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LAUNCHING A STRATEGIC MISSIONAL PARTNERSHIP
BETWEEN PARK PLACE BAPTIST CHURCH, PEARL,
MISSISSIPPI, AND NUEVO PACTO BAPTIST
CHURCH, TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS

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PREFACE

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I am thankful for the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary as it has provided me with a new depth and breadth of ministry.

I give all the credit and glory to God for providing me with both the opportunity and the ability to study and complete this project. May all of the effort and work be pleasing in his sight.

Chad Hunsberger

Brandon, Mississippi

May 2014

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to lead Park Place Baptist Church in Pearl, Mississippi, to launch a strategic missional partnership with Nuevo Pacto Baptist Church, in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

Goals

Four main goals guided this project. While Park Place Baptist Church (PPBC) and Nuevo Pacto Baptist Church (NPBC) have been serving together for a couple of years, the leadership of both churches felt it would be best to enter into a formal partnership.

The first goal was to provide training for NPBC. In order for NPBC members to grasp the desire and necessity of this partnership, the leadership of NPBC requested that the partnership begin with explicit education and equipping of their lay leadership as well as the elder leadership within the church.

The second goal was to train the PPBC mission team to comprehend the need for partnerships with other churches and organizations. An explanation of this specific partnership, as well as divulging a deeper understanding of the reason for future partnerships with other churches, was covered in training.

The third goal was to lead the PPBC mission team and the NPBC leadership to write a covenant agreement. This partnership included a written agreement stating ways

in which both churches contributed to the global mission of making disciples as stated in Scripture.

The fourth goal, a personal goal, was to have a better biblical understanding of partnerships between churches. Partnerships between missionaries and churches, as well as church-to-church partnerships, are mentioned throughout the New Testament. Therefore, for my own spiritual growth and ministry, deeper knowledge and insight regarding partnerships would be advantageous for me.

Context

Park Place Baptist Church is located in Pearl, Mississippi, a suburb of the capital city of Jackson. The church building has an address in the city of Pearl, but it is less than a quarter of a mile from the city of Brandon. In fact, because of the close proximity, the church also has a post office box in Brandon. Therefore, church membership is split almost evenly between the two cities. A study of those within a ten-minute drive time of PPBC most effectively describes church membership.

According to the 2010 census summary profile, 42,043 people reside within a ten-minute drive of PPBC. Nearly 75 percent of the population is white, and 19 percent are black.¹ This ratio helps explain why almost 100 percent of the PPBC congregation is white. While there are a few black members and attendees at PPBC, there is only one young Asian male.

The largest age demographic for the area, at over 7.5 percent, is the 25 to 29 years of age category.² This demographic is one in which PPBC needs to reach more effectively. While the church has seen growth in this area over the past two years, it does not come close to 7.5 percent of the church population. The 25 to 34 year old age

¹U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File1. Esri converted Census 2000 data into 2010 geography, prepared February 8, 2012.

²Ibid.

demographic is predicted to increase by an additional 500 people in the area by the year 2016 and will maintain the largest demographic category.³ Thus, PPBC must realize the need for growth in this demographic and make the needed adjustments to effectively reach them with the truth of the gospel.

The largest household income bracket is the \$50K to \$75K bracket, which includes over 20 percent of the overall area. The average household income within a ten-minute drive of the church is \$61,058, with the median household income at \$49,857.⁴ Such information is helpful for PPBC leadership because it provides accurate expectations for giving within the church.

PPBC was established in 1963 as Sunshine Baptist Church. Understanding the history of the church over the last thirty years is essential for understanding the current mentality and spirit of the people. In the late 1980s, the church building was burned by an arsonist; the church family went through deep pain trying to rebuild. During the rebuilding, the church changed its name from Sunshine Baptist Church to the current name, Park Place Baptist Church.

