in this new location. Historically the gospel has spread greatly in this simple way. There are many examples of how the Lord uses simple ordinary people in their migrations to establish churches. The Baptist churches in the southern part of the United States spread and grew rapidly in this way. This model has some advantages; there is almost no overhead. The people go at their own expense and are sustained by their own relationship with the Lord. The Church in Bangkok did not really start to grow until up-country Christians started migrating into Bangkok along with others in the late 1970s. They came for study and for jobs but they shared their faith, started churches! Most of the churches that have started in Bangkok in the last 35 years have roots in up-country Christian people.

But the Antioch model is also valid and has some advantages. The biggest advantage is that it did not need persecution to force people out. It can be done by churches that don't have a lot of migration out. Antioch was a significant urban center then and most likely was growing in population with people moving in. So for that church to participate in God's plan for the world they needed to hear and obey God and send people out intentionally. Another advantage is that people can be prepared and selected. Barnabas and Paul were already leaders in the church. They were proven quality. They were prepared in prayer and practical ministry. Mark went along as part of his ministry training though he failed the course. OMF and other mission organizations have come in to being out of this Antioch model to help prepare, train, select, support, supervise and supply the workers doing apostolic ministry. Barnabas, Paul and Mark were sent out with less elaborate support structures than we have in OMF. Thus, relatively young churches, can be involved in intentional evangelism and mission work immediately!

So if you are planting a church with a very mobile population you need to emphasize the Jerusalem model. But if you are in a more stable population you need to emphasize the Antioch model. Both of these models work for our Jerusalem (people just like us right here), our Judea (people just like us but a ways off), our Samaria (people not like us but close by) and the ends of the earth (people not like us and a long way off). Both of these models work for evangelism within a people group and for cross-cultural evangelism to other peoples.

Some suggestions: (Because this is a cycle some of the suggestions can only be carried out as other elements in the cycle are functioning.)

1. Whenever anyone moves away or on, for whatever reason, commission them! Have a special farewell that challenges them to see their move from God's perspective. How does He want to use them as they go to share the gospel and disciple the nations?
2. If possible, it is **better** for these migrants to start new groups than to join established groups (Better, because they have new contacts in a new social network that an existing church most likely does not have. And the more churches started the better for seeing a movement.) But it is better for them to join an existing group than to not have any fellowship and fall away. Usually in Thailand people need introductions if they are going to enter a new group. It is not enough just to tell a person that there is a group in their city. But if the person is open to starting a new group then they will most likely need some help from the "releasing/sending" church.
3. Start giving for evangelism and missions right away. Start praying (1 Tim 2:1-8) for evangelism and missions right away by modeling it. (The OMF Home Council had prayer information on Thai missionaries.)

Teams in Church Planting

Very rarely do we plant churches alone. Generally, we establish churches with others. So how are teams formed for church planting? How are teams maintained? How are teams made effective? There are many books on these subjects. So here is a list of some thoughts about teams in OMF Thailand.

1. We form and reform teams on the field. This means that our ministry context and needs drives the team formation process.
2. We form teams for a ministry purpose. The team is not the purpose. This means that no team is forever and that teams must be managed appropriately for the objectives and goals of the team.
3. We value diversity in our teams. We see diversity of gifts, temperament, skills, culture and language brings strengths and benefits to the team. Thus, teams must be managed to bring out the strengths and benefits of our diversity for the accomplishment of our purposes. Diversity increases capacity.
4. We work in a dynamic situation so teams change frequently. We must manage our teams within this context appropriately.
5. We work closely with Thai Christians. We might work under Thai leadership in some teams. In other teams we work alongside them or in some cases they might work under our leadership. We are willing to work in any of these alignments. We will function in the Thai language when there are Thai in the team.
6. Because our purpose is an indigenous church we want our teams small enough that new local believers feel they can take initiative and responsibility. Often teams with lots of foreigners can stifle local believers from taking responsibility.

Chapter 2 Audience Contacted

1. Where to go?

Maybe the single most important decision about a new church planting project, is the very first one: where will you go? Three basic approaches are possible:

1. Where it is most convenient?
2. Where the greatest need is?
3. Where the greatest responsiveness is?

Missionaries should realize that God may call for sacrifices. Convenience and family needs should not be deciding factors in deciding where to go. So the remaining options are 'greatest need' and 'greatest openness'. The 'need' emphasis says: Here are 200,000 people without a church, let's go there. The 'responsiveness' emphasis says: Here are two families who really want to hear the gospel, let's go there. Both are legitimate, and it's best to try to strike a balance between the two.

Historically OMF emphasized 'need' and went to the places without churches. This is why we pioneered in Central Thailand and South Thailand. This is why we have re-entered Isaan. But because we are interested in movements we must not neglect 'responsiveness' as a factor. If we have responsive peoples that we are working with we do so! Even, if that means planting another church in a district with five already. We want to saturate districts with churches. The urgent evangelization of Thailand will only be accomplished when there are churches in every village and neighbourhood.

We should realize that the church in Thailand is not in an absolute pioneer phase anymore. The gospel normally travels along social networks. Therefore in this stage of church history in Thailand, we try to avoid going in 'cold'. It is extremely difficult to plant new churches without any prior contact. When there are people who came to the Lord already, or people who are open to the Gospel message, it is much easier.

Need does not necessarily constitute call. We trust that when the Lord wants us to plant a church in an area, he will provide bridges into that community. So the approach we take is somewhere in between the 'need' and 'responsiveness' approach. We identify where the greatest need is. We pray and look for openings in areas with great need. And we eventually go into those specific areas where the Lord has provided responsive people.

The most important point in this chapter is: **don't just go somewhere!** Take your time to find a place that is both strategic because of its lack of Christian witness, and because of a cluster of responsive people. It might cost you a few extra months of exploration. But it will give you a much greater chance to complete the cycle of starting groups, consecrating elders, planting daughter churches, and pulling out, than when you go in cold. And you will also be able to do it years faster. The Regional Leaders help work through these decisions with teams.

2. Research

Before and shortly after you move into a new area, you should get to know it. There are several sources that can help you.

1. The *Thailand Christian Directory* has a list of all churches in your area. (From 2009 onwards, this should be updated and reliable information.)
2. Pactec can provide you with more extensive information on the churches in your area (including ethnicity and membership), and produce maps with details on Christian

percentage per tambon, amphur, and/or province. You can contact Dwight Martin at dmartin@e-star.ws. Or the Christian map at: <http://e-star.ws/ws/index.php/en/christian-map-of-thailand>

3. The provincial or the amphur office can give you a complete lists of villages with population; lists of schools; important features of the province or amphur; details on the economy of the province or amphur; etc. Don't hesitate to tell you are a missionary and want this information because you want to plant a new church. In almost all cases the officials will be very willing to help you.
4. Detailed maps of areas outside the main cities are hard to find. However, Google Earth is a big help. Spend some time to understand how it works, and it will help you to get a good overview of the area. Google Earth does not give details yet for all of Thailand. If that is the case for your area, try www.pointasia.com. This website is more difficult to navigate, but has more details than Google Earth.
5. General statistics about Thailand you can find at www.nso.go.th. (There is an English site, but the Thai site has more information.) If you type in <http://provincename.nso.go.th> you will get the site of the provincial statistical office.
6. Talk to people. Government officials, people in shops, people on the street, Christian leaders in the area, anybody. What kind of people live here? What is important to them? What are they proud of? How do they make a living? What are their thoughts about Christianity?
7. Make notes about temples, shrines, and other religious places or peoples. Note the times of religious or other festivals. Find out as much as you can about the history of the place. Find out about schools and hospitals. Find out about clans and families, people of influence and how people are connected.

3. Whom to reach?

Research has given some interesting insights that give some pointers to who are strategic people to reach. (See: Conversion Growth of Protestant Churches in Thailand by Marten Visser.)

- Women are more responsive than men, but husbands are more likely to influence their wives to become Christian than the other way around.
- Thai who have moved outside their home district are more responsive than non-migrants.
- Students are more responsive than non-students (but only during their university years).
- Older people are more responsive than younger people.
- Urban people, high educated people, and Sino-Thai are all more likely to become Christian than others.
- The most significant conclusion from the research is that Thais from all social groups are becoming Christian. Though there are some differences in responsiveness, the main reason why Thais are not becoming Christian is *that there is no one inviting them and consistently showing them what it means to be a Christian.*

4. How to evangelize?

- Use family lines. Over 40% of all new believers come to the Lord through a relative.
- Use personal relationships.. Thai people need time, need an example, and need a community to become Christian.
- Use mature and older people. People below the age of 30 are much less effective as evangelists.

- Use printed media. Bible, Christian books, correspondence courses, and tracts are the most effective media in evangelism.
- Make sure all members are involved in evangelism. For 70% of all new believers lay people are the most important influence. An average missionary can expect to influence 1 Thai to become Christian every 5 years. As a church planter you might do a little bit better. Yet your most important contribution is probably going to be how much you encourage and help other Christians to tell their relatives and friends about Christ.
- Make a yearly plan for evangelism that reaches ones, tens, hundreds and thousands.
- Do evangelism that inter-links various efforts so that interested people can be identified and then tied into small groups for further interactive evangelism.

5. Ministry plan

Before you move into your ministry location you should write a ministry plan. This ministry plan could roughly follow the outline of this manual. The questions below are to help you think through and develop your ministry plan. Answers to these questions will be developed in further chapters of this guidebook. Your ministry plan should be discussed with your Regional Leader.

Chapter headings of your ministry plan could be:

A. Preparations for a IBCM

1. Context. (Where are you serving? What is the Christian presence in that area? What kinds of people are living there? What are felt needs?)
2. Goals. (Church planting goals, including withdrawal; language learning goals if applicable)
3. Time management. (How much time are you going to spend in ministry? What kind of ministry? How much in language study? How much in administration? How much in wider OMF ministry?)
4. The church. (What kind of church do you envision? House church or not? Paid pastor or not? How large? What kind of worship? What kind of leadership? How are the sacraments going to be celebrated? What is the role of house groups going to be? How will self-responsibility and indigenous elements be included right from the beginning?)
5. The missionary. (How do you see your own role in the church? What is the difference between a missionary and a pastor? How will the church members realize that? What is the influence of your money going to be? What is your authority in the church, and how is that going to change over time? What is your role in the community?)
6. The team. If you work in a team with other missionaries, you should reflect on team roles and interaction.
7. Reproducibility. (How are you going to ensure that what you do can be done by the Thai church members? Both in church multiplication, and in church maintenance when you leave this church?)

B. Ministry Implementation to foster an IBCM

1. Missionaries commissioned. (What is your team going to look like? What is the relationship between Thai and missionary leaders? How is your team (formal and informal) going to function? Do you expect changes in your team during the project period?)
2. Audience contacted (How are you going to be known in the area? Who are your main target group? Where can you find and reach them?)

3. Gospel communicated (What is the Gospel that you want to communicate? How can you do that so that it touches the heart of your hearers? How can you evangelize the social network of your first contacts? How can you evangelize one on one, to small groups and to big groups? How will you start evangelistic house groups? How are you going to reach the whole community? How are you going to find the ones who are really interested in the Gospel after larger events [if you use any]? What kind of resources are you going to use in evangelism?)
4. Hearers converted (How are you going to do follow-up? How are you going to prepare people for baptism? How are you going to help people get freedom from spiritual bondage?)
5. Believers congregated (What are house groups going to look like? When are you going to start meetings? What is the relative importance of house groups and what kind of meetings will you have? What kind of music are you going to use? Who is going to preach/teach?)
6. Faith confirmed (How are you going to disciple people? What resources are you going to use for that? How are you going to help people live out their faith in daily life? How will discipline look like in the church?)
7. Leadership consecrated (What kind of church government will you have? How are you going to develop lay leaders? What resources are you going to use for that? When [if at all] do you see the church having a full-time pastor?)
8. Believers commended (When and how are you going to phase out? How are you going to prepare the church for that? What [if any] will be your on-going role in the church after pulling out?)
9. Relationships continued (What denomination will the church be part of? How will the church relate to that denomination?) *ACT is always our first choice.
10. Sending churches convened (When, how, and where will the church plant daughter churches? What is the relationship between the church and the daughter churches going to be?)

6. Introduce yourself to your community

- Make courtesy visits to community leaders
- Make courtesy visits to other churches in the area **
- Make courtesy visits to your neighbours
- Go to community activities (sports tournament, election meeting, wedding, etc.)
- Interview people (both to get to know the community and let the community know you)
- Get to know the people in the social network of your first contacts (the people that made you decide to come here in the first place)
- If you are in a rural setting, visit as many villages in the district as possible.

** We want to bless existing groups of Christians and be blessed by them. We don't want to waste energy on Christians who are out of fellowship or under discipline by other groups. But there might be people who became Christians somewhere else, but are not associated with a church because they don't have the opportunity. Try to locate them and start a house group in their house.

7. Bridge building events.

A bridge can be as simple as a plank of wood or much more elaborate. The basic purpose is the help get us across a barrier that separates us from others. We can use simple ways to get into contact with people or more complex ways as needed. But simple is preferred and primary. The visits suggested above get us in contact with some and might lead to other introductions. If we are working with local contacts, then we need to use the bridge of their social network. We can also participate in the community activities; sports, service organizations, and special interest organizations. Some times our unique gifts and abilities can be useful in building these connections. As we develop relationships the opportunity to share about Christ will come as we are eager to tell the people we meet in everyday life about Jesus.

Some direct evangelistic activities can be useful for example; telling people ‘I’m here to teach about Jesus- if you’re interested, I’m happy to teach in your home.’ Some kinds of tracting can open up conversation about Christ with people. Some have use interviews and surveys along these lines.

If we are going to use a more complex bridge then we ought to think through the plans carefully. Organizing an activity, especially an on-going activity yourself, is a great way to be busy and feel productive. But the question is whether it produces a church. So rather than organizing a sports tournament, take part in one; rather than setting up an English school, teach in an existing school for a few hours a week, with the understanding that you can use Christian content; rather than starting a community development project, look out for what is there and see how you can participate. When you are not the organizer, you will need to spend a little bit more time in thinking how to get the Gospel across. But if you are deliberate in that, you will be able to find ways.

Organizing an activity can be helpful and many types have been tried and used successfully. But remember to make the activities support the end vision. Your calling is to plant a reproducing church. Everything that contributes to that is good. Everything that does not contribute to that is bad. Evaluate all your activities regularly as to how they contribute to goals. Be ruthless in weeding out unhelpful activities.

Don’t start activities just to be busy. One of the hardest things of missionary life is thinking, “It’s 8.30 AM now, I should go out and evangelize – but I don’t have a clue how!” The easiest way out is to make yourself busy with a lot of activities that allow you to meet people. But meeting people is not the same as evangelizing, and evangelizing is not the same as planting the church.

Churches need bridge building events too! One-off events are easiest to manage and will not drain energy from the main task of the church. E.g. the church can organize a village clean-up, or take part in organizing festivities for the King’s birthday.

[Considerations about English teaching as a bridge building effort.]

1. Because we are so often asked to teach English we need to have a positive way to answer this request. If we say, 'No, we don't!' Right away the Thai asking us often feel as though we don't want a relationship with them. But if we say yes, then we need to have a time and place for doing it, or we can lose control of our schedule. 'Yes, I teach English every Friday night at 7 PM. Any one interested in can come and spend the evening in English conversation. Can you come?' Or 'Yes, I teach English at the Church on Sunday afternoons. We have courses that last 6 weeks. We work through the Interchange English books for an hour then we do some interactive English actives about Christianity for an hour. Our next course starts in two weeks. Would you like to join?'
2. The range of options goes from one-on-one, to small groups, to formal programs, to schools. There are positive examples of how all of these have been used in Thailand. Use the option suitable for you and your situation and purpose.
3. It is best if there is some payment for teaching English. This does not have to be great but it helps relationships if some payment is made. This works both in assuring commitment to coming for lessons and reducing feelings of indebtedness in the one receiving the instruction. The fees collected can be used for the costs incurred or to have a party at the end of the instruction time.
4. Most find that short courses work best in Thailand. Between four weeks and eight weeks seem to be good. This gives both the students and teachers a way out and opportunity for reorganization or redesign. The timing for starting courses must follow the Thai yearly cycle, (don't start in February!).
5. The evangelistic efforts for English range from using the Bible entirely for teaching, to almost nothing more than personal testimony if they ask. Most do something between these.
6. The question is raised that English teaching is not reproducible by the Thai, so should not be used. But it is reproducible just not easily so. So it does need to be used with care to highlight the bridge building principles not the English medium. Thai have successfully used English teaching as bridge but most often they find the principles work but they teach music or computers or some other subject.
7. Often when missionaries teach English one of the most helpful things for evangelism is a Thai Christian who is also one of the students! After the lesson, the students are talking and the Thai Christian will just naturally get into conversations about the Lord.

8. Short term teams.

Short term teams can play a role in making a 'splash' in the community, so that many people come to know about the existence of the church. It is easy to overestimate how well the church is known in the community. Having activities that reach out to larger groups of people is a good way not to lose the evangelistic edge of the church. Short term teams can play a role in that. Children's clubs, sports activities, tracting, open air preaching, and visitation are examples of activities that short term teams can be part of. Make sure the short term team does not just participate in the regular program of the church, but that there are extra activities. A well-led Thai short term team can be much more effective than a foreign team,

and will be much easier to host. Getting existing churches to send short-term teams to help with church planting also helps those churches to grow.

The ServeAsia coordinators can give helpful advice on how to use short-term teams effectively.

Chapter 3 The Gospel Communicated

Hesselgrave lists the following objectives.

- 1) To mobilize as many believers as may be available and can be effectively deployed in evangelizing the target area.
- 2) To relate the Good News of Christ to the audience in a way that will be clear, convincing, and compelling.
- 3) To employ the most appropriate methods of evangelism.
- 4) To utilize the potential of various communication media within the target area.
- 5) To reach the unevangelized in the target area in accordance with an order of priority established for the contact phase. (Hesselgrave: 1980, p 202)

Before we consider these objectives in the context of Thailand, let us remind ourselves of the content of the gospel.

1. God – His nature, plan, wrath, and promises.
2. Man – his problem (sin, unbelief, idolatry) and position before God.
3. Christ – the facts concerning His person, coming, and work.
4. Judgement – its meaning, the certainty of it, and a warning concerning it.
5. Salvation – the mercy of God and the kingdom of God.
6. Response – the necessity of repentance and faith. (Allan: 1962, p 68-69)

At first the only mobilization that needs to be done is the mobilization of one's self for evangelism. But as soon as one person has responded they must be mobilized into sharing the faith. Or in some contexts we are working with existing groups of Christians to start new work and need to mobilize them into sharing the gospel. The first step in Thailand is always to show them how first. The Thai imitate well and easily so demonstrations of evangelism is vital.

The second kind of mobilization requires organization. Not all Christians have the gift of evangelism but all can and should do evangelism. But for many this requires some intention and some organization. Some suggest that planning needs to be done for personal witness, witness in small groups and witness in larger groups and then wide-spread sowing of the gospel (focus on 1, 10, 100 and 1000).

The third step is to identify and release gifted evangelist to use their gifts. Christian Schwarz would suggest that about 10% of Christians have this gift. It is important that those who have the gift use the gift. So mobilization means that we identify and then help those with the evangelistic gifts to use them. We should not give them so many other responsibilities that they cannot use their God given gifts.

Sharing the gospel in Thailand is a challenge. It is hard to make the gospel clear because of the mental grid of Buddhism through which they hear what we are saying. This then makes it hard for the gospel to be convincing and compelling. As some have faced this issue they have tried various approaches to sharing the gospel, hoping that one will prove better than others. I don't think we will find one approach that solves the communication issues. What we do see is that people who have heard the gospel repeatedly over a period of time do seem to come to Christ more frequently. The leprosy patients in Central Thailand are an example of this. They got to hear the gospel explained in many different ways over a period of time. They got to dialogue with each other and with many different Christians until they understood the gospel clearly and were convinced. The love and care they received helped attract them to the Lord. Therefore it is important to share the gospel in a way that one can share it again. It is

important to share the gospel in several ways. And it is important to share the gospel in ways that show love.

Dr. Nantachai and Dr. Ubonwan emphasize the love aspect with their suggestions about meekness. (Their dissertations are highly recommended.) The Thai do not like confrontation so approaches that they feel are aggressive and do not build smooth relationships are avoided. Approaches that are dialogical and respectful are welcome. The Thai are willing to talk about the gospel but if we pressure them to make a response they will often feel very uncomfortable, because we have put them into a situation where they could “lose face” or they could cause us to “lose face.” We can explain to them how to respond to the gospel without pressuring them into a response.

Christian Schwarz’s study of Church Growth suggest that churches that share the gospel in ways that meet felt needs are growing. In Schwarz’s terms the gospel is unchanging but it has to connect to the felt needs of the audience. This certainly helps make the gospel compelling. Most of us felt various needs and as we looked at the gospel saw connections to our lives and responded. As we share our testimonies we need to help the hearers see these links. (I once translated the testimonies of a whole football team and every single person started their testimony “I grow up in the church” or something similar. This did not connect to the audience, none of whom grew up in the church. Their testimonies would have been more effective if they started with the issues that made them move from inherited faith to personal faith, i.e. “I was lonely, I was unsatisfied by a life of parties, I wanted meaning in my life, I was bitter and angry” and so forth. After this experience I told the teams to leave that phrase out of their testimonies and focus on the common human issues that we face.) Sharing the gospel in ways that meet felt needs means that we have to be concerned for the whole person.

In Thailand, we must think in terms of the social context of the person we are sharing with. They are very aware of it and are thinking a great deal about what responding to Christ will mean for their other relationships and the social acceptance they currently enjoy. We need to share in a way that seeks to bring their whole social network to Christ. Most immediately this is friends and family. The biggest obstacle for the gospel in Thailand is family, but it is also the greatest avenue for gospel to travel. (Often the Thai will seek ways to explore the gospel without endangering their social acceptance. They will use radio, internet or correspondence courses to explore Christ. Or they will hide their interest in Christ behind English classes. So we must be sensitive to their need to keep any potential disruption from their social network, even as we seek to engage with their social network.)

The family context means that there must be dialog about the gospel, respect (meekness) and a clear life change. When these are present then gospel can move along family lines in a powerful way. When these are not present, then often negative attitudes toward the gospel are built up.

Almost all methods of the evangelism have some value in Thailand. Some are better for some contexts or efforts than others. For example passing out leaflets has some value especially if conversation is part of the experience. Sometimes the leaflet can help start a conversation. Or at other times after a conversation a leaflet can encourage further thought about the gospel. The Jesus film can have good impact as part of a larger event. Often it can provoke a significant interest in Christ. But again watching the Jesus film increases in value if there can be discussion about it immediately afterward. Some Christian groups made use of the Passion of the Christ film by being willing to talk with viewers right after the film at the theatre. The poster picture set (available from Kanok) has been of great use for small groups of interested people. This is a very flexible tool that can be used in many settings from open air preaching,

to personal sharing. It can even be used as part of evangelistic skits. (The Geoff Case tract that is studied as a language module is very useful as are his studies of the gospel of John.) Another missionary made his own picture book and would ask people he encountered on the bus if they wanted to look at his pictures. This then gave him a chance to explain the gospel.

It is important that you have a way of linking various efforts and methods together. Can a personal encounter on the bus be tied into an evangelistic Bible study? Can a showing of the Jesus film be tied into an evangelistic outing? Can the soccer game build relationship into the community so you can show the Jesus film or do a Christmas program at the school? Can selling bread at an open market lead to occasions to pass out leaflets? Can cleaning up trash in the community lead to giving a Bible to key leaders? Can contacts to radio broadcasts be linked up with local Christians for discussion and interaction? All the efforts need to funnel the interested into cell groups or house groups or evangelistic Bible studies. And these on-going groups need to funnel people toward harvest events where the challenge to respond is brought to people. We can fish with a pole and catch one fish at a time. But if we use a fish trap then we can catch several at a time. And if we use a net then we can catch a whole lot of fish at one time.

One of the under-utilized methods of evangelism is story telling. Often we can tell stories in ways that challenge people to think in ways that mere statements don't. Often a story can be less offensive than a straight declaration. Stories also touch people emotionally or more deeply than just expounding facts. Just think a moment about the many times you have heard sermons when the only memorable thing was a story. Learn to tell stories (especially Bible stories) and to help others use stories for evangelism and discipleship! Stories acted out are also very powerful. The Thai love drama. So dramatic presentations of the gospel should be used in all kinds of settings!

Paul always went to the synagogue first. He had a reason for doing this. Do we have a reason for who and how we do evangelism? Or are we just sharing with whoever we can without any order or thought? If we have no plan in our evangelism, then we often become prey to "social marginals." These are people who are outside of the accepted social order. They are often attracted to missionaries (other outsiders) and because we are loving and kind people, we accept them (and they do need the gospel). But their acceptance of Christ does not help the gospel come into the community. Jesus sent out the seventy and told them to stay with the man of peace (Lk 10:6). This man had relationships in a community that helped them share the gospel with a whole area. (Alex Smith had a person like this introduce him to all the village leaders in Banrai, Uthaitani. This "man of peace" gave Alex the kind of introduction that opened up the whole area for evangelism, Smith: 1977.) Make efforts to find out who these people are in a community and build evangelism from the basis of their introduction. Most of the manuals on church planting tell us to make a list of key people we need to visit before we do a lot of evangelism. In Thailand where relationships are very important we need to pay attention to this matter. It only takes a bit of effort to visit the village headman, the headmaster of the school, or other community leaders but the potential benefits are great.

Methods and media have strength and weaknesses so choose thoughtfully. For example if you teach a lot of English you will mostly reach women. Because, these are the kind of people, who are attracted to English teaching. If you want to reach men, then you need to do things that men are attracted to! This is common sense but sometimes it is so hard to follow common sense!

Make use of the special days in the year for evangelism: Mother's day, Father's day, New Years day, Christmas, Easter, Valentine's, Loi Gratong, Water festival, Children's day and so

forth. Make use of the events in life for evangelism: birth, birthdays, weddings, graduation, funerals, new houses, accidents or special blessings. We know these kind of events happen and we must be prepared to use them for evangelism.

Finally, evangelism is something that we must never stop doing! This is hard because as people come to Christ we have to take care of them, help them grow. This creates a pastoral drag that slows and can stall evangelism. We must resist this and seek to use the new believers in expanding evangelism. One of the best ways to disciple new Christians is, to involve them in evangelism. We must never accept the idea that discipleship can happen without intentional efforts to share Christ with others.

Check list on Evangelism

1. Do you and your team have a year long plan for evangelism?
2. Does your plan include efforts that address the 1s, the 10s, the 100s, and the 1000s?
3. Does your plan link the efforts so that interested people are drawn into sustained and maintained contact?
4. Does your plan help others to be active in evangelism?
5. Have you evaluated last years efforts in evangelism so as to improve and develop the effectiveness of your team's evangelism?
6. Do you have ways to move from a witness to one person into a witness to that person's whole social network? Are you aiming at individual conversions or aiming at households (families)?

Chapter 4 Hearers Converted

According to Hesselgrave our objectives in relation to conversion should be:

1. to secure a response to the gospel that grows out of understanding.
2. to secure a response to the gospel which takes into account culturally appropriate patterns of decision-making.
3. to secure a response to the gospel which will be genuine and lasting, and result in spiritual fruitfulness.
4. to secure a response to Christ which will heighten the possibility of others becoming Christian. (Hesselgrave, 233)

We need to be careful not to rush into calling people “Christians” just because they show interest or even are involved in some practices (attending church or praying) or because they pray with us. They most likely are still seekers. Calling them a believer might even make it harder for them to keep moving toward a response that comes out of understanding. When a Thai person has understood the gospel they will most likely stop saying things like, “all religions are the same they teach people to be good.” This is often the point at which we need to talk very clearly with them about what it means for them to convert.

Motivations for seeking are varied; love, relationships, forgiveness, meaning in life, purpose, shame, sins, broken heart, escape from poverty, spiritual oppression, fear of death, increase in social status, opportunity for education, and much, much more. As we know from our own experience God will often be found by those who seek with impure (mixed) motives. He will also be found by those who respond truly to incomplete (incorrect) understanding. Part of the challenge for missionaries is to understand motives for interest and the level of understanding. This can only be done by personal conversations that seek to deepen understanding and refine motivations.

The Thai do not readily reject the old or discard the old when they adopt the new. In fact, most of the time when they listen to the gospel, they listen to it with a desire to adopt and add to, not with a thought of discarding the old. If we talk too quickly about discarding the old then we can jeopardize the opportunity to help them understand more clearly the gospel. But as they understand, they need to identify the things they discard and reject (repentance). It is important that conversation – dialogue is part of the process or we will end up with syncretism.

The Thai do not seem to make group decisions. They make individual decisions that are highly sensitive to their social context. Because we want to see conversion take place that will make it more likely for others to come to Christ, we must be careful in how we approach conversion especially with young people. It is best if the head of the household can hear the gospel and give permission to the younger members to become Christians.

Because conversion is both a process and a point it is best if we make baptism and accompanying confession of Jesus Christ as Lord as the goal and end point of the process. The New Testament pattern was repent, believe and be baptized. The way a person became of Christian was verbal confession of Jesus Christ as Lord (Rom 10:9-13) and baptism (Acts 2:41, 8:12-16). It is very likely that a person will pray to receive the Lord, confess their sins, and give thanks before they are baptized. But we should explain that public confession of Jesus Christ as Lord in baptism is dividing line between seeking and discipleship.

Baptism

- 1 The Thailand field has adopted believers' baptism by immersion as the form to be taught and practiced. In cases of illness, old age, or other special circumstances, baptism may be administered by sprinkling or pouring.
2. The qualification for baptism is repentance and confession of faith in Jesus Christ (Mark 16:16, Acts 8:36,37, 16:30-33). Baptism should be given to converts without undue delay (Acts 16:33).
3. Baptism events should be done as needed. When a person is ready for baptism they should be baptized. People ready for baptism should not be denied baptism and saved up for a group baptism several months in the future. It is better to have baptisms often than to have one big group a year.
4. Baptism preparations should be done one to one if at all possible. If a husband and wife believe, then preparations can be done with the family. When a responsible Christian understands that the faith and decision making of the convert is real, then they should be baptized. Often in group preparations there will be some who just go along with the others. The formal nature of the class also tend to emphasize knowledge rather than practical trust in the savior. Also formal classes to prepare for baptism tend to make baptism the terminal event. People prepare for the climax and then don't go on with discipleship. Formal classes also tend to take away from the personal and individual nature of faith and conversion that is needed in Thailand.
5. Baptism should be taught as an act of obedience to our Lord's command (Matt. 28:19) but should not be forced by a missionary or church planter. It is often good if the request for baptism comes from the believer himself (Acts 8:36).
6. A man with more than one wife should not be excluded from baptism, but any church member who contracts a second marriage should be disciplined, as this is contrary to the primary laws of God. We don't expect perfection before baptism as baptism is the starting point in discipleship.
7. When no church organization exists, the missionary should be responsible for the first baptisms. But as soon as possible the new believers can start doing the baptisms. The validity of baptism resides in the faith of the one being baptized and has nothing to do with the persons doing the baptizing. Often it is good to have the spiritual mother or father of the new believer involved. Often it is good if women baptize women and men baptize men.
8. Generally it is good if the Thai do the baptizing as that helps avoid giving the impression that Christianity is a foreign religion.
9. If a young person believes it is best to get the permission of the family before baptism. This shows respect to the family and makes it more likely for the whole family to be reached for Christ. If married woman believes, efforts should be made to bring the husband into belief and see them baptized together.
10. Baptisms can be administered by, one or two persons. If two people administer baptism it can avoid the exaltation of one man. This also provides opportunity to involve others in the event and promote the body of Christ theme.

Teaching them to do all that Christ Commanded

According to the Great Commission stated in Matthew 28:19-20, we are to teach new believers to do everything that Christ has commanded. This may seem overwhelming unless we are able to simplify the commands of Christ in ways that are memorable and transferable. Missionaries ought to constantly evaluate whether their ministries and teachings are reproducible. New believers should not be overwhelmed or intimidated by teachings that they are unable to pass on easily. In the *Church Multiplication Guide* by Patterson and Scoggins, the basic commands of Christ are put into seven categories:

1. Repent, believe and receive the Holy Spirit (related to conversion)
2. Be baptized (begin a new life and be part of the body of Christ)
3. Love (God, neighbors and even enemies, practice forgiveness)
4. Break bread (related to worship gatherings)
5. Pray (depend on God and engage in spiritual warfare)
6. Give (stewardship of time, finance and talents)
7. Make disciples (continue the cycle of the great commission)

Focusing on these foundational commands of Christ helps missionaries and new believers to uphold priority, and keeps them from being side-tracked by minute details or arguments over doctrinal controversies. It is important that these commands are not only passed on cognitively, but demonstrated consistently in real life situations for new believers to imitate.

Resources:

Church Multiplication Guide by Patterson and Scoggins.

Reproducible Pastoral Training by Patrick O'Connor

Planting Churches Cross-Culturally by David Hesselgrave

Confronting Traditional Beliefs and Practices

How should missionaries handle Thai traditional beliefs and practices? We should understand that not all traditions are bad. There are many traditions that do not involve idol worship or animistic beliefs. New believers should be encouraged to witness for Christ within their own culture and tradition in ways that honor God, and help others see that God is not just the God of the Westerner, but of all peoples and cultures. Follow-up and discipleship should empower Thai believers to examine their own worldview and culture and how allegiance to Christ will affect every aspect of their lives.

Most of us will discover that the Thais hold a mixture of Buddhist and animistic beliefs and practices. Paul Hiebert's book *Understanding Folk Religions* helps us to see that there are actually various layers to a Buddhist's worldview. At the top layer, one may be considered a Buddhist because they hold to general Buddhist doctrines about Karma as well as participate in Buddhist ceremonies. However,

Once I visited a Thai believer who was enthusiastic about sharing her testimony of how God had healed her. However, during a period of time, she became ill again with another kind of sickness. The Thai pastor noticed that she hung some objects in front of her home which was supposed to make her well according to animistic beliefs. The Thai pastor confronted her gently about this, explaining that this practice is unbiblical, since Christians need to put their trust in God. As time went on, she continued to waver between trusting in God and in animistic beliefs.

Buzz Curtis

at a practical level, many turn to animistic practices in order to meet their needs in times of sicknesses, determining good days for events, protection for home, travels, work, children etc. The Thais may continue in these beliefs and traditions even after their conversion. It is

important for missionaries who come from a modern scientific worldview (that tends to separate religion from medicine or encounters with the super-natural world) to understand that both Buddhist and animistic practices are very much a part of the daily choices of the Thais.

Many missionaries have the tendency to focus on discipleship through imparting truths and strengthening the doctrinal beliefs of new Christians. Follow-up is mostly intellectual. However, they often neglect the other dimensions that are very much part of the Thais' worldview such as relationship to their family and community, loyalty or allegiance to traditions, and "holy things" or spiritual powers that the Thai believers have bowed to in the past. Follow-up and discipleship must help the Thai converts become open to how the Christian faith will impact the various dimensions of life.

New believers will also be observed by non-believers in how they prosper. Since they have turned their backs on traditional gods and practices, will they be safe, or will they be punished by gods and face many calamities? At this point, new believers may be tempted to turn back to traditional practices for answers and help. Some may exemplify a stronger faith, while others may require a longer process before they fully embrace God's truth and commandments. During these initial stages, they need much encouragement from leaders, especially fellow Thais who can testify how God has delivered them and made them strong.

Finally, it is crucial for missionaries to consult with Thai Christians and leaders who have been through this journey of dealing with traditional beliefs and practices. Thai believers cannot be isolated from their surrounding culture. They may face daily pressures to participate in Buddhist ceremonies if they are school teachers or government workers. When they interact with non-believing friends and family members, they will have to decide whether to participate in important Thai rituals or holidays such as *Loy Kratong*, *Thambun Baan* (when monks are invited to chant and bless the house), lighting incense, worship of ancestors for Chinese background families, weddings and funerals that involve animistic practices and idol worship. *Prapheniithai Kap Khwamcheu Khristian* (Thai Traditions and the Christian Faith) is a very helpful booklet for new Thai Christians and missionaries to think through these issues.

Resources:

Prapheniithai Kap Khwamcheu Khristian
Understanding Folk Religions by Paul Hiebert
Appropriate Christianity by Charles Kraft

Check List Questions

1. How will/does your team know when a person is ready for baptism? How will/do you assess if a person is converted?
2. How will/does your team prepare a person for baptism?
3. How will/does your team conduct baptisms? How will/did you make baptism what it is, the public entrance into allegiance to the Lord Jesus?
4. What has/is your team prepared to do with people after they are baptized? Is this clear to new converts?
5. What has your team planned to help new Christians sort out the good and the bad in their traditional beliefs?
6. How is the task of preparing people for baptism going to be passed on to local believers?
7. How are you going to help new believers do (practice) all that Christ commanded?

Chapter 5 Believers Congregated

Hesselgrave mentions five objectives but here we highlight four of them that are key as we consider the congregating of believers.

1. To establish times and places for assemble of the local Christians.
2. To make the meetings spiritually meaningful and helpful to the household of God.
3. To incorporate new members into the local family of believers.
4. To develop evangelism that brings new people into the local body and establishes new congregations.

This is an area where established Christian practice and custom often collide with Biblical teaching, with each other and with local realities. As international and interdenominational evangelists-disciple making-church planters we need to be especially self-aware of difference between our own preferences in these matters and what is Biblically mandated. We need to be very clear about what is Biblically mandated for a church and the sphere of freedom within those injunctions that local groups of believers (churches) are able to creatively enjoy.

The Scriptures are clear that allegiance to the Lord Jesus makes us a part of the Body of Christ, the household of God, the vine, and the flock of the Good Shepherd. There is no such thing as church-less discipleship in the New Testament. To follow Christ demands that we are a part of His family. So how will we live out this connected spiritual reality?

MEETINGS

Church or ekklesia means to meet or assemble. A Christian meeting or assemble is to meet in His name, under His authority and direction. But as soon as we have said this we have a flurry of questions. When do we meet? Where do we meet? What do we do when we meet? How often do we meet? How many have to meet to have a meeting, or to be a church? Who is in control? Who can do what in a meeting? How often do we meet?

In Act 2 we see the first believers congregating and giving us a pattern to follow. New believers gave themselves to:

- ❖ Study - devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching
- ❖ Fellowship - meeting together in the temple and homes
- ❖ Corporate Worship - breaking of bread, praying and praising God
- ❖ Stewardship – giving to one another as there was need
- ❖ Witnessing - and the Lord added to their numbers.

Place of Meeting

Where do we meet? Do we need buildings of brick and mortar? Jesus visited the temple in his time, but also said that a time would come when the Father would not be worshipped either on Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem but in “spirit and truth” (John 4:23), and he promised that whenever 2 or 3 believers gathered in his name, he would meet with them (Matthew 18:20). The early believers met in the temple and in homes. As Christianity spread, believers met in synagogues, in public places, and in the open air. House gatherings were a common feature of Christian life – in fact there were no church buildings as we know them and were none for the first 150 years.

Christianity has no one sacred spot, or shrine, or place. God will meet with his people wherever they gather and call on his name. This is the biblical basis, but how do Thai people feel about a special meeting place? How important is a sacred place to them? Does this do

more harm or more good? Does a building diminish or enhance their fellowship and life with the Lord?