Several years after the rebuilding, the pastor of PPBC resigned due to a moral failure. Over a year later the church hired a new pastor, yet church members found themselves not trusting his leadership and even some of his principles. This pastor also had a moral failure and resigned in 2007. While there have been many who have found it difficult to trust any leader, God has granted his grace and taught many in the church how to trust again and let the Lord lead the current pastor. The current pastor, Keith Grubbs, came in 2008 and has provided stability and trust within the church. His leadership style is filled with patience and consistency, and his personality exudes mercy. His style and personality seem to be what the church needed after such a difficult time of hardship and distrust.

³U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010.

⁴Ibid.

Another unique fact about PPBC is that it is host to Park Place Christian Academy (PPCA), an accredited school starting in K3 and going all the way through the twelfth grade. This unique aspect brings people from much further distances into the church mission field, though most of them are not members of PPBC. The relationship between the school and the church seems to be at an all time high. In the early stages of the school, during some difficult business meetings, harsh words were spoken within the church and again a lack of trust was displayed. However, by the grace of God, the partnership between the pastoral staff and the school leadership has proved to be both effective and beneficial for the church and the school.

A series of pastors, instability during their tenures, and the addition of a school are some of the reasons that the growth pattern has fluctuated over the last decade. According to the 2002 Annual Church Profile, the average worship attendance was 840 and the average Sunday school attendance was 706. There was a steady decline in both of these areas for six years. However, when the current pastor came in 2008, a small increase in both of these areas was recorded for the 2009 year. In the 2011 Annual Church Profile, the average worship attendance was 535 and the average Sunday school attendance was 537.

Baptisms and other additions dropped heavily during the interim period (from 44 to 15 over two years), but God was gracious to provide a strong increase in both of these areas by 2009 (35). Baptisms more than doubled from 2008 to 2009 and have averaged 30 for the past two years. Other additions have also doubled from 2008 to 2009 and have continued to increase over the past two years.

Involvement in missions has been one of the most consistent areas of growth over the past ten years. According to the 2003 Annual Church Profile, only six people participated in mission projects. In 2004 that number increased to 91 and the number continued to grow over the next several years. During the 2011 church year, 492 church members participated in mission projects. Many were local and statewide projects.

However, 34 of them were participants in international mission projects, which is an increase of 566 percent over ten years. The pastoral leadership believed this steady increase to be an indicator of spiritual growth among church members. Currently, more mission opportunities are needed in order that more people can participate.

My title at PPBC is Associate Pastor. That role has many different responsibilities, most accurately placed in four main categories. First, I have pastoral responsibilities. Within our staff are two considered to be pastoral staff, the pastor, and myself. Together, we seek the vision for the church and relay that vision to the church and its leadership. As pastoral staff, we seek to be the shepherds of the congregation through the preaching of the Word of God, caring for those in need, and providing general leadership with the ministries of the church. This responsibility is broad and deep. It proves to be the most comprehensive work I do and requires the most attention mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.

Second, I am responsible for leading, equipping, and evaluating all staff. At PPBC the staff includes four other ministerial staff positions, three administrative staff positions, a business manager, and a facilities manager. This responsibility includes the leadership of weekly staff meetings, evaluations, supervision, and oversight.

The third responsibility of the Associate Pastor is to provide the overall leadership for the missions element of PPBC. This includes the finding of local, state, national, and international opportunities for missional service. The Associate Pastor must also equip team leaders for short-term mission endeavors in order that they might prepare and lead their teams effectively. I also lead a small missions team in providing assistance on mission trips and granting monies to different mission organizations for the advancement of the gospel in other areas.

The fourth responsibility I have is to provide direction, leadership, and training for all education programs and ministries within the church. This includes, but is not limited to, the areas of Sunday school and discipleship training. Part of the responsibility

includes the choosing of appropriate curriculum, recruiting quality teachers, and equipping leaders to fulfill their responsibilities most effectively.

Rationale

PPBC had a unique need for this project. As mentioned above, mission involvement has increased continually over the past several years, particularly within the area of international missions. This increase has strengthened the spiritual lives of several church members. In order for PPBC to continue to have significant growth in this area, deeper steps of commitment were needed to help the members effectively reach the lost. A partnership of this fashion would deepen that responsibility and help the members of PPBC see the necessity of a lifestyle of international missions rather than simply a once a year mission trip responsibility.