- ❖ A House: an advantage is that it keeps the group small and thus lends itself to mutual recognition of participants, dialogue, interaction and the building of friendships. Others are aware of any member's absence and re-establish contact. Neighbors, friends and acquaintances find it relatively easy to accept invitations to meetings and are readily assimilated into the group. When the group outgrows the limitations of the house, it is simple for part of the group to start a new group in the home of another member. In this way, the number of meetings, meeting places, groups and individual members multiplies rapidly. Another advantage is that it is free. Homes are also abundant. The disadvantage is that the owner of the house can be a barrier to others coming or can think they are entitled to be *the leader* and dominate. Sometimes the groups do not want to multiply because the fear losing the benefits they gain from the small group. These disadvantages are well known and can be addressed. Missionaries have used their homes for church meetings. This has some positive and negative aspects. Because we want the churches to be indigenous it is better if we can use local people's home.
- ❖ A Center: In the towns and cities it is often very helpful to have some kind of ministry center. This helps the community understand the presence of Christians, it can often give a place for evangelistic events and for fellowship-edification events. This can sometimes allow for several "house groups" to gather for special events. It can often be seen as a "common ground" that does not have an owner and thus can be used by all. Thai churches have used this approach so it is reproducible but there is a cost for these centers.
- ❖ The development of new churches CANNOT be dependent on the provision of church buildings, even if a church building is desired and desirable.
- ❖ Broaching the subject of a permanent building too soon after beginning a new work may discourage converts and divert attention from more important issues. On the other hand not talking about buildings and processing the whole subject with new believers does not help either because other Christians might push the expectation that a "real church" has a special building.
- ❖ The shape of the meeting place and the arrangement of its furniture affect the process of communication and participation. There is a "zone of participation" which roughly is in the form of a triangle with the base immediately in front of the speakers. Long, rectangular sanctuaries are actually not well designed for effective communication. If a church is to be built, due thought must be given to a design which optimizes involvement, participation, and the sense of belonging. All rooms used for meetings affect the meetings.
- ❖ Size of the meeting place affects the number of people who attend. Most rooms have an optimal number of people that can be accommodated. While at some exceptional times this number can be exceeded, normally there is a level of comfort that a room imposes on the meeting. So if a room is comfortable for meetings of 20 people don't think you will grow the meeting to 30 or 40. If the room is comfortable for 60 don't think you can grow to 80 or 100. The only way to grow, is find a bigger meeting place or start more meetings. This latter option is very good for situations where the cost of meeting rooms is very high or suitable rooms are scarce.
- ❖ Saddling any congregation with debt or high on-going costs to provide a building is counterproductive. Architect Ray Bowman's book *When not to build: An architect's unconventional wisdom for the growing church* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992 has helpful advise.
- ❖ As far as possible church buildings should reflect the architectural styles of the indigenous culture. The building should not communicate that Christianity is a foreign religion. This is tricky as taste and perceptions change over time.

- ❖ The buildings should not exist to impress people, but to minister to people. Design buildings with ministries in mind! But buildings do not need to be ugly either. Christians should make some effort to make things beautiful to reflect the creative beauty of our God.
- ❖ It is good to evaluate meeting places with new believers so that we train them to consider factors that make a place a suitable place for meetings.
- ❖ We must always be looking and ready to establish evangelist meetings in new homes.

Time of Meetings

It cannot be established from Scripture that the primitive church was required to meet at any specific hour of the day, nor on any particular day. Some held meetings during the day, some at night. Churches seemed to pick the times that were convenient for the believers. The only biblical requirement is that believers meet frequently, break bread together and build each other up.

We must be sensitive and not impose our ways (in accordance with our upbringing and personal preferences). The Bible requires only that believers meet frequently. Local ideas about time and local lifestyles must be considered if we want believers to congregate and be disciplined effectively. To decide how many meetings are appropriate and when meetings should be held, consult Scripture and assess the local situation. It is good to process this matter frequently with the new believers. Most new believers need to meet more frequently than once in seven days in order to grow. Attending several meetings does help them. The church in Jerusalem met every day.

Thai people are more concerned about the event than punctuality. Meetings starting on time and ending on time are not what concerns them but the event itself. So choose a meeting time that helps with this event focus and gives plenty of time flexibility. Life patterns for many Thai (especially in rural areas) are not 7 day patterns. Sometimes they don't know what day of the week it is!

Group Functions and Optimum Size

In the human body, normal weight depends on one's height, body frame, and to some extent the kinds of activities in which one engages. Similarly the activities and aims of a group have a bearing on optimum size.

Biblical precedents:

- ❖ Jesus had a special relationship with 3 disciples
- ❖ Jesus chose 12 disciples.
- ❖ After sending out the 12, Jesus sent out 70 (or 72) to go ahead of him.
- ❖ After his resurrection the Lord appeared to a group of more than 500.
- ❖ There were 120 believers at Pentecost, after Pentecost they swelled to 3000, then 5000 (men) and probably more with daily meetings in homes and some use of the temple courts. If the average home could have a meeting of 30 people they would have needed at least 100 homes.

Research:

- ❖ Core leadership groups e.g. running corporation and leading military campaigns seem to be 3 – 12 members. Eight to 12 persons can know each other well enough to maximize their talents (Edward T. Hall, *Beyond Culture*).
- ❖ A “small group” is usually defined as a group of such a size that :
 - Its members can establish a face-to-face relationship
 - Absence of any member from a meeting would be noticed

- Seldom more than 25 – 30, and usually fewer.
- It is well suited to effect group learning, fellowship, and corporate action
- ❖ Community can be defined as the “maximum number of people who can maintain face-to-face relationships”. It is usually taken to be 1000. But some suggest it is only 150.

Therefore please consider the following guidelines for our situation in Thailand.

- ❖ Small churches are not weak churches because they are small. In fact they can be stronger and healthier than numerically bigger churches because they can foster a more interactive body life.
- ❖ Small churches are great places to develop leadership. Small churches thrive on involvement of all members so gifts and abilities can be seen and developed more easily. Risk taking in leadership development is easier to make as the consequences of failure are smaller.
- ❖ Small churches can be established and reproduced more simple and easily than big and complex churches.
- ❖ Small churches spread out responsibility for nurture, discipleship and on-going evangelism so they become “indigenous” more quickly.
- ❖ Small churches can be led by non-professionals.
- ❖ Small churches have more flexibility in when, how and where they meet.
- ❖ It may be difficult for local churches to grow much larger than the upper limits of the size of the small group. Often groups can only grow beyond this size if they have leadership resources and facilities that permit it and encourage it. Yet often churches in Thailand try to exceed their leadership or have expectations that are out of line with the leadership resources they have and can develop. The Peter Principle – leaders will be promoted to the level of incompetence. Good lay leaders of a small church of 15-25 are often not able to be effective with 35-45 people. So the cycle of growth and decline start. When the leadership ability is greater than the number of members the group grows until it exceeds the leadership resources. This causes stress and unhappiness that leads to decline of the group size until the group numbers are less than the ability of the leaders to care for it. The way out of this cycle is to spin off new groups.

EDIFICATION

The New Testament church remained focused on the one most important issue: Jesus Christ is Lord! The Thai church needs to focus on this too! The early Christians mostly meet in homes to “break bread,” pray, fellowship, be instructed in the faith, give of their substance, help one another, and carry out God’s mission. The New Testament churches were focused on gathering to build each other up and then scattering to share the good news.

How do we help a new church develop spiritually meaningful and helpful meetings? Some suggestions:

- ❖ Meetings are more meaningful to people when they are participating actively. So find ways to have all members active in meetings and actively preparing for meetings.
- ❖ Thai are used to rote learning so repetition is important. They like to have songs they repeatedly use at various points in their meetings. They like to have scripture memory activities. It helps them to recite certain prayers, passages of scripture, or responses at each meeting. Elements of liturgy are very helpful for the Thai and especially when the group is small. They can develop a feeling that they can say a prayer well or sing a song well if they do it repeatable.

- ❖ The Thai want meetings to have both formal and informal aspects. There needs to be something that is “riaproy” and something that is “ben gun eng.” They want meetings to have a fun aspect and a solemn aspect. It is helpful if we have both of these and that they are clearly quod so people know what is expected.
- ❖ Attention needs to be given to both the organized elements like, leading prayers and teaching the scriptures; and the unorganized elements, like people greeting each other and chatting. Both need to contribute to spiritually meaningful assembly.
- ❖ Most Thai churches eat a meal together. This is a significant part of meeting and more than just food is prepared and served. Thai (like many of us) do not like to eat with people that they have serious issues with. Often when issues are resolved they demonstrate the reconciliation by eating together. Communion could be a part of this eating together.
- ❖ It is necessary to plan and provide for various groups in the emerging church. Factors such as age, sex, ethnic origins, and educational background must be taken into account. Small churches thrive on togetherness so providing for various sub-groups in the church need to be done as a whole group. So the whole group does some things that relate to the needs of the children, or youth or elderly. When groups are over 70 people then the need divide up for some activities is self-evident and welcomed by the group. But groups of less than 40 like to do things all together.

BELONGINGNESS: The New Believer and the Believing Community

The saved are “no longer strangers and aliens, but ... fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household” (Eph 2:19). God created a new society for the redeemed – the church. Belonging to the church is not optional for believers. By divine action they are united to the body of Christ. No believer is excluded nor exempted on any grounds. All believers are part of this new society.

The early church understood this – from an embryonic new society of 120 believers, 3000 were added in one day (Acts 2:41). There was no waiting period – no courses, no waiting period while new converts learned basic doctrine, no waiting to attain a certain level of holiness.

In belonging to the church, new believers had identity, namely “Christ followers.” In their new society they received spiritual nourishment, they were loved and taught to love in return. They had security and stability. The sense of belonging was so intimate that the group was called a body and each person was a body part. When one part suffered, all parts suffered. When one member was honored, all members were honored. (Eph 4:11 – 16, Heb 10:24 – 26, 1 Cor 12:26)

Individuality was not destroyed through identification with the group. New believers had been given special ability to make unique contributions to the body (Rom 12:3 – 8, 1 Cor 12:7 – 11, Eph 4:7 – 16). The spiritual gifts gave status. New believers were needed by the group. The group could not function properly without their abilities. At the same time the new believers needed the group since they could not function apart from it. Each person’s individuality contributed to one’s “social being-ness”, and each person’s social nature contributed to one’s individuality.

New believers are part of God’s family. They may in fact have given up earthly family ties when they converted to Christianity, as some Thai families believe that to be Thai is to be Buddhist. It is essential that the new believers feel that they are part of the divine family.

This means meeting together regularly and participating in the activities of this family. Within the family they become strong, mature, fruitful, members of the body of Christ.

Relationships within churches should be warm and personal, with a high degree of integration from the first. This is done in Thailand by acceptance, honor, and treating each other as family. Consider the warmth and “family feel” that an employer often creates, how he takes care of his staff and family, how people look after each other, etc. The church should be MORE united and have more love than even the best employer! More so than any other group, the church must show a united community and a common cause.

EVANGELISM AND THE CHURCH

It is easier for people to believe and be incorporated into the church if they don't have to cross a culture, language or status barrier. Christians can most easily share the gospel with those who are like them. And we want churches that can easily reproduce within their social sector. So we don't want to make these factors a hindrance to sharing Christ. For example a person might become a Christian and join a church but feel they cannot bring their family to that church because of social differences. This then impedes the evangelistic movement.

A particular local church does not have to have the full variety of social and cultural diversity that is possible. In fact a local church cannot have this. But even a small church that has similar culture, language and social status can have lots of diversity that challenges them to maintain the unity! It would seem best if the local church is relatively homogenous and that it reflexes the full scope of Christ's acceptance by relationship with other church. If a local church begins to cross social barriers it should consider starting another church within that social spectrum. That helps the gospel advance. And if intra-church fellowship is maintained the church network reflects the broader social spectrum. So if there is a person who believes but it is impediment for his witness to bring people into a given local church then he needs to be helped to establish a new church in that new social spectrum.

The older a local church is the more it will be a “gathered people” type church (a church with lots of social diversity that impedes evangelism because the members feel the church is too socially different from their social network to be comfortable bring their social network to the church.) The newer the church the more likely it will be a “people movement” type church where all the members are of one social type and feel comfortable bringing their social network to the church. Family networks can have several social strata so as family networks are evangelized and brought into the church the social strata of the church gets more complex.

Some have suggested that rather than group the converted we ought to convert the group. This approach seeks to use the natural social grouping for evangelism and discipleship. Often with the other approach we are trying to group socially distinct people and thus we limit the ability of those people to witness within their social network. Because we need to start lots of churches it might be better to start two or three churches rather than group two or three new converts together who are social distinct.

Churches can become entrenched and intertwined with culture in such a way that the cultural role and God's purpose clash. This can happen very quickly as we see in Acts when Paul goes to present the gifts from the Gentile churches to the church in Jerusalem. Most of us know this from our own countries and we should not be surprised if there are some cases in Thailand. The biblical church should not be afraid to be different from the predominant culture, or from sub-biblical expressions of Christianity within the Christian community (even if it is “Thai Christian” culture!).

CONCLUSIONS

In rural areas we are most likely going to be establishing small churches of less than 30 adults. It is best if these small groups can be linked together so they can assist each other. It is most likely that these groups will meet in homes or “salas.” The meetings will be led by lay people and have an informal, “ben gun eng” atmosphere. We do not want to encourage these churches to have paid leaders. It is often helpful for these kind of groups to meet at night. Now that many of villages have pick-up trucks the believers from one village can travel to a near-by village to meet with another group. With this pattern many can attend a couple of meetings in a week. For example, one meeting is in their own village and maybe a couple of other meetings in nearby villages during the week. Because of some of the Thai Christian cultural expectations about the word “church” (building and paid pastor) it might be helpful to not call these groups “churches”. But functionally they are churches.

In small towns the groups will be similar but might meet in a rented building. They might have a bi-vocational church worker. But they normally will not have paid workers. The town groups might find it useful to meet on Sundays but most likely need to have some small sub-group meetings (cell groups) during the week too!

Bigger towns and small cities often will have the ability to grow to over 50 or 60 adults. But this is only the case when they have gifted leaders who can manage organizationally and pastorally the larger needs. Since our goal is to get as many churches going as possible this secondary growth is not our primary concern. A group that grows and reproduces new churches will affect greater numbers of people in the long run. So churches in bigger towns would likely have a Sunday meeting and cell groups that meet at other times with the hope that they could become churches. Paid leaders are often possible and may be helpful for churches in these kinds of situations. But the congregation must be people who have regular income.

Cities can often produce bigger churches. This is due in part to the concentration of the population and in part because cities attract leadership abilities. The big problem for the city church is property and buildings. Only a few groups can afford to buy and build their own facilities. So even in the cities small churches should be established and fostered.

Further reading Ralph W. Neighbour Jr. *Where do we go from here? A guidebook for cell group churches* Houston: Torch, 1990.

Check List Questions

1. Does your team have a plan for the times and places of meetings? Do you have a plan on how to congregated new believers? Are meetings frequent enough? Are they at suitable times for those believing?
2. How do these meetings contribute to spiritual life of believers? How do these meetings help them to do all that Christ commanded? How do these meeting help believers connect in mutual fellowship?
3. Do the meetings help incorporate new believes into the family of God? Are the meetings part of the discipleship of new believers?
4. How do the congregations reproduce? What is the plan for reproduction?
5. How are you going to process the pressure, expectations and desires to have buildings?

Chapter 6 Faith Confirmed

Make disciples is the central verb in the Matthew version of the great commission. The sequence of the participles is important. First there must be going. The going contains in it the telling because it is followed by baptising. Folk could not be baptised if they were not responding to the gospel. This is followed by teaching. Not teaching of *knowledge* but teaching *obedience* to all that Christ commanded. The letters of the New Testament are apostolic examples of the teaching that followed baptism.

Hesselgrave sets forth five objectives important in church planting. (Hesselgrave p 303-305)

- 1) To establish believers in the faith so they know what they are to believe and how they are to live.
- 2) To provide opportunities for worship that will be uplifting and God-honoring.
- 3) To exhort believers to serve under the authority of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit so that as citizens of heaven and earth they will make both spheres richer by their contributions to God and man.
- 4) To help believers in their witness.
- 5) To encourage believers to practice faithful stewardship in accordance with the time, talents, treasures, gifts and energies God has given them.

Patterson lists the following commands of Christ that we are to do and teach others to do.

- 1) Repent and believe and receive the Holy Spirit (Mk 1:15; Jn 3:16; 20:22)
- 2) Baptize (Mt 28:18-20)
- 3) Make Disciples
- 4) Love God and one another (Mt 22:36-40; Jn 13:34-35; Lk 10:25-37; Mt 5:43-48)
- 5) Break Bread (Mt 26:26-28; Jn 4:24)
- 6) Pray (Jn 16:24)
- 7) Give (Lk 6:38)

This is wonderfully simple! And that makes it easy to reproduce, especially if the focus is maintained on obedience to the Lord Jesus and is maintained on doing. We do want new believers to know what they believe and how they are to live but in the first few days of being a new Christian the focus is on knowing who they trust and taking steps to do what he commanded. As they do this, then their knowledge of what and how will increase and be confirmed.

ESTABLISHING

Because we learn to do all that Jesus commanded best through “informal” learning it is important to bring new believers into the family of God. All of us know that growing up in an earthly family shapes how we live. The patterns of life, responses to situations and ways of acting that we learned by just being a part of a family; often take years of determination to unlearn! This shows how powerful “informal” learning is! As some have said, “Faith is caught not taught.” So as we are loving God and each other, breaking bread, praying and giving, making disciples it is easy to bring others into what we are doing so they can imitate us. We model obedience to all that Jesus commanded.

We need to model Bible reading, study, meditation, and listening. As we model this we teach people to nourish their spiritual life on the revelation of God. They will in this way come to know more about what they believe and how to live in union with Christ but they will also learn that the Scriptures are the food we need to sustain our relationship with God. They will

come to see the Bible is not simple a book to know but the revelation of God, whom we trust, and in trust, obey.

Prayer is similar. As they see our prayer life and habits, they imitate us and learn how prayer is an essential part of sustaining our relationship with the Lord Jesus. If pray is just religious actions and not connected to a relational faith in God who exists and can respond to our needs, it grows cold and hard to do. But when we know we are addressing a living God who loves us and cares for us, prayer grows warm and is not so hard to do. Habits of prayer then sustain a relationship with God, in whom we trust, and in trust, obey.

So if informal learning is the best style of learning for obedience. The best situation for this kind of informal learning is one to one and small group interaction. Informal learning does not happen well sitting in rows looking at the back of some one's head and listening to one person speak a long discourse. It happens when people can look into each other's face, interrupt each other, and ask questions. It happens when people walk side by side, or work together, or interact over a meal.

Formal learning is very good for teaching knowledge. It has its place in confirming the faith. Acts 2 clearly indicates that the early church continued in the apostles teaching. Our Lord himself did teach formally at times. Paul expected his letters to be read to the churches. Romans could take about 2 hours to read aloud. (This would stretch most of our abilities to concentrate. We might be like Eutychus! But it would bless us too! Try it sometime.) Formal styles of teaching are useful. But church planting cannot employ this style alone for confirmation of a new Christian's faith.

Follow-up/Discipling New Believers

In Thailand, the school system has its emphasis on learning theoretical knowledge by memorization without being able to apply it. The consequence of this system is that many Thais try to learn Christian doctrine the same way and they find it very difficult to apply biblical teaching in their everyday lives.

Discipleship training in small groups or individually seems to be a good means to help believers learn to apply biblical truth to their lives. For instance, telling new believers: "You need to have daily devotions. Read a little bit in the Bible every day (e.g. by using Scripture Union notes, etc.) and pray!" is not enough and will almost certainly not lead to a fruitful devotional life. Even if the believer starts daily devotions, he will soon be frustrated and give up, because he has never been taught how to do it exactly. Discipleship training means that we teach devotions step by step by going with the believer through an example quiet time from A to Z.

We have to show him how to pray, what to look for in the Word of God, how to take notes and how to seek to apply what he has learned. This needs to be practiced and checked over several weeks until the believer is able to feed on the Word of God by himself. Then he will enjoy his daily devotions and will want to do it. And they should then be able to and encouraged to do this with other new believes. In the same way other areas of the Christian life need to be taught and practiced together with the believer. People need to see step by step how things are done.



It seems that preaching and teaching up front only helps a few extra keen believers to come to some degree of maturity. Many others do not find that becoming a Christian is a life transforming experience.

(There are several good discipleship programs in Thai:

- Experiencing God (Blackaby); S. Baptist Press
- Navigators: some are useful, but in general weak on the Church and very "western" in approach.
- Making Disciples, printed by Kanok Bannasan, good short lessons for new believers.
- Chronological teaching through the Bible
- HBS for church leaders and the very committed.
- The Salt Series by Kanok

It is important to remember though, that such textbooks do not make disciples; they are just a means to the end. It is more important that the one establishing the new believer loves the disciple deeply and is willing to die for each disciple like Jesus.

Steps in Discipleship

1 God's Part Commands: Mt 28:1-20	2 Christian Worker's Part Prays - goes out Witnessing	3 Response of Hearer (non-Christian)	
Creation declares	Prayer, holy living and share	-9	Believes there is no God
- Reveals Himself - Reveals His Plan 1. Before Believing (Ro1:18-20)	Christian Worker - Builds a good relationship (Prepares the Ground)	-8	Believes there is a God, but does not understand the Gospel.
Brings Understanding sowing the seed	* Shares the Gospel	-7	Has some superficial, often faulty understanding of the Gospel.
	* Uses Various Methods	-6	Knows the important Doctrines of the Christian Faith.
	* Prays For -	-5	Understands the Implications of the Gospel.
	may reject	-4	Has a Good Attitude toward the Gospel.
	-3	-3	Has Personal Problems about Receiving Christ.
	* Persuades	-2	Makes a Decision to Receive the Gospel.
	-1	-1	Admits to being a Sinner and Wishes to be Forgiven.
	2. Believes (Ro 10:14-17)		
Gives New Life - Forgives and Cleanses from sin - Gives Rights of Sonship 3. Repents (Titus 3:5)	Explains Steps for Receiving Christ. Reaps	0	Repents, Confesses Sin - Sins of the Flesh - Sins of spirit involvement Is made a new creation (1 Jn 1:9, Jn 1:12, 1 Cor 5:17)
Cleanses and Makes Holy Makes like Christ	Follow – up	+1	Evaluates after Decision
	Guide and Nourish	+2	Becomes a Part of Christ's Body, the Church.
	Teaches to be a true Disciple	+3	Grows in Understanding and Behavior.
	+4	+4	Builds a close Relationship with God.
	+5	+5	Takes increasing Responsibility in his Christian Life.
	GLORIFIES GOD	GLORIFIES GOD	+5
4. Grows toward the Fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:12-16)			

Resources for Young Thai Believers

Worldview building resources

Many missionaries find that a new Thai believer needs a lot of “re-orientation” to get the Buddhist worldview out of their system in order to be grounded in the Christian faith. One of the best ways to build this Biblical worldview is to spend time in the Old Testament stories. Resources that help with this big-picture understanding include:

- The chronological approach developed by the New Tribes Mission. In Thailand it is produced by Train and Multiply and called เรียบพระคัมภีร์ตามลำดับ. Book 1 is evangelistic and book 2 cover the same ground - creation to revelation - but assuming the student has come to faith.
- The Bible overview method developed by Matthias Media. Available in booklet form from the Central Thailand student ministry team or as an interactive e-learning course at www.kwamjing.net
- Some DVD's from The Bible Collection like Abraham, Esther, Moses and Jeremiah. In Thai it is called by the grand name of อภินิหารตำนานศักดิ์สิทธิ์
- “God’s Story” Bible overview in VCD format is very digestible. It is called เรื่องราวของพระเจ้า
- The Old and New Testament Picture Bible as well as a booklet called ตัดวงจรกรรมข้ามห้วงบารมี (Escape from Karma by Dr ไพฑูรย์ หัตถมมาศ) available from Kanok Bannasan.

There are also many topical or systematic theology approaches to fill in the gaps in the understanding of the new believer. These include Kanok resources:

- การสร้างสาวก รวมเล่ม - God, sin, repentance, faith, the Bible, prayer, church, worship, marriage etc.
- เปิดประเด็นดั่ง (Searching Issues by Nicky Gumbel) - problem of suffering, other faiths, sex before marriage, faith and science, homosexuality etc.
- For believers with difficult backgrounds, books covering specialized topics like lesbianism, healing, bondage, Mormonism etc.

Discipline building resources

General resources for helping establish basic Christian disciplines include:

- Booklets มุมสงบ - The Quiet Time by bishop Frank Houghton, ตัวอย่างคำอธิษฐาน - Sample Prayers, พระเยซูผู้รักว่าโลก - evangelistic Bible studies from John’s Gospel, แต่ผู้เชื่อใหม่ - Now that I Believe and others available from Kanok Bannasan. Especially the Christian living section in their on-line catalogue.
- ชีวิตคริสเตียนขั้นพื้นฐาน - basic Christian living discipleship booklet used by and available from YFC.
- Thai Bible Society has good Thai Bible software which includes study notes and two Thai translations. Good for self-study and printing scripture memory cards.
- Thai edition of Our Daily Bread (มานาประจำวัน) is available from RBC ministries. Their website also has a daily audio feed.
- The International Bible Society has The Life Application Study Bible in Thai.

Devotional resources

There are many devotional resources available, like:

- Thai Christian music. You can listen online at YFC's website or buy from Christian bookstores. One of the best stocked suppliers of English and Thai music albums is Radiant Bookstore.
- DVDs like The Gospel of John available from secular outlets like แมงป่อง
- Christian Colors Song 3 is a very popular songbook for personal quiet time or group worship. Available from YFC.
- Kanok Bannasan books like Pilgrim's Progress and biographies like The Heavenly Man, Eric Liddell and Joni Eareckson is commendable.
- Online sermons in Thai is starting to emerge, like this one by Dr. Michael Youssef in co-operation with Voice of Peace:
http://www.oneplace.com/ministries/leading_the_way_english_thai_radio/Default.asp
- Tyrannus publishers have a few good devotional titles by Andrew Murray.

The scene changes all the time, so do watch OMF Thailand Intranet :: Downloads :: Ministry Resources and :: Forums :: Church planting & evangelism :: Resources for news of the latest discipleship resources available in Thai.

Contact information

Radiant Book Store: 10 ซ.ร่วมเย็น ถ.พัฒนาการ ข.พระโขนง กรุงเทพฯ 10250, Tel: 0 2319 0399

www.kanokbannasan.org

www.thaibible.or.th

www.tyrannusthai.com

www.ibiblehouse.com

www.thailandyfc.net

Involvement in Deliverance Ministry

There may be some cases when you are puzzled by apparent lack of spiritual understanding or lack of spiritual growth in a seeker or believer. What are the causes? Past religious and occult practices may be part of the reason for spiritual blindness.

Use the guidelines and check list at the end of this chapter to see if the new believer has completely cut his ties with his past religious and spirit involvement.

What is it? Because scripture tells us that God's enemy, Satan, seeks to devour all people, we are therefore commanded to pray on our spiritual armor daily and be ready at all times to use our prayers in an offensive position to take down the works and strongholds of the enemy that is in the unseen world. Demons in people are our enemy, not the person(s). All people in every culture can be oppressed, harassed and/or controlled by evil spirits. Scriptures commands us to test the spirits, to cast them out, and to set the captives free in the powerful name of Jesus Christ and by His powerful blood. Jesus gives us His authority to confront demonic activity in His name and take control of the situation at hand, not be controlled. The rulers, authorities, and spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms are real just as much as earthly authority structures of men are real. God's purpose for His Church is to show His wisdom to the spiritual world, not just humans. All of Satan's purposes are directly opposed to God's plans.

Verses to review: 1 Pet 5:8 Eph 6:11 2 Cor 10:3-5 Lk 13:10-17 2 Cor 12:7,8 Acts 5:1-3 1 Jn 4:1 Lk 4:18 Matt 28:18 Eph 6:12 Eph 3:10

In the Thai church planting context: Thai are particularly superstitious and sensitive to the spiritual world. Their belief in the unseen spiritual world opens them up to the oppression and demonization of evil spirits. There are no “good” spirits, as they believe, because our enemy masquerades as an angel of light. Satan and his minions are active behind many things, some of his schemes (Eph 6:11 2 Th 2:9) are: church splits, poor relational skills, un-forgiveness, unrepentant pride, worldly values in Christian conversation, family splits, judgments, low self-esteem, poor chronic health, drug abuse, seemingly unbreakable unwholesome habits, sexual immorality of every kind, cultural face saving and lies, compromise, lack of obedience and commitment, neglect of prayer and Bible study, many forms of social entertainment, defilements and shame, “put-downs”, and powerless Christianity. Do you see or experience these things? Then you have your work cut out for you!

Some Practical Suggestions:

1) If and when you are in a prayer situation with a willing believer, have them confess their sin *completely* with a repentant heart. Have them prayerfully RENOUNCE and CLEARLY state every aspect of that sin that most likely has allowed the enemy to operate in the person’s life. Sin is the main “door” for demonization. Have them express in the prayer affirmation of receiving Jesus’ forgiveness. By this you can generally determine how personal their relationship with Jesus is and if they can really walk in His forgiveness. Note that Thai most likely say “mai ben rai, lum bai laew, mai mi arai”. A forgotten debt does not mean it has just disappeared with time and we are to forget it. Confession without genuine repentance is grounds for the enemy to continue harassing through the “door” of sin.

2) Before we lead a person to commit their life to follow Jesus, we must be sure they are willing to renounce and discard every item relating to their former world of superstition and belief. Such demonic things can be any sort of amulets, idols, strings, and *ANY* objects or pictures of questionable religious purposes. Yes, even artifacts relating to any era of royalty have their roots in the demonic. As missionaries we must realize that these items are not merely “cultural”, but are directly tied to the demonic realm. If we fail to make this important at the beginning of their ‘life with Christ’, they most likely will go on to assimilate outward forms of Christian faith (prayers, church attendance &, baptism etc.) with very little transformed inner life in evidence.

Bringing contacts to the point of faith in Christ as well as discipling them, we must be sure to find out their previous animistic involvement and cut off the ties and influences by deliberate oral declaring-type prayer. This pronounces and activates a clear statement to the demonic world of their changed allegiance. Then *ANY* remaining artifacts must be disposed of. Those that they own must be destroyed in such a way that someone else cannot find them and make use of them. The decision to destroy them must be their own, not ‘teacher told me to’; and they must do the destroying themselves, you may observe only. If you do it yourself, you may be sure the demonic will find a way to get you in trouble. Also, if they destroy an animistic item in their possession which really belonged to someone else, you may be sure the spirit behind the artifact will arouse the true owner and could become a big problem for them and even you.

3) Be alert to religious occasions. Here are some things not to do or not to partake in: Do not put “friendship strings” on your or others wrists in Central Thailand. Do not put your hands together as a “wai” during Buddhist prayers at weddings, funerals or public ceremonies as this gives the impression of personal involvement to the spiritual aspects of the ceremony. Do not “wai” a priest when everybody else does. Do not bow to the Kings picture at any time, just reverently stand still. Do not touch “holy” things. Do not put “Songkran floats” in the water as others do. Do not allow a priest to “bless” you. Do not allow your hands to be washed with “holy water”. There are many other things we should avoid doing but in short, be filled with

the Holy Spirit and avoid all appearances of compromise that dilute your testimony for Christ. The enemy is more active than you think.

4) When in battle against the demonic forces, your prayers are not to be analytical, pleading, theoretical, or wimpy. Instead they are to be firm, commanding and clear with faith and without fear. Think of a dangerous intruder totally dedicated to “take out and destroy” your closest family member, what would you do? Stand there and rationalize it? No, you’d jump in with all your strength and prevent anything from happening. Your sword of the spirit is for offensive purposes. Show your enemy you mean business in the authority and power of the Lord Jesus Christ!

Resource:

1) For further practical prayers for children’s protection, location cleansing, another’s salvation, taking up spiritual authority in your family, or for you or others from demonic oppression please contact Buzz or Ruthi Curtis at buzzruthi@gmail.com

2) I Give You Authority by Charles Kraft, printed by Chosen Books.

3) The Bondage Breaker and The Way of Escape by Neil Anderson and available in Thai from Kanok Banasaan.

Corporate Worship/Meetings

I would suggest that we change Hesselgrave’s word “worship” to assemble. We must provide people opportunity to assemble. Worship is something that we as Christians should do at all times and in all places. It is not something that we can only do when we are assembled. Nowhere in the New Testament are we commanded to gather for worship. We are told to gather (Heb 10:24-25) and we are told to build each other up when we gather (1 Cor 14) and we are told to break bread together. Communion was given to us for the purpose of remembering the Lord’s death and resurrection until he comes again.

At no point in the church planting process does our own cultural traditions and expectations impinge on the effort as this matter of meetings. When do we meet? Where do we meet? What do we do when we meet? Who does what? What can everyone do? How do we meet? We try to justify our answers and practices by Biblical or traditional or aesthetic reasons. But so little is proscribed in the New Testament! So little is forbidden in the New Testament! And now in Thailand it is not just what we bring but the Thai churches have developed its own sense of what church meetings are to be or not to be.

While Sunday is the traditional time for church meetings, clearly that is not commanded. In Acts churches often meet every day, at various times of the day too! Churches can meet any time that is convenient for the believers gathering. They can meet every 7 days or every day or every 10 days or follow an irregular pattern. Generally believers need to gather frequently if they are going to love one another. And generally regular patterns of meeting are needed.

The only commanded activities when believers gather is prayer (1 Tim 2:1-8) and communion or breaking of the bread. In Christ’s instructions about this there is no indication of anyone being forbidden or commanded to conduct the event. So churches are free to ask any member to have a part in conducting the event. The validity of communion rests with the faith of those receiving the bread/body and wine/blood of Christ. It does not rest upon who prays for, or who recites the scripture or who explains the meaning of communion, or who passes out the elements. Groups ought to have communion frequently but are free to choose a pattern of every meeting, or once a month, or some other arrangement.

Paul's instructions in 1 Cor 14 clearly indicate that edification of others is the evaluative standard of meetings. If it builds others up it is good. But if it does not build up others then it can be done privately (for example speaking in tongues) or it should be stopped (disorderly conversation or interrupting of others). Paul indicates that members could prepare and bring songs, hymns, teachings or other messages to share provided that everything was done to edify the body. There is great freedom in what a church can do when it is gathered!

The Apostles teaching is important for the church. But the traditional "sermon" is only one way that can be done. We don't need to be locked into that one way of doing things. If there can't be a sermon the church can read the scriptures. Prayers are important and commanded but again there are not fixed ways to pray. We are free to pray in all ways and at all times. Praise was evident in the meetings of the early Christians as well as outside the meetings (See Romans 15. Praise addressed to non-believers is/can be evangelism, right?). So praise expressed in many ways including songs, testimonies, stories, plays, readings, banners can be a part of our meetings.

SERVICE

Service – All are gifted so all can serve. The Holy Spirit has been poured out on all who believe so all who believe can serve and should serve. The impediments to this service is that some feel they are unworthy to serve, others feel they are lacking gifts or abilities, others are just lazy. Some have been told by others they cannot or should not serve or kept from serving by rules or traditions. Some have been wounded by the criticism of others when they tried, so they stopped.

Prayer Counseling

Beginnings:

Prayer Counseling is a ministry of inner healing, seeking to reach down into the emotions and more hidden areas of what drives a person's decisions and behaviors. Various approaches to ministries of inner healing types are much more well known now in 2008, but Prayer Counseling began to come into focus as a distinct ministry in OMF Thailand field in early 1994. Before that, as missionaries disciplined people throughout Thailand, it had become increasingly apparent that most local believers would seem to either grow to a point and get 'stuck' in their Christian walk, or grow in some areas but be stuck in others and remaining immature believers without victory. It was as if they would reach a ceiling. For everyday life Thai Christians can easily react to issues at hand in 'Thai cultural' ways before seeking God's ways, which conflict with their desire for a pure faith in Christ. Church problems are often dealt with by worldly wisdom instead of God sought wisdom. There has been a pattern of churches with divisive issues coming up regularly between members and/or towards their leaders and pastors. Commonly found sin patterns within churches have included; gossip, criticism of leaders, control, male/female inappropriate relationships & sexual issues, financial sin. Therefore, when we plant churches we must be able to approach these kinds of problems with Christ's ways and with his victory, not just with programs or ideas based on culture. We must be prepared to effectively minister to the soul and spirit of Thai people who commit themselves to become God's people. As we plant God's church in Thailand, we must recognize the inroads that the enemy uses against God's church. As we sought The Holy Spirit, the Wonderful Counselor; God brought wise people of God (John and Janice Aston + Anglican vicar, John Whettam) to begin to teach us more of His ways. Thus, Prayer Counseling has become an effective component in God's redemptive equipping process for our OMF team in Thailand.

Quick Overview:

The key of this approach to ministry and discipleship is counseling in prayer while listening to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We must not seek to use our own understanding, but that of Jesus who sees the true inner heart of a person, and that is why it is so important to emphasize the prayer and listening component. It is God's presence, guidance and discernment that are to be the prevailing factors. Prayer Counseling is comprehensive, covering 4 main areas; **Wounds** and emotional pain; **Sin** and sinful reactions; **Bondages** blocks and stuck behaviors; the **Occult** with Satan and his schemes. They are actually all intertwined, but are outlined separately in this ministry in order to highlight how a person's life can become compromised and without spiritual victory, thus needing to be set right. Isaiah 61:1-3 highlights these points well, and how the message of the living Christ has come to set things right. We are poor in spirit...our spirits are impoverished and need to be restored by the good news and presence of Jesus. Our hearts have been broken (**WOUNDS**) and our emotional responses have led us into **SIN**, which has made us captive (**BONDAGE**) to the schemes of the devil (**OCCULT**) to keep us stuck (**BARRIERS**) due to our wounds and sins. The news of Jesus is not only one of salvation, but of comfort for those who mourn, freedom for captives, release of prisoners and vengeance against the enemy. The goal is to bring forth "...a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor...to rebuild...restore...and renew...what has been devastated..." (Is 61:4) This is the ministry of Jesus (Luke 4:18-19) Missionaries need this touch in our hearts just as much as Thai people. As a distinct ministry, Prayer Counseling therefore seeks to see Jesus heal the wounds, forgive and cleanse the sin, release from bondage to behaviors and attitudes, to rebuke the enemy and restore the arenas he has influenced.

Where we are now:

God has taken a team of us OMF-ers on from 1994 in this ministry. After initial instruction, we have learned a lot by hands on doing and ministering to people. There is much more that can be stated and taught in each one of these 4 main arenas of Prayer Counseling and their related topics. OMF-ers in the PC team have been using what God has taught us with anyone God sends our way, and also teaching seminars from either 1-5 days on one or all PC topics. These have been held in both Central (both regional and at local churches) & North Thailand (+ Cambodia) in either Thai or English (for missionaries), and we are prepared to continue to help promote all the resources God has for us in this comprehensive way to whoever is interested. In the now 14 years of prayer counseling ministry with countless individuals, we have witnessed a much greater level of release both for ourselves and amongst those who realized their need for help at deep levels after they have initially prayed to receive Christ. People have been able to confess hidden unbelief that God truly cared for them at their silent lonely levels of pain; un-forgiveness they had held against the people/events which had caused them so much pain; many deep fears, wrong loyalties and many other sins of action, attitude and thought. Then they have experienced Jesus' forgiveness and comfort at deep emotional levels and been released from dungeons of hidden pain which had kept them from spiritual growth. They have experienced freedom from their sinful reactions to many things. Mourning despair and grief has been removed from them. It has truly been rewarding to see Thai people experience their living Savior at this deep level of life. It has caused them to grow so much deeper in their loyalty to Christ instead of the culture around them. In this way we can see a greater degree of commitment and the citizenship of heaven in their lives.

This is why, as a team of missionaries in Thailand, we recommend in this handbook that missionaries learn the ministry of prayer counseling. Deal with your own issues first, and then learn how to set Thai people free by walking with Jesus in this deep way. For more information about Prayer Counseling or for help in facilitating a seminar, contact Buzz and

Ruthi Curtis. Your regional leader can also advise you. Some Thai leaders experienced in Prayer Counseling are Ajan Pramuanpon (Lopburi); Ajan Manunsak (Jasaman ch. BK); Ajan Wanna (BK); Ajan Sawaeng (Prajuap).