Biblically, there are examples of churches partnering with believers in other areas in order to reach the nations effectively with the gospel. In order for PPBC to be most effective in reaching the people of Honduras, creating a long-term partnership in which continued relationships can be built and sustained for years of disciple-making was necessary.

Frequently, when a church in the United States takes on a mission project in another country, they become the only giver in the situation, creating an unhealthy environment of dependency from the other church. A true partnership allows for both churches to benefit and grow from one another. This partnership was designed to strengthen the lives and ministry of both NPBC and PPBC.

Definitions

In order to understand the concept of this project most effectively, defining several key terms found within the project and its title are necessary.

Though the word *strategic* is in the title of this project, it is not necessarily a strategic planning model of leadership. However, in light of the consistent references throughout this project to strategy and planning, it is helpful to see that Aubrey Malphurs defines strategic planning as “the envisioning process that a point leader uses with a team of leaders on a regular basis to think and act so as to design and redesign a specific ministry model that accomplishes the Great Commission in their unique ministry context.”⁵ With these two definitions in mind, and for the purpose of this project specifically, the word *strategic* will be defined as intentional and specific planning.

The word *missions* might be most easily defined as the sending of people to spread the gospel. David Horner defines missions as follows: “Missions is God’s plan for reaching all nations with the good news of Jesus Christ by sending His people to tell them about and show them the gracious, redeeming love of a glorious God.”⁶ Horner adds to that thought in an end note:

According to Tim Keller, *missional* means that a church is “adapting and reformulating absolutely everything it does in worship, discipleship, community, and service—so as to be engaged with the non-Christian society around it.” . . . In that context, *missional* addresses the overall emphasis of a church ministry as it approaches its surrounding culture with a strategy shaped by missiological thinking within a biblical framework. Missional thinking serves the evangelistic intent of the church well so that its engagement with the non-Christian society surround it results in an encounter with the gospel of Jesus Christ.⁷

Therefore, for the purposes of this project, the word *missional* describes an organization or individual rearranging themselves for the sending of people to spread the gospel.

⁵Aubrey Malphurs, *Advanced Strategic Planning: A New Model for Church and Ministry Leaders* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005).

⁶David Horner, *When Missions Shapes the Mission: You and Your Church Can Reach the World* (Nashville: B&H, 2011), 8 n. 2.

⁷Ibid.

According to the aforementioned definition of missions, evangelism must take place for missions to occur. Therefore, an accurate definition of the word “evangelism” is necessary. The Lausanne Covenant of 1974 defines evangelism in this way:

To evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gifts of the Spirit to all who repent and believe. Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialogue whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Saviour and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God. In issuing the gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship. Jesus still calls all who would follow him to deny themselves, take up their cross, and identify themselves with his new community. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his Church and responsible service in the world.⁸

The word *partnership* specifically refers to the connectivity between two or more parties for the purpose of more effectively reaching a common goal. The Lausanne Covenant of 1974 helped pave the way for church partnerships. The covenant states the following regarding churches in evangelistic partnerships:

We rejoice that a new missionary era has dawned. The dominate role of western missions is fast disappearing. God is raising up from the younger churches a great new resource for world evangelization, and is thus demonstrating that the responsibility to evangelize belongs to the whole body of Christ. All churches should therefore be asking God and themselves what they should be doing both to reach their own area and send missionaries to other parts of the world. A reevaluation of our missionary responsibility and role should be continuous. Thus a growing partnership of churches will develop and the universal character of Christ’s Church will be more clearly exhibited. We also thank God for agencies which labor in Bible translation, theological education, the mass media, Christian literature, evangelism, missions, church renewal and other specialist fields. They too should engage in constant self-examination to evaluate their effectiveness as part of the Church’s mission.⁹

⁸The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.

⁹“The Lausanne Covenant,” The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, accessed March 19, 2012, <http://www.lausanne.org/Lausanne-1974/Lausanne-covenant.html>.