EVANGELISM

Witness – “The successful expansion of any movement is in direct proportion to its success in mobilizing and occupying its total membership in constant propagation of its beliefs.”

Kenneth Strachan

If we want a movement, then we have to see those who have come to Christ immediately and consistently sharing Christ with others. We don't want to do this in rude ways or in ways that sabotage further opportunities. So just firing up the zeal is not enough. We have to model winsome sharing ourselves. The best modeling comes as we go together. For example, Jesus speaks to Matthew. Then Matthew organizes a party for his friends to meet his new friend and Lord – Jesus. There Matthew sees how Jesus shares with his friends. So if one of them turned to Christ, Matthew could share with that one's family and friends.

Evangelism breaks down when Christians:

1. Are not full of the Holy Spirit because they have grieved the spirit.
2. Discourage new Christians from sharing their faith and stifle new believers witness
3. Give no help, training, assistance or organization for evangelism
4. When so much time is taken up by the church, that believers have no time for evangelism and lose contact with non-believers
5. When no evaluation of methods, programs, or efforts is done and the efforts get stale and canned instead of creative and fresh.

STEWARDSHIP

Stewardship – Giving in one of the commands of Christ that we are to obey. The basic teaching of the bible about giving is:

1. All we have comes from God.
2. What we have, we have the right to use and are accountable to God.
3. God is generous with us, so we need to be like him, a cheerful giver.

The sooner that a group of new Christians are sustaining the group with their offerings the sooner that group is responsible for itself. When a new group is not willing to practice giving, and is then sustained by the giving of outsiders, the less vital the faith of that group is. Groups of Christians like this will either learn to give or die.

Checklist

- 1) What will you do to establish new Christians in the faith? What materials will you use and how will you train them to establish others in the faith? How will you teach them to do all the Christ commands?
- 2) How will you provide opportunities to assemble and teach new believers to break bread together, pray, give and build each other up in their assembly?
- 3) How will you mobilize all new believers in service in the power of the Holy Spirit?
- 4) How will you help them do sustained evangelism?
- 5) How will you teach them to give?

Personal Inventory Checklist – Please complete the following information:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>		
Address	City	State	Zip Code	
Age	Church	# of yrs a Christian	# of Children	# of Grandchildren

Please review this checklist thoroughly and follow these directions!!!!

Click **BOTH** boxes next to the issues listed that have been impacting your life within the past 6-12 months.
 Click **ONE** box for all other issues listed that have impacted your life as far back as you can remember, but are no longer a problem. If listed items do not apply, please leave blank
 Choose to be totally open and honest before the Lord. Bring everything into the light – you want to be free!!!

SEXUAL IMPURITY PROBLEMS

OCCULT INVOLVEMENT

MENTAL

	Pornography		Fortune Told		Confusion
	Fornication		Tarot Cards		Concentration
	Adultery		Palm Read		Procrastination
	Homosexuality		Séance		Hallucinations
	Exhibitionism		Astrology, Horoscopes		Schizophrenia
	Masturbation		Numerology		Paranoia
	Lesbianism		Table Tipping		Persecution Complex
	Incest		Rune Stones		Accident Prone
	Rape		White or Black Magic		Inferiority
	Lust		Role Playing Games (D&D)		Past Traumas
	Prostitution		Levitation		Childbirth Trauma/Miscarriage
	Abortion		Ouija Board		Delusions
	Venereal Disease		Voodoo/Spell Casting		Compulsive Behavior
	Molestation		Yoga		
			Transcendental Meditation		RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND
ADDICTIONS, ABUSE/USE			Automatic Writing		Roman Catholic
	Drugs		Charms, Fetishes, Crystals		Mormonism
	Alcohol		Satan Worship/Witchcraft		Far Eastern Religions
	Tobacco		Martial Arts		Native American
	Prescriptions (past/present)		Hypnotism		New Age/Jehovah's Witness
	Money/Greed		Auras		Christian Science/Unitarian
	Gambling/Lottery		Astral Projection		Lodges (Religious/Masonic)
	Gluttony/Metabolism		Tattoos		Legalistic Protestant
	Rock Music (Heavy Metal)/Rap		Other:		Spiritual Abuse
	TV/Video Games/Computer				

	Shopping			RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS
		SPIRITUAL PROBLEMS WITH		Spiritual
I HAVE DONE THE FOLLOWING		Bible Reading		Emotional
	I speak in Tongues	Prayer		Frigidity
	I'm willing to test the spirit of Tongue (1 John 4:4)	Church Attendance		Sexual
	I was slain in the spirit	Witnessing		In-Laws
		Unbelief		
				Other:

Please note: Many spiritual experiences such as speaking in tongues or being slain in the spirit are very positive and not thought of as problems. But because spiritual experiences sought with wrong motives can be subtle entry points of demonic false religious spirits, it is wise to test the spirits as we are told to do in 1 Jn 4.

BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS		PHYSICAL PROBLEMS	
	Bitterness or Resentment		Stress, Tension
	Hearing Voices in Mind		Tired, Exhaustion
	Unforgiveness		Hypoglycemia
	Anger or Rage		AIDS
	Anxiety or Worry		Allergies, Hay Fever
	Fear or Doubt		Anorexia, Bulimia
	Depression/Grief		Dizziness, Blackouts
	Suicide Thoughts		Menstrual Problems, PMS
	Lying, Deceit		Sudden Sleepiness
	Cursing, Swearing		Insomnia
	Jealousy or Envy		Nose, Sinus Trouble
	Pride or Self-Righteousness		Eye Problems
	Rebellion or Disobedience		Seizures, Epilepsy
	Critical Spirit, Gossiping		Headaches
	Daydreaming or Fantasizing		Pain or Arthritis
	Nightmares		Throat Problems
	Coveting Others' Possessions		Infirmities
	Impatience or Irritability		Ear Problems
	Stealing		Asthma
	Laziness		Diabetes
	Self-Pity		Constipation
	Arrogance		Chronic Back Trouble
	Hatred		Memory Loss (long-term)
	Controlling or Manipulating		Hyperactivity/ADD/ADHD
	Shame, Guilt, Regret		Forgetfulness (short-term)
	Insecurity or Low Self-Esteem		
	Distrust	OTHER	
	Backbiting, Belittling		Veteran
	Fighting or Quarreling		Racism, Prejudice, Minority
	Rejection, Abandonment		Slavery (background)
	Isolation, Loneliness		Abuse from Parents

			Financial

OTHER PROBLEMS (you can write as long as you wish):

We want to bring everything into the light of God’s presence. Call sin SIN, confess everything to God audibly (1John 1:9). Now thank your heavenly Father for forgiveness and cleansing through the Blood of Christ. Come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace in time of need (Hebrews 4:16)

PLEASE BE SURE TO READ THE FOLLOWING AND CHECK THE BOX BELOW BEFORE MAILING:

Those facilitating deliverance prayer do not claim to be licensed counselors; professional counseling should be sought elsewhere.

By clicking on the box below you agree that 1) you choose to receive prayer by Christian lay ministers, 2) that the Lord Jesus Christ alone has the power to heal and set you free, and 3) that your future walk with Him is your complete responsibility.

I have read and agree with the above statements – Dated

รายการตรวจสอบส่วนตัว

วันที่	ชื่อและนามสกุล	โทรศัพท์	ชื่อคริสตจักร
ที่อยู่	อำเภอ	จังหวัด	รหัส
อายุ	เชื่อในพระเจ้ากี่ปี	มีบุตรกี่คน	มีหลานกี่คน

กรุณาอ่านข้อแนะนำเหล่านี้ก่อน!!!!

จากรายการดังต่อไปนี้ ขอให้ท่านทำเครื่องหมายดังต่อไปนี้:

- สำหรับการกระทำหรือพฤติกรรมที่เป็นปัญหา หรือเคยทำ ภายใน 6 เดือนนี้ที่ผ่านไป ให้ทำเครื่องหมาย “+”
- เท่าที่จำความได้ สำหรับการกระทำหรือพฤติกรรมซึ่งเคยเป็นปัญหา, แต่ไม่เป็นอย่างนั้นแล้ว, ให้ทำเครื่องหมาย “O”
- แต่ละอันที่ไม่เกี่ยวข้องกับท่าน.....ให้ทิ้งไว้เปล่า

ขอให้ท่านสัตย์ซื่อ เปิดใจ และนำทุกสิ่งออกมาสู่ความสว่างของพระเจ้า~ท่านต้องการความปลดปล่อย!!!!

ความไม่บริสุทธิ์ทางเพศ

___ ดูภาพลามก
___ มีเพศสัมพันธ์ก่อนแต่งงาน

ประวัติด้านศาสนา

___ โรมันคาทอลิก
___ ศาสนาฮินดูพราหมณ์

- ล่วงประเวณี
- นอกใจสามี/ภรรยา
- สำเร็จความใคร่ด้วยตัวเอง
- รักร่วมเพศ
- มีเพศสัมพันธ์กับพี่/น้อง หรือญาติใกล้ชิด
- กิเลสตัณหา
- การข่มขืน ทำ/ถูกรักร่างไป
- คำประเวณี
- ทำแท้ง
- กามโรค
- ปลุกปล้ำ

- ศาสนาพุทธ
- ศาสนาอิสลาม
- ลัทธิยุคใหม่
- การไหว้บรรพบุรุษ
- การไหว้รูปเคารพ
- การไหว้ภูตผี
- ศาสนาคริสต์ที่เคร่งครัดเป็นกฎ
- ลัทธิอื่นๆ (เช่น มอรั่มอน, พยานพระเยซูฮอวาท์ หรือ ลัทธิศาสนาธรรม)
- ลัทธิ ร. 5
- ลัทธิ เจ้าพ่อเจ้าแม่อื่นๆ (เช่น เจ้าแม่กวนอิม)

พฤติกรรมเสพติด (เลิกไม่ค่อยได้)

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> กินยาเสพติด | <input type="checkbox"/> โลกเงินทอง | <input type="checkbox"/> บ้างาน | <input type="checkbox"/> การพนัน / เล่นหวย / โกงเงิน ฯ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> กินเหล้า/เบียร์ | <input type="checkbox"/> ดิคา (ยานอนหลับ/ยาแก้ปวด/ยาทันทใจ) | <input type="checkbox"/> บ้าซื้อของ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> สูบบุหรี่/กินหมาก | <input type="checkbox"/> กินตะกละ | <input type="checkbox"/> บ้าดนตรีเฮฟวี (heavy music) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ดิคาเล่นเกมคอม | <input type="checkbox"/> ดูTV / ดูหนังVDOมากเกินไป | <input type="checkbox"/> อื่นๆ _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ดิคาใครบางคน ขาดไม่ได้ | | | |

ปัญหาฝ่ายวิญญาณกับ...

- การอ่านพระคัมภีร์
- การอธิษฐาน
- การไปโบสถ์
- การเป็นพยาน

ปัญหาทางจิตใจ

ปัญหาสายสัมพันธ์ต่างๆ

- ฝ่ายวิญญาณ
- ฝ่ายอารมณ์
- เพศสัมพันธ์ผิดปกติ
- ยืนขาทางอารมณ์เพศ (หญิง)
- สามารถภาพทางเพศเสื่อม
- ปัญหาเกี่ยวกับญาติฝ่ายสามี/ภรรยา
- อื่นๆ _____

_____ พฤติกรรมย้ำคิดย้ำทำ

- สับสนบ่อยๆ
- ตั้งสมาธิยาก / สมาธิสั้น
- ผลัดวันประกันพรุ่ง
- ประสาทหลอน
- โรคเพื่อฝันไม่อยู่ในโลกความเป็นจริง
- ภาวะจิตบกพร่องมีอาการหวาดระแวง
- คิดว่าใครแกล้งเขาตลอด
- มีอันเป็นไปตลอด
- รู้สึกว่าตัวเองเล็กน้อยไร้ค่า
- มีแผลในใจจากเหตุร้ายในอดีต
- คลอดยาก
- แพ้งลูก (กี่ครั้ง _____)

___ ถูกหลอกหลวง ให้เข้าใจอะไรผิด

เกี่ยวข้องกับโลกกลับเนื้อธรรมชาติ

- | | | |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| ___ คู่มือ คู่มือชะตา | ___ คู่มือพิชิต | ___ การนั่งทางใน / โยคะ |
| ___ คู่มือมือ | ___ โหราศาสตร์ การผูกดวง | ___ ใช้เวทมนตร์ / คาถาอาคม |
| ___ ชุมมุนทรเง้าเข้าผี | ___ เกมคอมพิวเตอร์ให้เล่นบทบาทพ่อแม่แม่มด | ___ การไหว้ศาลเจ้า |
| ___ กุมารทอง | ___ เล่นลายมือผี | ___ โยเกิร์ต / ไข่รีหรือกระแสดิจิต |
| ___ ศิลปะป้องกันการตัว/การทหาร | ___ เครื่องรางของขลัง / การวางเสน่ห์ | ___ การสะกดจิต |
| ___ การเดินทางไสยศาสตร์ (ทั้งขาว/ดำ) | ___ ถูกถวายเป็นเทวดาหรือวิญญาณใดๆ | ___ การถอดวิญญาณส่งออกไปทำการ |
| ___ ศิลปะหรือวิชาต่างๆที่ให้ไหว้พระครู (เช่นมวยไทย, เล่นเครื่องดนตรีไทย, การรำไทย, การนวดแผนโบราณ เป็นต้น) | | |
| ___ อื่นๆ _____ | | |

นิสัยประจำตัว

- ___ ขมขื่น/น้อยเนื้อต่ำใจ
- ___ ได้ยินเสียงในใจ
- ___ ให้อภัย ยกโทษไม่ค่อยได้, แค้นใจ
- ___ จี้โมโห / ระวังอารมณ์ไม่ค่อยได้
- ___ จี้กังวล / กระทบกระชวยเสมอ
- ___ จี้กลัว / จี้สงสัย
- ___ ซึมเศร้า / เศร้าโศกเสียใจ
- ___ คิดฆ่าตัวตาย / อยากตาย
- ___ โทกหลอกหลวง
- ___ ชอบว่าคำ พูดสบถ สบประมาท
- ___ จี้วิจารณ์
- ___ มีทิฐิ ตัวเองต้องถูกเสมอ
- ___ ใจบงกช ไม่เชื่อฟังใคร
- ___ วิพากษ์วิจารณ์ ชอบนินทาผู้อื่น
- ___ เพื่อฝัน สร้างจินตนาการ / คิดฟุ้งซ่าน
- ___ ฝันร้ายบ่อย
- ___ โลกสิ่งของที่คนอื่นมี / อยากได้
- ___ หงุดหงิด อารมณ์เสียบ่อยๆ
- ___ จี้ขโมย
- ___ จี้เกียจ
- ___ ท้อแท้ หมดกำลังใจ
- ___ จี้สงสารตัวเอง
- ___ หยิ่งผยอง จองหอง
- ___ เกล็ดขี้

ปัญหาสุขภาพ

- ___ ความตึงเครียด
- ___ เหนื่อยล้า
- ___ น้ำตาลในเลือดมากเกินไป (hypoglycemia)
- ___ โรคเอดส์ / HIV
- ___ โรคภูมิแพ้
- ___ โรคกลัวอ้วน
- ___ เวียนหัว หน้ามืดบ่อยๆ
- ___ ปัญหาทางประจำเดือน
- ___ อาการง่วงหลับ / หลับใน
- ___ นอนไม่หลับ / ตื่นเสมอ
- ___ ปัญหาทางจมูก ไซนัส
- ___ ปัญหาทางตา
- ___ ปัญหาทางหู
- ___ ปัญหาทางลำคอ
- ___ โรคลมบ้าหมู / อาการชัก
- ___ ปวดศีรษะ หรือปวดหัวข้างเดียวและคลื่นไส้ (ไมเกรน)
- ___ เจ็บปวดตามข้อต่อ / โรคข้ออักเสบ
- ___ จี้โรค / อ่อนแอ
- ___ โรคหอบหืด
- ___ โรคเบาหวาน
- ___ ปวดหลังเสมอ
- ___ ความทรงจำขาดไปบางช่วง
- ___ ไฮเปอร์, อยู่นิ่งไม่ได้
- ___ จี้ลี้ม, ความจำเสื่อม

___ เจ้ากี้เจ้าการ / ชอบควบคุม หรือใช้คนอื่น

___ รู้สึกผิด อับอาย

___ รู้สึกเสียขายผิดหวัง

___ ไม่มั่นใจตัวเอง ตีคุณค่าตัวเองต่ำ

___ ไม่ไว้ใจคน, ไว้ใจใครยาก

___ ถูกดูถูกหมิ่น นินทาลับหลัง

___ ชอบทะเลาะเบาะแว้ง

___ รู้สึกถูกทอดทิ้ง

___ รู้สึกเหงา โดดเดี่ยว

___ โรคหัวใจ, ความดันโลหิตผิดปกติ (สูง/ต่ำ)

___ ระบบการเผาผลาญอาหารผิดปกติ

___ **สิ่งอื่น**

___ อคติต่อเชื้อชาติ / เป็นชุมชนน้อย

___ เป็นทหารผ่านศึก

___ ขาดนิยามมาก

___ พ่อแม่ทำร้าย (ร่างกาย/จิตใจ)

___ ปัญหาการเงินเสมอ

ปัญหาอื่น:

เราอยากให้นำทุกอย่างออกมาสู่ความสว่างแห่งการทรงสถิตของพระเจ้า สิ่งที่เป็นบาปท่านต้องเรียกว่าบาป, ให้สารภาพทุกอย่างต่อพระเจ้าโดยออกเสียงเสร็จแล้วให้ขอบพระคุณพระเจ้าสำหรับการทรงอภัยและการทรงชำระที่มาจากพระโลหิตขององค์พระเยซูคริสต์เจ้า (1 ยอห์น 1:5-10) ฉะนั้นให้ท่าน “เข้ามาถึงพระที่นั่งแห่งพระคุณ เพื่อเราจะได้รับพระเมตตา และจะได้รับพระคุณที่จะช่วยเราในขณะนี้ที่ต้องการ” (ฮีบรู 4:16)

คำอธิษฐานเพื่อการปลดปล่อย

มกราคม 2009

1. ผู้นำอธิษฐานเพื่อการปกป้อง

- พระบิดา ในพระนามแห่งพระเยซูคริสต์เจ้าชวาณาซาเรีธ ผู้ที่มักบังเกิดเป็นสภาพในเนื้อหนังมนุษย์ ข้าพเจ้าอธิษฐาน ขอทรงสถาปนาการปกป้องคุ้มครองอย่างครบบริบูรณ์มายังเราทั้งหลายในเวลา
- ขอสิ่งให้ทุก ๆ วิญญาณที่รับใช้ในอาณาจักรแห่งความมืด ที่กำลังทำงานไม่ว่าจะอยู่ภายนอกหรือภายใน....(ชื่อผู้รับการปลดปล่อย).... จงเข้ามาอยู่ในการควบคุมเดี๋ยวนี้ภายใต้สิทธิอำนาจขององค์พระเยซูคริสต์เจ้าชวาณาซาเรีธ ผู้ที่มักบังเกิดเป็นสภาพในเนื้อหนังมนุษย์

2. ผู้นำถามผู้มารับการปลดปล่อย และให้คนนั้นตอบว่า

“ใช่ ข้าพเจ้าได้เชื่อ” (หรือ “ใช่ ข้าพเจ้าได้ต้อนรับ”)

- ท่านเชื่อหรือไม่ว่า พระเยซูคริสต์คือพระบุตรองค์เดียวของพระเจ้า?
- ท่านเชื่อหรือไม่ว่า พระโลหิตของพระเยซูที่ไหลบนไม้กางเขน เพื่อชดใช้บาปผิดของท่านแล้ว?
- ท่านเชื่อหรือไม่ว่า พระองค์สิ้นพระชนม์และได้รับการชุบให้เป็นขึ้นมาจากความตาย โดยฤทธิ์เดชของพระเจ้า พระบิดาผู้ทรงฤทธิ์ใหญ่ยิ่ง และทรงขึ้นไปประทับอยู่เบื้องขวาพระหัตถ์ของพระเจ้า?