Limitations and Delimitations

This project had four main limitations. The first limitation the time frame—fifteen weeks. Therefore, all of the training, equipping, and traveling had to place within the fifteen-week time period.

A second limitation was my role within the church as Associate Pastor. While this role does carry both authority and responsibility, there was still a greater authority from the pastor. He was aware and supportive of this partnership and this project; however, due to the nature of my role, if he felt as though other responsibilities should take priority, I would have been under obligation to submit to his authority.

A third limitation was the distance between Pearl, Mississippi, and Tegucigalpa, Honduras. As PPBC sought to partner with NPBC, it was necessary to communicate regularly and share together the needs and desires of both churches. However, communication was difficult at times.

A fourth limitation was the language barrier between the English-speaking church, PPBC, and the Spanish-speaking church, NPBC. Although several leaders at NPBC speak English quite well, times at which language was a limitation.

A delimitation is a limitation that I, as the project manager, placed on the project. This project contained two delimitations. One of the delimitations of this project was the size of the team I formed to train and equip for mission purposes. This team consisted of no more than ten participants and was limited to members of PPBC.

A second delimitation was the number of days I spent in Honduras to participate in leadership training. I stayed only four days to complete leadership training for the members of NPBC.

Research Methodology

Officially beginning the partnership between PPBC and NPBC was the first goal of this project. Accomplishing this goal included writing and signing the covenant

between the two churches. The signing of the covenant took place in Tegucigalpa during a specific training trip I took in the spring of 2013.

The second goal of this project was to provide effective training for the leaders at NPBC. In order to observe the effectiveness of the training, participants filled out an evaluation survey (translated into Spanish) that provided opportunities for general and specific critiques. This evaluative survey helped the participants restate what they had learned. The survey also helped me understand the quality of teaching and leadership provided through the seminar.

The third goal of the project was to train a PPBC missions team to understand the need for partnerships with other churches and organizations. This was evaluated by two identical surveys. The first survey was given at the onset of team training to see how well the team understood the necessity of this concept as well as to see the biblical knowledge of missional partnerships. The second survey helped display the team's growth, or lack of growth, in this specific area and was administered at the end of the fifteen week project.

The project's fourth goal was to help me have a better biblical understanding of missional partnerships. As I studied, preparing to teach in these training techniques, I anticipated growing in my depth of knowledge. As I developed a deeper proficiency, I was able to put these developments into practice in my teaching, preaching, and planning.

Summary of Chapters

Chapter 2 evaluates the biblical understanding of strategic missional partnerships through the lens of four key passages in the New Testament: Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 5:1-11, 2 Timothy 2:2, and Philippians 4:14-20. Each passage forces the Church to ask questions regarding the effectiveness and necessity of partnerships.

Chapter 3 explains the need for short-term mission projects for churches throughout the world. It also examines the missional partnership strategies at four

Southern Baptist churches to facilitate a healthy understanding of some of the ways in which other churches plan and implement partnerships. This chapter will also provide examples of other sending agencies and the significance placed on partnerships.

Chapter 4 provides thorough explanation of the process behind the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the partnership. This chapter allows for someone to learn from and apply the same methodology in his or her context.

Chapter 5 evaluates and critiques intently the effectiveness of the project. The survey results are tabulated and displayed as a helpful explanation regarding the results. The surveys and explanation will determine whether or not this would be an effective opportunity for other ministers in the future.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL EVIDENCE

Introduction

Launching a strategic missional partnership requires forethought, planning, and asking and answering many questions. Not only do questions need to be asked of the church, they must also be answered according to a biblically based theology. Throughout history, different men have defined missions and its purpose. David Horner defines it as follows: “Missions is God’s plan for reaching all nations with the good news of Jesus Christ by sending His people to tell them about and show them the gracious, redeeming love a glorious God.”¹ This definition is based on a “biblical perspective” connected to the great commission throughout the synoptic gospels.²

This chapter addresses questions the church needs to ask when studying Scripture more closely regarding missions and partnering for the sake of the gospel. Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 5:1-11, 2 Timothy 2:2, and Philippians 4:14-20 are the four passages studied and addressed specifically in this chapter. Each passage elicits a different question and will require a depth of understanding to provide an effective answer.