- คุณได้ขอและต้อนรับพระเยซูคริสต์เจ้าเป็นพระผู้ช่วยให้รอดแล้ว และเป็นองค์พระผู้เป็นเจ้าของคุณแล้วหรือไม่?

3. คำแนะนำที่ผู้นำให้กับผู้มารับการรักษาให้ปฏิบัติตาม

“ในพระนามแห่งพระเยซูคริสต์เจ้าชาวนาซาเร็ธผู้มาบังเกิดเป็นสภาพในเนื้อหนังมนุษย์ ข้าพเจ้าปฏิเสธและประกาศตัดความสัมพันธ์กับพระอื่นทั้งสิ้นที่ข้าพเจ้าเคยกราบไหว้วันมัสการ และประกาศยกเลิกการติดตามพระอื่นทั้งหลายโดยสิ้นเชิง ขอขอบพระคุณองค์พระเยซูคริสต์เจ้า ที่พระองค์ทรงยกโทษความบาปผิดของข้าพระองค์ ข้าพเจ้าขอน้อมรับการยกโทษจากพระองค์ และมอบถวายชีวิตทั้งสิ้นให้กับพระองค์ ขอโปรดช่วยให้ข้าพเจ้ารู้จักและใกล้ชิดกับพระองค์มากขึ้น ตั้งแต่วันนี้เป็นต้นไป

4. ผู้นำอธิษฐานเพื่อการปลดปล่อยให้เป็นอิสระและเยียวยารักษา

“พระบิดาเจ้าข้า เพื่อจะทำลายกิจการของมาร (1 ยน.3:8)

โดยอำนาจแห่งพระเยซูคริสต์เจ้าชาวนาซาเร็ธ ผู้มาบังเกิดเป็นสภาพในเนื้อหนังมนุษย์

ข้าพเจ้าขอสิ่ง ณ บัดนี้ ต่อ... อำนาจที่ชั่วร้าย, สิ่งติดตามควบคุม, และเหล่าวิญญาณที่รับใช้ในอาณาจักรแห่งความมืด จงถอยถอย และต้องถูกกำจัดออกไปจาก...(ชื่อผู้รับการรักษา)... โดยตลอดกาล ตามต่อไปนี้

- ความบาปจากบรรพบุรุษ และการสาปแช่งทุกอย่างที่ติดตามผูกพันอยู่กับ...(ผู้รับการรักษา)... โดยทางสายโลหิต รวมทั้งคำสาปแช่ง, เวทย์มนตร์คาถา, คำสาบาน หรือข้อผูกมัดอื่นๆทุกอย่าง ที่เคยผูกมัดผู้นี้ให้ติดคนอื่น, ติดระบบโลก, หรือติดบางอย่างในวิญญาณของเขาเอง และได้ขัดขวางผู้นี้จากการรอดที่พระองค์ ผู้เป็นพระผู้ช่วยให้รอดและจอมเจ้านายของเขา คำสั่งเหล่านี้รวมทั้งคำสาบานหรือคำสาปแช่งที่ผู้อื่นเคยกล่าวอยู่เหนือผู้นี้เกี่ยวกับพระเท็มเท็จซึ่งอาจผูกมัดและถ่วงผู้นี้อยู่ด้วย
- มือที่ยึดจับของศัตรูต่างๆ อย่างที่ครอบครองความคิด จิตใจและร่างกายของผู้นี้อยู่ ซึ่งกำลังพยายามทำลายชีวิตของเขา และขโมยแผนการของพระเจ้าในชีวิตของเขา โปรดให้คืนสภาพจากที่ศัตรูได้พยายามช่วงชิงเอาไปจาก...(ผู้รับการรักษา)... และโปรดนำการรักษาทุกๆ ด้านมาให้เขาด้วย
- ระบบเก่าที่ครอบครองความคิดของ...(ผู้รับการรักษา)...ซึ่งทำให้มองไม่เห็นพระองค์ หรือความงดงามและความจริงแห่งพระวามะของพระองค์ ขอให้...(ผู้รับการรักษา)...จะได้รับการเปลี่ยนแปลงจิตใจภายในใหม่ เพื่อจะให้ความคิดและจิตใจเป็นหนึ่งเดียว และทุกชิ้นส่วนที่มีการแบ่งแยก จะรับการรักษาให้หายสิ้น

5. ผู้นำอธิษฐานเพื่อการรื้อฟื้นใหม่ของสิ่งต่อไปนี้

“พระเยซูคริสต์เจ้า ข้าพระองค์อธิษฐานทูลขอให้พระองค์

- ขอทรงเปิดเผยถึงของประทานและการทรงเรียกในชีวิตของผู้นี้...(ชื่อผู้รับการรักษา)... และขอทรงนำเขาโดยฤทธิ์อำนาจแห่งพระวิญญาณบริสุทธิ์ เพื่อถวายพระสิริแก่พระองค์ และเพื่อพวกเขาจะเต็มล้นด้วยความชื่นชมยินดี และความหวังไว้ในพระองค์สำหรับอนาคตใหม่ต่อไปข้างหน้า
- ขอทรงปกป้องเหนือครอบครัวของ...(ชื่อผู้รับการรักษา)... ทั้งบ้านของเขา และพระพรด้านวัตถุทุกอย่างที่พระองค์ทรงอวยพรให้เขาแล้ว และซึ่งจะถูกปล่อยในเวลานี้ด้วย
- ขอทรงชำระ เติมเต็ม ประทับตรา และปกคลุม ...(ชื่อผู้รับการรักษา)... โดยพระโลหิตของพระเยซูคริสต์เจ้า และขอพระวิญญาณบริสุทธิ์ทรงสถิตและทอแสง และโอบล้อมเขาไว้ ด้วยโล่แห่งความเชื่อ

6. ผู้นำอธิษฐานอวยพระพร

- พระเยซูคริสต์เจ้าชวาณาซาเรีธ ข้าพระองค์อธิษฐานเพื่อ...(ชื่อผู้รับการรักษา)... ให้เขารักพระองค์ ด้วยสุดใจ ด้วยสุดจิต ด้วยความคิดและสุดกำลังของเขา ขอโปรดประทานพระกรุณาเพื่อให้...(ชื่อผู้รับการรักษา)...ติดตามพระองค์ด้วยความเชื่อฟัง และเพื่อจะรู้จักพระองค์มากยิ่งขึ้น
- ข้าพระองค์อธิษฐานสิ่งเหล่านี้ในพระนามที่อยู่เหนือนามทั้งปวง คือพระนามขององค์พระเยซูคริสต์เจ้าชวาณาซาเรีธ ผู้มาบังเกิดเป็นสภาพในเนื้อหนังมนุษย์ เพื่อไถ่บาป และรื้อฟื้นผู้ที่พระบิดาทรงเลือกไว้ตั้งแต่ก่อนที่พระองค์ทรงสร้างโลก อามิน

7. ผู้นำแนะนำให้ผู้รับอธิษฐาน

ขอคุณได้อธิษฐานด้วยคำพูดของคุณเอง และยอมรับในสิ่งที่พระเจ้าทรงกระทำเพื่อคุณด้วยความเชื่อ จงสรรเสริญและขอบพระคุณพระองค์

Chapter 7 Leadership Consecrated

Leadership is one of the most important aspects of establishing churches. The nature and quality of leadership will affect the future churches and the momentum of the movement. Schwarz says that healthy churches need leaders that empower. Or that healthy churches have leaders that help others become leaders so the pool of leadership is increasing and able to meet the challenges of growth.

Act 6 shows how the early church faced the crisis of growth. Growth created stress and the solution they choose to solve the problem was to increase the number of leaders. This is always the solution to problems associated with growth. More and more leaders need to be developed and employed suitably in the work in order for the work to be sustained and expand.

Hesselgrave lists the following objectives

1. Efforts should be continued to promote the spiritual maturity of all believers in the congregation.
2. Believers should be taught how to recognise and select men and women who are gifted and qualified for leadership in the local church.
3. A permanent organization of the church should be established that is scriptural, functional, effective and expandable.

Promotion of Spiritual Growth

Doing all that Jesus commanded us is essential for the sustaining and development of maturity. All seven things that Jesus commanded must be done forever for us to maintain and grow in maturity. As we and others move through the life cycle of birth-childhood-youth-young adult-adult-older adult-old age-death we need to reapply spiritual lessons in new contexts. We have to see the lessons from God's revelation applying to our circumstances and we need to help others see the relationships to their circumstances. This makes the old and familiar always new and exciting.

The Bible, the whole Bible needs to be explored, applied and understood. The Bible is the basic text for spiritual development. See 2 Tim 3! It needs to be at the center of on-going spiritual development.

The congregation or the Body of Christ is also essential. No believer can grow to maturity in isolation from others. Participation in and as a part of the Body of Christ is essential! Mutual submission to others in the Body of Christ is essential for healthy on-going growth.

Five Types of Leadership

If we understand leadership as influencing others, then we can see the following types or levels of leadership.

- 1. A person influencing one other person to do God's will.
- 2. A person influencing and helping two or three (a small group) to work together and do God's will.
- 3. A person who does 1 and 2 with several people and several groups so that they obey God together. (a pastor, or lay elder)
- 4. A person who influences for God's will at the group of groups level.
- 5. A person who is a specialist. Influences in the speciality to help God's people obey.

These five levels can be seen in the following chart. Extensiveness relates to the number of people potentially influenced. Comprehensiveness relates to the areas of life potentially influenced. And intensity is the power of the impact. For example a mother influences one child but does so in all aspects of that child's life and does so with deep and lasting impact. A Christian author might influence hundreds of people who read his book. But the influence is just in the one area of life the book addresses and while it might have some temporary impact it might not be that lasting of an impression.

Leader Type	Extensiveness	Comprehensiveness	Intensity	Total Potential for Influence
Type 1	1	5	5	11
Type 2	2	4	4	10
Type 3	3	3	3	9
Type 4	4	2	2	8
Type 5	5	1	1	7

All believers can be type one leaders. That is they can influence another person to obey the Lord through direct interaction. Almost all believers can be type two leaders. They can influence a small group of people. This is true to the nature of people, in that all most all people can be parents and thus have leadership in the small group. The church needs vast numbers of type one and type two leaders. Most of the leadership training efforts need to be to develop and deploy all believers in type one and two leadership.

When people demonstrate that they can effectively function as type one and two leaders their spiritual gifts will become evident and those who have gifts suitable for type 3 and above leadership can be further developed for type 3 and 4 leadership. The best leadership training is on-the-job training with mentors for type 1, 2 and 3. This is especially true for type 3 leaders who most often function as pastors. (They might not be titled pastors but they function in this way.) They are using their gifts to influence people one to one and in small group leadership at multiple levels that affect between 20 and 150 people. On-the-job training with good supervision can develop people quite quickly. Formal training for type 1, 2 or 3 leaders needs to be for short periods of time with immediate reengagement in ministry.

Type four leaders usually have a more extensive scope for their leadership. This is reflected in either, a very large congregation most likely over 150 people, or a network of congregations. These people often profit from some formal education as it helps develop critical thinking skills, analysis, communication skills and so forth. But they should have proven gifts at type three before they get this formal training.

Type five leaders always have special gifts that need special development. God works to give these people the development that they need. These kinds of people usually are not new believers. Often this kind of leadership is only achieved by people when they are older.

Priscilla and Aquilla are doing type one ministry with Apollos. Paul and Silas are doing type two ministry with the Philippian jail and his household. The elders from Ephesus that Paul addresses are examples of type three. Paul is an example of a type four leader. Mark and Luke might be examples of type five leaders as they influenced others through what they wrote.

Lay leadership training

Begin immediately

As soon as an embryonic church is apparent (e.g. a group meeting for bible study, worship and prayer in a home) we should expect God to raise up leaders for the new church from within this new group. (Acts 14.)

Who are the potential leaders?: Note those who are prayerful and have faith to trust in God during times of crisis, those who are bringing friends and relatives to the meeting or are concerned to take the church-planters to meet their friends and relatives so that they can hear the Gospel, those who get excited about what they've discovered in Scripture and are able to share it clearly and powerfully in the meeting. We look for those people who are already effective type 1 and 2 leaders.

Basic training – informal

Those you identified as potential leaders can then be encouraged by working alongside them in evangelism, helping them to share scripture with others by taking them on pastoral visits or giving them a formal role in a meeting. We take them with us in visiting new believers and encourage them to take initiative with pastoral concern and prayer. We give them small assignments in ministry but do not give them an official title. They are just part of those who are serving together with us. (See section on lay-leadership training).

Some of the things that we want to train them to do are: 1) How to follow up contacts? 2) How to prepare new believers for baptism? 3) How to do post baptism discipleship? 4) How to conduct small meetings? 5) How to be servant-leaders? 6) How to discover and use spiritual gifts? 7) How to respond to attacks of the evil one and help others get free of demonic oppression?

The best training is on-the-job training! So get people involved in serving the Lord and they will be hungry to learn. The best way to learn evangelism and disciple making is by doing it and being mentored or coached as one does it. So make full use of non-formal ways of training.

Basic Training – formal

There are many formal types of training available. Seminars, retreats, Short-term Bible Schools and workshops of all kinds are being advertised. Choose wisely and use what is good. Support training events that are sound biblically and that promote fellowship with ACT churches. Organize training events that will help the network of churches that you are developing as you need them and with a high focus on how the training will be reproduced and used. One of the best is the Train & Multiply program of mentoring chains.

Example of Lay Leaders Training

The Uthai lay leaders meeting involves 10-20 leaders from 5-10 churches. They meet once a month on a day decided at the previous meeting and rotated round the different churches. The host church provides a midday meal. After half an hour of worship there is sermon preparation. A chapter of scripture is read, analyzed, discussed and applied by the group and then they make a sermon outline. After lunch they discuss a subject of current interest (e.g. living as a Christian in Buddhist society, church discipline, ethical issues, pastoral care, personal devotions). Good, bad, interesting and difficult experiences are shared by the leaders and relevant scripture studied about the subject. Then a conclusion stated that all the leaders can put in practice and teach their church members. This helps reduce confusion caused by different leaders teaching different things. Then there is a time of intercessory prayer for each other. The next months' time and venue are arranged. Four people are chosen to lead the different sessions next time: 1) Worship, 2) Bible study-sermon prep, 3) Subject of interest, and 4) Intercessory prayer. This one day format helps the lay leaders develop in Bible study skills, communication skills, problems solving. As the atmosphere is relaxed they are free to discuss theological, ethical and pastoral issues. They can encourage and learn from each other.

Example of HBS (Home Bible School)

The HBS students pay for a workbook. They are expected complete the workbook each day. This involves them in reading the Bible passage for that day and answering questions. HBS groups meet once or twice monthly with a tutor. They review the Bible section they have been studying in their workbook. They discuss the section, ask questions about passages they did not understand and share how they applied the Bible to their life. Opportunity for going deeper in to theology, ethics, pastoral issues etc. can be taken up by the group as needed as they come up in the passage studied.

This program works through the Bible in modules e.g. Pentateuch, Gospels, Historical Books, Letters, etc. Skills in Bible reading and study are developed. It takes about 7 to 10 years for people to do the whole HBS course. Most of the groups are church based. People can join the group at any point.

Most of those who study HBS for more than a year become leaders in the church. HBS is an excellent way for a local church to do continual lay leadership development with its members. In-depth Bible study like HBS transforms lives, develops motivation to serve the Lord, guides that motivation and sustains service throughout life challenges.

Sending people to Bible Schools (Seminary in Thailand)

When considering this topic two basic points need to be clearly understood:

1. Attending a Bible Seminary (of whatever sort) does not necessarily equal a call to and/or the potential for Christian full-time ministry. Even though most Bible Schools in Thailand offer vocational training for future pastors and articulate their reason for being as to train leaders for the church.

2. Graduates from any Bible Seminary will generally be seen as อาจารย์. Whether a Bible college is aiming at this or not and whether a graduate has the potential (spiritually and personally) to be a leader of a Church or not, does not really matter. Having gone through a certain "system" will put you in a certain position.

It is evident that these two points in combination create much difficulty for the Church. Many Churches have gone through a lot of difficulties because they have received someone as an

อาจารย์ and entrusted the leadership of the church to a person, who should have never entered full-time Christian ministry! Many people who have gone to Bible School have had difficulties are a result of this combination.

This makes it very difficult and not really advisable to send someone to a Bible college, who we see in need of basic discipleship training and personal development.

In some of our home countries an appropriate discipleship training center might be of much blessing to a person who needs basic discipleship like that. But here in Thailand the danger is very high that someone simply goes through a system and then - more or less automatically - ends up in a leadership position in Christian ministry.

Bible Seminary should not be seen as institutions we can use to provide basic discipleship to new believers! This has to be the responsibility of the local Church. New believers need to be carefully discipled and need to be given the opportunity to grow and develop their gifts and potential within the local Church before attending a Bible Seminary is considered.

To actually choose and send someone to Bible Seminary should be the responsibility of the local Church. If the district (เขต) is also involved and supports the decision this gives a very positive base for the future student (recognition, moral, emotional and financial support). In some cases it will be the initiative of an individual to volunteer to attend Bible Seminary, but especially with volunteers the church needs to confirm aspiration before they enroll.

It is absolutely clear that our life as a Christian will/should always be a process of growth - thus we do not expect someone to be perfect. But people who are considered to be sent to Bible Seminary should have a clear record of willingness to serve the local Church and use their gifts. Some evidence of the Eph 4 equipping gifts ought to be evident in their life. Suitability should be recognized by the local Church. It needs to be noted that a spiritual attitude and humbleness to serve are in most cases more crucial than specific abilities like leading worship, preaching, teaching etc. While these gifts are important, too, they can most of the time be developed. But where the spiritual attitude is missing all the gifts will be of little value to the Kingdom of God. The decision which Bible Seminary someone would attend should also be a corporate decision of the student, the sending Church and possibly the association.

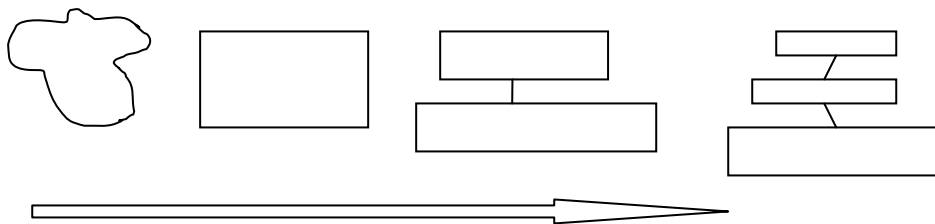
SELECTION OF LEADERS

The churches existed and then Paul came back and appointed leaders. Or in the case of Crete had Titus go back and take the churches a step further in their development. So at first we form groups. They are functioning but they do not have appointed leaders. This is okay and natural. It takes time for a church to develop to a point it is ready for selecting and appointment of leaders. We must resist the temptation of over-organize and to rush organization. It is better to see how leaders emerge and function than to try to force a group to have organized leaders when they are not yet ready.

Often churches are pushed toward having “constitutions” before they are needed. It is best to emphasize the Bible is our authority for faith and conduct. If people will not obey the Bible they will not follow a constitution.

Small churches need open and highly participative styles of decision making. Small churches can talk about things and decide together what to do and when to do it. A very congregational

style is very good with small groups. The group decision helps promote ownership of the decisions.



At first the church is unorganized. As it develops the organization is totally congregational with all decisions being made together. Then as the size and maturity of the group increase they have recognized leaders that guide and lead the congregation. These leaders function covers that of elders and deacons. Then as the size and maturity of the church develops the different functions of elders and deacons is recognized and worked out in the organization of the church.

As church size increases the need for a more representative style of leadership becomes evident. Churches that are over 50 members feel that deciding everything together takes too much time and is too cumbersome. They are glad to have someone function as their representatives to make decisions and sort out problems. If the representatives are good at communication with the members the sense of ownership is maintained. If the communication with the members is allowed to slide then the members can start to feel and act in ways that suggest they don't feel the church is "theirs." The bigger the church the more they will accept a very directive style of leadership.

In most of the Thai ACT churches they are very reluctant to use the biblical term elder for the representatives that they choose for organizing and serving in the church. This shows how seriously the churches take the appointment of elders. Often they will have chosen several to serve as a committee but only one will they call elder. Most of the others they would consider deacons or just as ordinary members who are being entrusted with some responsibility. In rural churches, there can be a reluctance to accept the rank of "leader" or "elder" because of fear of criticism, so care needs to be taken that gifted leaders continue to function.

The main purpose of leadership is pastoral care and teaching of the believers (Acts 20) so that the church can grow and multiply as members mature and reach out to their community. The criteria for leadership in 1 Timothy 3 and other passages includes a warning not to promote new believers, not to promote polygamous members, and to note how the potential leader has succeeded with his own family, among others. As this should also be explained before selection, care must be taken that the church doesn't conclude that none are eligible, as none are "above reproach." While women are in servant-leadership roles in the churches throughout Thailand, the churches generally do not use the title "elder" to refer to them.

If the church is able to support a worker full-time they could ask one of the elders already selected to serve full-time or they could invite someone from outside. In either case this person should be someone that the church respects and is willing to follow. In most cases importing someone from outside is risky unless there has been a good opportunity to evaluate them. A diploma from a seminary is no guarantee of quality.

The issue of social status and position in Thai society affects the selection of leaders. It is very hard for a church to not select high status people to be on the church committee as they feel that this would show disrespect toward that high status person and they don't want to show disrespect. But for most of the churches they will only call a person an elder if they really think they are a spiritually mature person who is truly an elder. How to manage the matter of a high status person in the congregation and their relationship to authority in the church is delicate. Often the simplest way is to ask the high status person out of the meeting or to be absent in some respectful way so the remaining congregation is not troubled by the face issue in the same way they would be if that person was present. Sometimes it can be helpful to draw up a short list that the church confirms. This can also help in avoiding clearly unqualified and undesirable people from becoming leaders.

The churches should encourage all to use their gifts and abilities in service. There are no restrictions in evangelism, sharing the scripture with others in pastoral visits, participating in meetings, personally encouraging those with pastoral concern, prayer ministry and visiting new believers. All of this can be done without an official title. Give titles cautiously.

Church Government

After leaving China in 1952 the CIM/OMF was invited by the Christian Church in Thailand to start a Thai church ministry in the many provinces of Thailand not yet evangelized by any other church or mission. So, in 1953 OMF began its evangelistic work in areas of Central, North and South Thailand. Under the informal agreement with CCT to do this OMF decided: that the pattern of church government to be introduced to an emerging Thai church in the future would be of the Congregational / Baptist type.

This pattern of church government places the local church congregation acting together as the highest authority in church affairs next to God and His revealed truth in the Bible. Church membership is through believer's baptism by immersion and the celebration of Communion (The Lord's Supper) is for all believers. Church leadership is by Elders and Deacons chosen by the congregation with Elders having spiritual oversight and Deacons attending to practical affairs of the church.

In Central Thailand after several years of widespread intensive evangelism there was little response among the general population. However response did start to come from medical related evangelism. OMF hospitals in Wiset, Manorom and Nongbua were key centres of evangelism. Significant response to Christ came among the patients attending regular “Sala” treatment clinics for leprosy and skin related diseases. As time went by several Christian groups emerged among these people and several churches started meeting in these Salas. Later they formed an Association of Sala churches, mostly meeting in the sala in rural areas.

Meanwhile, through persistent evangelism, especially using teams of missionaries, local new believers and Bible school students from North and East Thailand, “Hot Season Evangelism” as it was called, many turned to Christ. These, along with groups of “Well” people in several towns, formed a smaller “Association of Well churches” For several years these two Associations operated independently with their own activities and annual conferences. At this stage of development local church government was still largely by Elders and Deacons. This leadership was dynamic and fostered both on-going evangelism and pastoral care of growing congregations. There were a few area pastor-evangelists at this time also.

But slowly, through increasing personal fellowship between the believers. a lessening fear of catching leprosy, better treatment and education and a growing recognition of the spiritual caliber of the Sala church leaders, these two Associations joined together in Central Thailand in 1982 as the (ACTC)

The pattern of development in South Thailand was similar in many ways although the leprosy and skin treatment salas were mostly attended by ST Malay people using the Pattani Malay language. The Well church in ST even today are mostly Thai and Chinese peoples. Both groups followed the above church government outline..

In North Thailand church growth and government has been along ethnic and language connections with OMF missionaries following the same above church government outline within the often tight social structure of leadership patterns. No formal medical evangelism was used but many missionaries were nurses or had basic medical knowledge they used to good effect in healing and evangelism.

So across all areas of Thailand where OMF has been church planting since 1953, including Bangkok (ACTB) formed in 1985 there has been a common foundation of church government laid which has enabled all OMF related churches in Thailand plus several churches resulting from other mission work eg NTB and some independent churches to come together into a common association viz ACT

The Associated Churches of Thailand (ACT) when formed in 1983 (registered in 1985) initially adopted the same pattern of church government

However over the 25 years of ACT there has been some considerable adaptation to this. Three main influences behind these changes are:

1. Thai society, religion and government is firmly rooted in hierarchical form and order.
2. Many ACT leaders have come into ACT from other church groups and pushed the churches toward a more hierarchical structure.
3. ACT itself has tended to become more structured and seems to need local churches to have a similar structure in order to communicate.

As a result of all three points, ACT local church government has moved away from the earlier and clearly defined Elder/Deacon congregational pattern toward a more hierarchical power type pattern. This tends to make the church focus on administration matters rather than spiritual growth and development. It tends to focus the church toward filling positions (chairperson, secretary, treasurer) rather than developing the spiritual life of the members. It also tends to force churches toward having full-time paid workers rather than a few lay elders to oversee the church. Written by Alan Bennett who worked in Thailand from the late 1960s - 2007

Full-time workers, Bi-vocational workers

The urge for a วัด and a เจ้าอาวาส

Scripture makes clear that the Church needs leadership. Scripture also talks about the qualifications of leaders (e.g. of elder, overseer, deacon) and about specific functions of such leaders. However, neither the qualifications nor the different functions refer specifically to common terms like full-time workers or bi-vocational workers (lay leaders). Scripture does

not give us clear instruction on how leadership should look like in those terms. Therefore, if we distinguish between full-time and bi-vocational workers and reflect on the suitability of each we do this mainly considering the given field situation, the practical needs and possibilities and possible future implications.

Within ACT and the Thai church in general we might see a natural tendency towards “institutionalism”. Many Christians have the common understanding that a Church is only then a proper Church if there is a Church building (โบสถ์) and a full time worker (ศิษยาภิบาล) employed in that Church. In most cases this is an understanding that is not so much based on a conviction formed by studying the Scripture but stems more from seeing some models of church and from the underlying religious (Buddhist) mindset that there needs to be a clearly visible place where religious practices are carried out (in a วัด) and that a วัด needs a เจ้าอาวาส.

It is therefore not so easy - but all the more important - to lead new Christians and an emerging Church to understand that the Christian Church does not necessarily have a building or a paid worker in order to be a Church. Careful study of Scripture on what the “Body of Christ” actually is will be necessary. Although to have its own building and to have a full time worker can be of much blessing to a church it needs to be carefully evaluated in a given situation whether this is what the emerging church should be focusing on.

Full-time versus lay leadership

We want to see all the Thai Buddhists reached for Christ. In order to see this happen it will not be enough if individual missionaries plant individual churches. We will need to see the Thai church reproduce and multiply. In the light of that, we need to keep in mind that a focus on paid full-time workers and Church buildings will stifle the natural reproduction of a church. If a church has a fixed focus on wanting to have its own full time worker that Church will very likely not be enthusiastic for releasing a group of its members to plant a new church. And if there already is a full-time worker in that Church there might be the hidden goal of having as many members as possible in one Church in order that the salary of the full-time worker will be secured. If there is a group of members with a heart for outreach and seeing an opportunity to plant a new Church (what we actually want to see happen) this, unfortunately, might easily lead to division and a church split.

It is a fact that (especially in a more rural context) most of the present ACT churches are not able to support a full time worker. To lead those (and new) Churches to focus on employing a full-time worker will not help those Churches. As we see a Church emerge in its embryonic stage (e.g. a group meeting for bible study, worship and prayer in a homes) it will be most obvious and helpful to train up leadership from within that group (see relevant section on “Selection of leaders” and “Lay Leadership training”). We will need to help existing and emerging Churches to understand that the responsibilities and functions that need to be fulfilled in the leadership of a Church are not bound to a specific status (whether it is paid or lay worker). What we want to see is that every local Church has strong leadership that is able to care for the existing flock appropriately and continue with the evangelization of their surrounding and beyond. In the majority of cases this will mean to select and train local lay leaders.

This is most easily done if respected, natural leaders of a community can be won for Christ. However, we need to be very careful in differentiating between purely natural and spiritual leaders. “A spiritual Church must have spiritual leaders”.¹ In many cases those spiritual

leaders will not necessarily be the natural leaders of a community. This will bring the challenge of lack of recognition in the society. But where there is some potential for leadership and clear evidence of spiritual growth those believers must be given opportunities to develop as Church leaders. This, of course, is not a quick and easy process. It might appear to be a faster and more efficient approach to import trained leadership (eg. interns or fresh graduates from Bible colleges). However, we need to very carefully consider the long-term implication of such an approach and ask questions like:

A) to what extent will this approach promote or stifle the willingness of local believers to take on responsibility and to grow in it?

B) to what extent will the local congregation be able to support this worker after the missionary has left?

C) to what extent will an external full-time worker be willing to adapt to the given local situation?

¹ David J. Hesselgrave; Planting Churches Cross-Culturally - a guide for home and foreign missions; Backer Books, Grand Rapids, 12th reprint 1997; p.358

National workers take on full responsibility

Whether leadership of an emerging Church will be lay leadership or involving a full-time worker the goal of every missionary effort will be to see national workers take the full responsibility for a given local church. Although the initial stages of Church planting will usually involve a high level of leadership input given by a missionary it has to be very clear that missionaries must not become the leaders or pastors of a Church.

It is our goal that - wherever possible - missionaries will be working together with Thai nationals in planting new Churches. In this combined effort ACTC leadership wishes to see the Thai nationals be the base (ให้คนไทยเป็นหลัก). We, too, wish to see this increasingly become reality but also recognize that this ideal composition of a Church planting team might not always be possible.

Where it is possible we are not that much facing the difficulty of the missionary having to take countermeasures to not end up as the Church leader. But whether or not the Thai national worker in that given Church planting team should assume the role of leader of that Church or rather try to rise up local leadership will be not less of a challenge.

If a local church wishes to call a full-time worker that Church has the freedom to choose whoever they feel is appropriate. This does not necessarily need to be a person accredited by the Association or a graduate of a Bible college. In general graduates of a Bible college are recognized as leaders and ministers within the Association. However, we are still lacking a clear method of recognizing accepted and experienced lay leaders within ACT.

Church Discipline

The overall thrust of teaching and example in the Bible regarding discipline in the church of Jesus Christ is threefold

1. To bring the sinner to repentance
2. To bring the repentant to a place of full restoration.
3. To preserve the purity of the church

Discipline in the church is based on the root meaning of the word, namely to “disciple”. Jesus set the example by “disciplining” those who voluntarily obeyed His call to follow Him as His disciples. In turn Jesus’ disciples are called to disciple others and the nations. (Mt 28:19-20).

Discipling or making disciples in the Bible is a very positive function. For the church then, discipline should also be a positive expression of behavior among the believers, always seeking to restore through loving admonition.

The general application of discipline in the local church and that acknowledged by all churches within the Associated Churches of Thailand (ACT) is that taught by Jesus himself in (Mt 18:15-19). These steps through private, personal counsel, internal church announcement are in order to allow the offender to confess and be restored at the earliest possible stage before the need to go public or finally apply the “or else” factor in dismissal from church membership.

The one offended by the sin is to first go to the offender and in love point out the sin committed, without defamation of character. If the offender confesses and restores then that is the end of the matter. If not then witnesses must be called in order to ascertain the truth. If the offender is still unwilling to listen, humble and confess then the matter is to be brought to the churches knowledge and participation in seeking a genuine confession and restoration from the offender. If no confession is made then the offender is to be put out of membership of the church. What the disciplined member then does becomes his/her responsibility.

In cases where a church leader has sinned in a way that is clearly offensive to the church; then after confession and forgiveness is sought and given, it is considered important that that person stands down from the leadership role for a period until such time as confidence in his/her purity and personal walk with the Lord before the church is restored. This can be a period of months, not often going beyond two years. Longer periods can prove very destructive to fellowship and spiritual growth.

In all these situations great sensitivity to the Word of God, the Holy Spirit’s voice and the feelings of the congregation must be exercised by the Pastor / Elders / Deacons / Church committee handling the issue. Personal privacy and integrity must be maintained wherever possible. What the leaders fail to do in discipline issues becomes their responsibility before God and the church. (Acts 20:25-30)

In Thailand, as in many other countries, the exercise of discipline in the church is a struggle, mainly for three reasons;

1. the fear of breaking of personal relationships,
2. it cuts across the cultural norm of always trying to maintain smooth relationships,
3. the tension of having to deal with older, more educated, higher status people who may be involved directly or indirectly.

In addition there is the fear of losing the offender to another church or causing a split of the congregation if the offender takes with him/her a loyal following of supporters

It must be remembered at all times that Jesus is the Head of the church and He is building a holy church for Himself.

The integrity of the local church leadership is crucial. Church leaders must keep short accounts with God, with each other and with the congregation. They must set a Biblical standard of behavior themselves in order to be an example and mentor for the congregation to follow. As regards discipline they must lead from a position of strength, not living with the fear of a guilty conscience.

A missionary working with a local church as an advisor to the leadership must show great sensitivity to all concerned when discipline matters arise. If you must get involved observe the following guidelines...

1. Work with the Pastor or Chairman of the Elders or Committee assuming they are not the one(s) coming under discipline. Remember they are the chosen or elected leaders by the church.
2. Be careful not to take on or accept the responsibility by default for the discipline. Your role is as an advisor and trainer. Be very supportive in prayer, speak little.
3. Encourage the Biblical principles to be followed. Perhaps lead a special seminar session with the leaders before they tackle the matter in hand.
4. In a case that involves the Pastor or a leader it may be wise to consult with the wider church community, eg Khet or Paak level.
5. Avoid gossip and idle chatter. Beware the ones who ask oblique questions in trying to find out more than they need to know.
6. Many Thai Christians are blood related in wide family networks and marriages. Know your people and their family circles.
7. Keep any written material relating to discipline with names included very secure.
8. Always remember mercy, through confession to restore those who have sinned.

Checklist

- 1) How will you promote the spiritual maturity of all the believers in a church?
- 2) How will leaders be recognized and developed? How will they be trained to reproduce?
- 3) How will church be organized and how will government be developed? How will this contribute to reproduction?

Chapter 8 Believers Commended

“If there is any one subject in church-planting evangelism that does not receive adequate attention either in the literature or in the actual planning for a new work, it is that of withdrawal of the pioneer worker(s).” Hesselgrave page 383

We must begin with the end in mind. So sound strategy for establishing churches or any ministry MUST include plans for the withdrawal of foreign missionaries. Do you have plans for how to end? Does your ministry plan have a section on how you will leave?

Objectives

1. An amicable withdrawal of pioneer(s) from the established congregation at the best possible time (as soon as practicable).
2. An orderly transition of pastoral leadership in the congregation.
3. A continuation (where possible) of effective ministries that have been undertaken by the pioneer worker(s). (Hesselgrave page 385)

Because our vision is for indigenous churches, we must start with the idea that we are temporary. We are here to get something started but the on-going effort to sustain it rests with the converts. This fact must guide our efforts, our self-understanding and the roles that we take.

Paul established churches quickly. Part of this was that he was often driven out of a city. For example he may have only spent a month in Thessalonica before he had to leave. We might call what Paul experienced there as pull-out; the forced withdrawal of missionary church planters before they are ready. In Corinth Paul stayed about 18 months before leaving. In Ephesus he may have stayed up to three years. In these cities he seemed to feel that his work was done and that the on-going ministry could be handled by local people. A planned withdrawal is called phase-out which suggests a series of steps toward exit.

The most important feature of Paul's church planting was his incredible faith in the Holy Spirit. Paul did not feel his presence was the essential factor in the growth of a church or the people in the church. He saw the presence of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God as the essentials. So a small group of believers with the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures could grow and be all that God wanted them to be under the supervision of God alone. Paul believed this and practiced it.

If we understand our temporary role in church planting and we have faith in God as he is at work in the new converts, then we quickly involve the new believers in ministry and the responsibility for being the household of God engaged in the Father's business. The more they are involved the more they grow and take ownership for the on-going growth and development of the church. But if we limit their involvement in any aspects of the ministry then we stifle their growth and they are reluctant to take ownership of the growth and development of the church.

Paternalism is that attitude that they can't do it without us, that they can't do it right without us. It is a sin of over-estimating our significance (superior feelings) and stealing their responsibility and role. It is a sin of unbelief. It often appears because our own ego needs to

control things or our own ego needs to have their adulation or the need to be needed. The attitude and actions that spring from paternalism always are an impediment to churches becoming indigenous.

The earlier that ministry is entrusted and made the responsibility of the members of the church the easier that phase-out is. So the training of leaders and their deployment starts immediately. Remember: model, assist, watch and leave!

Phase-out is easier if there is other ministry for the missionary to do. Especially if it is ministry that take them away! Often it is hard for new leaders to lead if the missionary leaders are still present. So planed time away, or expanding into new ministry so there are ever increasing times away is helpful.

Phase-out is emotionally hard for the missionary leaving and for church. But it is only made harder if the missionary cultivates a spirit of dependence on the missionary or allows the church to develop an attitude of dependence on the missionary. The emphasis is we are depending on God.

When the responsibility is passed on it is absolutely critical that the missionaries do not try to take that responsibility back. Even if this means failure! Failure can be debriefed and learned from in a way that does not lead to the missionary re-assuming responsibility. But if the missionary does re-assume responsibility, than the church as learned some very harmful lessons; namely 1) we can't do it right; 2) we aren't really in control and 3) we can be dependent on the missionary.

The ministries of a church almost always decline some after phase-out. This is normal and should be expected. If the phase-out is done well this decline should not be great. But we missionaries often do not see all the ways that we are supporting and helping a church even as we phase-out. But when we are really gone the church feels the loss and is affected by the loss (time, money, pastoral action, evangelism, teaching, love, counsel, skills and more) and this means they have less capacity for ministry in the short-term. In most of the churches that missionaries have phased-out (or pulled-out) in Thailand have had a period of decline. They eventually bounce back and in many cases their ministry exceeds anything that happened when the missionaries where present.

If the church is established by a team of missionaries then phase-out usually means that the team is slowly phased-out. This has lots of implications for the team and it has to be planned very careful. Normally a large team is helpful for the initial stage of evangelism. But as the new Christians are developing and need scope for exercising their faith in ministry, to many missionaries can be an impediment. So the missionary team numbers need to be reduced. Some of the phase-out can be handled by wise use of HA. Some of the phase-out can be handled by vigorous efforts to start new churches in nearby areas. But all of this affects the missionary team and its members significantly. One of the missionaries in a team needs to be the finisher or the last missionary. This person needs to have a clear understanding of what they must do so that responsibility has been completely transferred. It helps if this person has gifts and skill in encouragement, counsel and faith.

The sooner that a group is starting to reproduce another group the easier the phase-out process is. So we should aim to have started the second and third church as soon as it is possible to do so. It helps the first group to understand the transfer of responsibility that is essential for healthy church multiplication if they are starting a new group and developing another.

Phase-out is easier if the church planting goal is a simple church. If the mental picture of the church being planted is complex and large, then it will be hard for the missionary to leave. This is because it seems only the missionary has the skills to manage the large complex church, only the missionary has the resources for a large complex church and because the missionary will look at anything less as incomplete and unfinished and thus resist departure.

If the mental picture of the church that is given to new-Christians is large and complex they will often feel inadequate and unable to cope. They will put pressure on the missionary to stay and to stay. They will often not be active in starting new churches because their church is not finished yet, or not grown up enough. (We don't have a building yet or a full time paid pastor!) Yet often new-Christians will desire a "church" that is large and complex because they feel socially marginalized by becoming a Christian and hope that a big church will compensate for this feeling.

In some situations missionaries will phase-out to a national pastor. This option should only be moved toward if the emerging congregation has significant means. Currently any church that does not have a monthly offering of over 10,000 baht and a yearly offering over 120,000 baht should not even consider the idea of calling a full-time Christian worker! They should focus on lay-leadership and possible bi-vocational leadership. This later type of leader would most likely be someone in the congregation who is serving well and who the congregations would like to encourage to use more of their time in ministry. If the church has resources for a full-time pastor and this is part of the phase-out plan it is important that selection is done carefully. Not just anyone will do! They need the right gifts and abilities and attitudes. Good selection requires time. (We just have to get somebody before we leave for HA in three months will always lead to poor choices!) Then if the selection and calling is worked out it is best if there is some overlap of the pastor and the missionary phasing out. This does not need to be more than a year and in most cases can be significantly less than a year.

Check list

Do you and your team have a phase-out plan? Are you working your plan?
How are you cultivating responsibility for the on-going ministry in new believers?
How are you training leaders?
Are new believers involved in ministry immediately?
How are you doing with model, assist, watch and (launch) leave?
Have you communicated your phase-out plan to the church from the beginning and repeatedly?

Thought: Better to leave when everyone is wanting you to stay; than to stay until everyone wishes you had left!

The missionary church planter should leave as soon as the new church has leaders they are willing to follow.

Chapter 9 Relationships Continued

When we talk about model, assist, watch and *leave*, we are not talking about cutting off all relationship with people in the churches that we establish. Leaving means that responsibilities change! (As in marriage a man shall *leave* his mother and father and cleave unto his wife.) A newly married man still relates to his mother and father as they do to him. But the responsibility has shifted from mom and dad. So the missionary church planters want to shift the responsibility but maintain relationship. Some suggest we use the word launch.

Missionaries generally have to physically leave for some time which is not hard to arrange. After a period of absence than periodic visits can and should be made to encourage, give advice if they ask for it, and to enjoy seeing how God is using them in ministry. Paul did have on-going contact with the churches that he planted and at times made significant ministry efforts to help them after he had phased-out (Corinth). But he did not lord it over them nor abandon them. His on-going relationship was counsel on request, or mutual help and encouragement, or periodic communication.

Church to Church relationships

It is not healthy for churches to have not relationship or connection to other churches. Just like human beings need families, churches need to be in a family of churches. Some of the benefits of inter church relationships are:

1. Fellowship that is broader than we have in one church.
2. Correction and encouragement so individual churches don't get off track or overly discouraged.
3. The ability to assist each other in outreach, discipleship and mission.
4. The ability to share resources: people, skills, knowledge, wisdom, materials and money
5. Protection from some kinds of social or spiritual pressure.
6. The ability to have some united activities that one church might find hard to do such as youth work or camps, or efforts for men or women, or professional sub-groups
7. Spiritual stimulation and refreshment

OMF Thailand has decided that churches we plant will be part of the ACT family of churches. ACT is made up of 13 sub-associations. Eight of the associations are tribal based. Five of the associations are Thai and geographic. Our work relates to these Thai regional associations in South, Central, Bangkok, North and North-east. Ministry within the ACT family is conducted in over 13 different languages.

OMF Thailand is in a partnership relationship with ACT and the sub-associations. This means that we are not in control. The leaders of ACT and the sub-associations are free to disagree with us. And we are free to disagree with them. There are some things that they might choose to do that we are not that interested in and we might choose to do some things they are not that interested in. Each side is free to initiate. But we might also have some areas that we want to work together! In these cases we might work under their leadership or they might work under our leadership. We want to work in an adult to an adult fashion where we respect them and they respect us.

ACT as an organization emphasizes fellowship between churches. It respects the local churches responsibility for their own spiritual health and ministry.

We need to be in communication with the ACT sub-association or “Pahk” whenever we are starting a new church. All churches that are a part of ACT give 1% of their offering to ACT. The sub-associations or “Pahk” have various patterns of giving to support the sub-association activities. It is best to establish these patterns at the beginning of a new church.

Chapter 10 Sending Churches Convened

We want to see indigenous, biblical churches reproducing among their own people in Thailand and reaching out in mission to other peoples. This is already happening and we need to encourage it and help it develop further.

The Thailand Home Council is sending out missionaries already. Some of these missionaries come from ACTC, ACTS, ACTB churches. Some come from other denominational backgrounds. There are also missionaries being sent cross-border from ACT tribal groups to work in the same tribal group. It is likely that some cross-cultural missionaries from the Thai to Muslims within Thailand might be sent in the near future. The Home Council is promoting the Karios Course as part of mission education for churches throughout Thailand. Contact Aj. Narin for details.

ACT churches are involved in reproduction within their own peoples. More can be done in this area. Most of the efforts rest with one church that has vision for church planting making an effort to start a new church. The National plan (Vision 2020) has been a great help in encouraging churches to reproduce within their Jerusalem and Judea.

ACT has 8 tribal associations. Many of the tribal Christians are moving off the mountains to seek education and jobs throughout Thailand. As they have been educated in the Thai language and in most cases are Thai citizens they could share the gospel with the Thai people. Unfortunately they are reluctant to do this and in many cases do not have a vision for doing this. We need to make this a matter prayer. At least 40% of the Thai Protestants are tribal and if they got the vision and burden to share Christ with Thai people they could make a big difference. But this is cross-cultural ministry for the Tribal Christians. The Thai are the Samaritans for the tribal believers, just as Muslims are for the Thai believers.

Check List

Has the emerging churches you are working with understood the four dimensions of the great commission

1. Jerusalem – people like us in our place
2. Judea – people like us that we have to go to
3. Samaria – people not like us that are close by,
4. Ends of the earth – people not like us far away

and are they doing something for each area?

Strategy Statements Thailand and Regional

OMF Thailand Strategy Statement in the OMF Thailand Handbook:

1. Our target people are Thai Buddhists, the majority people of this country. We envision that the Thai Buddhist that we bring to Christ will have direct ministry toward other people groups in Thailand and beyond.
2. Our primary emphasis is evangelism and discipleship of Thai people in a way that establishes communities of faith (churches) in every place. We do not see this simplistically but comprehensively. So we also value ministry specialities that focus on aspects of this such as kwamjing.net, sports ministry, student work, HBS, and theological education.
3. We want all our efforts to mobilize the Thai Christians and churches so they reproduce at every level. It is not enough that we evangelize, we must help Thai Christians do it and train others to do it. It is not enough for us to disciple, we must help them to disciple others who will disciple others. It is not enough that we form churches, we need to help the churches effectively establish other churches that establish others until the country is filled with communities of faith in Christ.
4. We want our efforts to build healthy communities of churches. We want to see 'church' expressed not just on a local level but also on a regional level. So we want to help establish churches that relate to other churches in ways that build up the ACT family of churches. We do this because just as individuals are spiritually healthy when in proper relationship to the body of Christ locally, so are congregations healthy when they are appropriately cooperating and helping each other.
5. Our efforts are presently divided into five regions. Each region has factors that affect the practical outworking of our strategy. But the following are shared characteristics of all five regions:
 - a. We work with ACT. Normally the churches that we establish are ACT.
 - b. We prefer to start work where there is Thai initiative, effort or responsiveness rather than alone. However, we can also take initiative to start work.
 - c. We seek to use methods and financial resources in ways that Thai Christians can sustain and reproduce.
 - d. We train, equip and empower from the very beginning so that local Thai Christians can take ownership right away.
 - e. We emphasize that the church is the body of Christ, so we do not make a building a necessity or paid Christian workers a necessity for a congregation to be a healthy church.
 - f. We seek to make the Bible the authority for life, doctrine and practice in the lives of the new Christians and the churches established.
 - g. We seek to work in a way that makes evangelism an on-going effort.
 - h. We teach people to obey all that Jesus taught us.
 - i. Because the gospel moves best along the lines of relationships we expect our work expand along lines of relationships.
6. Relationships with other organizations in Thailand.

Trust between people in ministry is important. Therefore we seek to work and live in a way that promotes and builds trust among God's people. We relate to or cooperate with them as guided by our vision and priorities.

As a Fellowship we have historic relationships with ministries that OMF founded in the past 50 years that has bearing on our present actions. Some organizations that we helped start are now independent such as, Bangkok Bible Seminary, Phayao Bible Seminary, Ban Nok Kamin, Manorom Christian Center, Thai Christian Students, and others. Other organizations we helped start and are still involved with are: EFT, ACT including Chiang Mai Theological Seminary and the ACT Samphan Foundation, Kanok Bannasan and Christian Leprosy Foundation. We respect these relationships and participate with them in on-going ministry as is appropriate in light of our priorities and personnel.

Adopted by Strategy Council February 2010

Thai North Thailand (TNT)

The North Thailand field consists of the 10 northernmost provinces of Thailand – approximately 6.6 million people. Although North Thailand numerically has the most Christians, the majority of them are Tribal peoples. Only approximately one third of the 180 000 Christians in the north are Thai – 0.88 % of the total population.

Mission.

To glorify God through the urgent evangelization of North Thailand's Thai-speaking Buddhist population.

Vision.

To see in North Thailand a movement of indigenous biblical churches, reproducing among their own people and reaching out in mission to others.

Core Values.

1. Regular Prayer.

We recognize that our vision can be realized only if God makes it happen. Prayer seeks God's intervention and reminds us of our own inadequacies. Given the spiritual battle that we face, we must pray before, during and after every ministry undertaking.

2. Persistent Faith.

From a human perspective, our task is impossible. Yet, as we press forward we will keep our focus on God and not allow ourselves to become overwhelmed by the challenges that we face. God is able, and the Thai shall be reached in His time.

3. Focused Effort.

We will keep sight of where we are headed and seek to make every decision with our end-vision in mind. We must then continually evaluate the results to ensure that the decisions we have made are actually leading us towards our goals.

4. Authentic Christianity.

As ambassadors for Christ, it is essential that we live spirit-filled, Christ-like lives in front of the people we are seeking to reach. We must also seek to always treat our teammates in a manner worthy of Christ Himself.

5. Easy Reproducibility.

Missionaries cannot complete the task. Completing the task depends on Thai Christians. Therefore, we must ensure that the things we attempt and model are things that can be easily carried on by Thai Christians without missionary involvement.

6. Appropriate Partnerships.

With few missionaries, we must seek to enlist the support of other Christians from both within and outside Thailand. At the same time, we should be careful to make sure that those we partner with also share our same vision and values.

7. Multiple Church Planting teams

In order to help bring about a movement of rapidly reproducing churches, we will have teams in North Thailand focusing on planting multiple indigenous, reproducible, churches simultaneously.

Strategy statement O M F Isaan

Context

Isaan is the North-East of Thailand. It has over 20 million inhabitants, of whom about 18 million are ethnic Isaan. In Isaan are 31,000 protestant Christians, which is 0.16% of the population. There are about 130 districts, with in average 50,000 people, that do not have a single protestant church. About 100 missionaries are working in Isaan. Half of them are working in the major university city, half of the rest are working among ethnic minorities. In most of the 19 provinces, with each about one million people, there is not a single (registered) missionary. Isaan needs the Gospel! Therefore OMF Thailand is committed to building a regional Isaan team focussing especially on the districts without churches with the purpose to start a church planting movement.

Vision

The churches that we envision

- Worship God using Isaan cultural forms
- Are built up in the faith through careful study of the Word of God
- Often will be led by unpaid leaders
- Often will be house churches
- Have an impact on their community through social service
- Multiply

Strategy

We make our initial contacts in unchurched districts through:

- Isaan believers originally from those districts who have become Christians in Bangkok or elsewhere.
- Isaan believers in neighbouring districts
- People who responded to Christian radio or other large-scale evangelism

In our evangelism we emphasize:

- Reaching male heads of families
- Chronological Bible teaching
- Use of Isaan language and culture, especially in rural areas
- Encouraging new Christians to soon lead their own house group
- Using methods that are reproducible by the Isaan
- Creativity in establishing churches that are financially self-supporting

We support new church plants through:

- A Bible bus with Christian literature and evangelistic resources
- Training sessions for Isaan Christians who want to plant churches
- Making Thai and Isaan resources available in the areas of evangelism, discipleship, and leadership development
- A monthly Isaan church news letter sent to all Isaan churches

OMFCentralThailandStrategyStatement

Draft Version April 2008

The Central Region of Thailand has 17 Provinces with a population of about 11 million people. The majority of them are ethnic Thai speaking standard Thai language. There are ... 1 Christians in Central Thailand (less than ...% of the population). Out of the 170 Districts there are still ... without a Church. There are ... Churches (compared to 6994 Buddhist Monasteries). The Central Thailand region of the Associated Churches of Thailand (ACTC) has presently 62 churches that are mainly lead by local lay leaders. is a community of biblical churches (ACTC) of sufficient size and strength (about 1% of the pop.) that is able and dedicated to continue the evangelization of Central Thailand.

Those Churches

1 Missing Figures: waiting for the updated figures from Dwight Marten

- know and obey the Word of God
- pray and depend on God
- reach out to their non-Christian environment
- reproduce and multiply
- live unity and forgiveness
- are a community of believers where each member is a continuously growing, functioning and serving part of the body of Christ
- intentionally disciple and train at all ages and levels
- are led by spiritually mature (very often unpaid) leaders.
- adapt to and work within their given context, using the resources of indigenous churches
- function within a community of churches like a network of extended family

We commit ourself to

- studying, living and teaching the Word of God
- ongoing and regular prayer - personal and corporate
- holiness and sacrifice - modeling Christian lives
- Widespread, frequent, Christ-honoring and culturally appropriate communication of the Gospel
- Urgently establishing new ACTC churches throughout Central Thailand, especially in key population centers and responsive areas.
- Strengthening existing ACTC churches for the ongoing task of evangelism, discipleship and reproduction.
- Continuous learning and training

We make disciples by

- working along existing family lines and contacts
- focusing on reaching whole families
- using reproducible methods
- intentionally mentoring and training disciples of all levels towards continuous spiritual growth and sacrificial service within the body of Christ
- intentionally implanting a DNA of

reproduction right from the beginning by
modeling and having disciples of all levels
pass on what they have learned

In working with ACTC we

- work with and alongside Thai nationals / the Thai Church
- listen to learn and discern to keep focused
- foster, initiate and execute intentional Church Planting
- focus on training a strong base of local lay leaders
- promote dependency on God and using resources of indigenous churches
- promote cooperation and fellowship between Churches within ACTC and beyond

Context

Our Vision

Towards that Vision

Vision and Strategies of Greater Bangkok Region

Context

Bangkok is one of the major gateway cities in East Asia. It is considered the center of influence for the whole of Thailand in areas such as politics, culture and religion. The city consists of over 10 million people with a Christian population of less than 1%. Even though there are churches in most districts of Bangkok, there are still thousands of communities untouched by the gospel due to the density of population and social barriers. Youths, businessmen, migrants, performers, government workers, Buddhist monks and many more are hidden people groups that wait to be sought out and befriended. More workers with courage and creativity are needed to initiate new ministries and partner with Thais in order to reach the frontiers of this megacity.

Vision

We want to see a movement of churches springing up all over Bangkok and glorifying God by following Jesus passionately, evangelizing communities, developing servant-leaders and church-planters, transforming culture and networking in unity with one another.

Strategies and Values

1. We will follow Jesus passionately through *loving* God and others, *obeying* his word, *praying* diligently, *witnessing* frequently, *persevering* in hardships, and *modeling* a Christ-like character and ministry for Thai believers.
2. We will evangelize communities through *initiating* contact with communities, *sharing* the whole gospel, *discipling* key people and their network of relationships, *servicing* felt-needs, *praying* for individuals and breakthroughs, *upholding* justice, and *equipping* new believers to do the same.
3. We will develop servant-leaders and church-planters through *actively communicating* the values of servant-leadership and church multiplication to new believers and congregations, *partnering with* likeminded Thai church-planters, *mentoring* emerging servant leaders and church-planters over a period of time, and *releasing* them to lead and initiate new church-plants in Thailand and beyond.
4. We will transform culture through *encouraging* Thai Christians to make full use of their talents and be involved in various avenues, *engaging* in dialogue concerning Thai culture in light of Biblical values, *ensuring* discipleship in every sphere of life and transformation of the Thai society at large.
5. We will network in unity with one another through *meeting* regularly for fellowship and accountability, *assisting* one another in ministries, *caring* for one another's wellbeing, *edifying* ACTB and various churches in Bangkok, *linking* one another to relevant people and resources and *rejoicing* in the advancement of God's kingdom in the entire region.

OMF South Thailand Strategy Statement 2009

The current situation in South Thailand:

- Population: 9,149,419
- Religious situation: Majority Buddhist with some local Muslim communities except the three Southern most provinces which are majority Muslim.
- 316 churches
- 16,154 Christians or 0.1766% of the population
- 48 districts with no church (of a total of 159 districts)
- 680 sub-districts without a church
- We understand that it is 700 times more likely that someone will come to Christ if they have a relative who is a believer. The presence of a local church in a village makes it 100 times more likely for someone to believe.

Our focus as a regional team is on reaching Thai Buddhists for Christ. We aim to follow family lines and social networks to start new work in strategic areas where there is either no existing, local church or in a central location surrounded by areas with very few churches.

Our vision:

A movement of **Vibrant,
Indigenous,
Biblical,
Reproducing
ACTS churches
Networking
Together with the body of Christ**
to reach South Thailand.

How we want to get there:

Vibrant - Listening, obeying and being responsive to the Spirit of God, we seek to show the light and life in our churches and cell groups. We want to see Thai believer's lives reflecting a real sense of vibrancy, of "life in all its fullness". We want to see vibrant churches that worship God with their whole lives and thus bring life and light to the whole community.

Indigenous - We desire to see churches that are fully Thai in their style of worship, use of language and ways of communicating the Gospel. We also want to see full ownership of the local churches taken by the local Thai Christians in terms of leadership, financial responsibility and reaching out to other Thais.

Biblical churches – We believe the Bible is God's Word and is the sole authority for Godly living and for all matters related to the Church. We seek to live in a way that is consistent with Biblical teaching. We continually teach and train local Christians in reading, understanding and obeying the Bible for themselves.

Reproducing – We desire to build churches that will reproduce themselves in multiplying church movements. We would prefer to see many small to medium size churches throughout South Thailand rather than just a few mega-churches. As such, we seek to teach and use

methods that are easily copied by local Christians, while we model and assist the local Christians to start new churches in other areas. We also see that mission is vital to every church and we desire to build mission mindedness into local Christians. We long to see Southern Thai Christians working as missionaries to other parts of Thailand and beyond and will work to foster this.

ACTS – We are committed to the ACTS church network as we have a good relationship with these churches and enjoy the ACTS churches' trust, doctrine and humility.

Networking together – We seek to build relationships with other churches in South Thailand in order to promote the unity of the body of Christ. This requires us to take time to build relationships and trust with Christians of other churches in our local area. We do this as far as is possible without compromising on doctrinal purity or unethical practices such as “sheep-stealing”. We will only work alongside other churches that share the same vision and values as ourselves.

Mission Statement:

We dedicate ourselves by prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit:

1. to evangelize continually, widely and frequently, make disciples for Christ, teach and train Thai people to plant new churches and strengthen existing churches in South Thailand, and
2. to support, cooperate and assist each other in the pursuit of our vision.

Our Goal:

Our job as cross-cultural church planters is complete when the Church in South Thailand is 5% of the ethnic Thai (Buddhist background) population (25 times current percentage) and is vibrant, indigenous, Biblical and reproducing.

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The books with a rating have been read and rated using the following scale

10-9 Essential Reading for all Thailand Missionaries

8-7 Important Reading for all Thailand Missionaries

6-5 Useful Reading for Thailand missionaries

4-3 Helpful reading for Thailand missionaries

2-1 Good only for a few Thailand missionaries

You can add a rating to this list or you can add a book or article to this list.

An 'X' means that the book is in the libraries at these centers. If you would like to add books to these libraries please do so! Let us know so we can indicate the book is in a center library.

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