¹David Horner, *When Missions Shapes the Mission: You and Your Church Can Reach the World* (Nashville: B&H, 2011), 6.

²Ibid.

What Does Making Disciples Include?

Matthew 28:19-20, the Great Commission, drives the church to ask the question, “What does making disciples include?” This text pushes the church to ask this question because Jesus does not define making disciples in a dictionary format. Instead, he expresses it through the entirety of his commission. Beginning at the end of verse 18, Jesus says, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you and behold I am with you always even to the end of the age.” The question, “What does making disciples include?” is answered within this text. In order to grasp the various elements within the phrase, “make disciples,” a definition explaining the phrase adds clarity. John MacArthur writes,

Matheteuo (make disciples) is the main verb and the central command of verses 19-20, which form the closing sentence of Matthew’s gospel. The root meaning of the term refers to believing and learning. Jesus was not referring simply to believers or simply to learners, or He would have used other words. *Matheteuo* carries a beautiful combination of meanings. In this context it relates to those who place their trust in Jesus Christ and follow Him in lives of continual learning and obedience³

Craig Blomberg offers this further insight:

The verb “make disciples” also commands a kind of evangelism that does not stop after someone makes a profession of faith. The truly subordinate participles in v.19 explain what making disciples involves: “baptizing” them and “teaching” them obedience to all of Jesus’ commandments. The first of these will be a once-for-all, decisive initiation into a Christian community. The second proves a perennially incomplete, life-long task.⁴

Making disciples, first of all, includes evangelism. It entails telling other people the good news of Jesus Christ. While it is clear that “make disciples” is the imperative verb, one must be careful not to forget to *go*. David Horner found helpful

³John MacArthur, *Matthew 24-28, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1989), 340.

⁴Craig Blomberg, *Matthew, The New American Commentary*, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 431.

insight on this very issue from Roy Ciampa. He writes, “In an enlightening article about this passage, Roy Ciampa, associate professor of New Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, contends that even in its participial form, the word *go* has the grammatical power of an imperative.” He continues, “In *Salvation to the Ends of the Earth: A Biblical Theology of Mission*, Andreas Kostenberger and Peter O’Brien address the issue, as well. While affirming that ‘make disciples’ is the primary point of emphasis in the text, *going* is an integral part of how the exhortation is to be understood.”⁵ This being said, in order for disciples to be made, one must *go* and take the gospel to the nations.

Evangelism is evident in Matthew 28 because the word *baptizing* is a natural product of making disciples. Evangelize means to share the gospel, to take the good news of Jesus Christ to the lost, and as Charles Spurgeon states, to “win souls.”⁶ For a church to be evangelistic, it is necessary for the church to speak the gospel. Words truly are necessary to spread the gospel. In fact, Romans 10 tells us, “faith comes from hearing and hearing from the word of Christ” (v. 17).⁷ Making disciples includes evangelism. R. Peace states, “The word evangelism is derived from the Greek verb *euangelizo*. The core meaning of this verb is to proclaim the good news that the kingdom of God has come near in the person and work of Jesus, the response to which is repentance and faith. The content of the message of the early church became known as...the good news.”⁸ MacArthur shares his understanding of the Great Commission:

The Great Commission is a command to bring unbelievers throughout the world to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and the term the Lord uses in this commissioning is “make disciples.” The true convert is a disciple, a person who has accepted and

⁵David Horner, *When Missions Shapes the Mission*, 45.

⁶C. H. Spurgeon, *The Soul Winner* (New Kensington, PA: Whitaker House, 1995).

⁷Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture texts will be taken from the English Standard Version.

⁸John Corrie, Samuel Escobar, and Wilbert R. Shenk, ed. *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations*, (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2007), s.v. “Evangelism” by R. Peace.

submitted himself to Jesus Christ, whatever that may mean or demand. The truly converted person is filled with the Holy Spirit and given a new nature that yearns to obey and worship the Lord who saved him.⁹

Baptism is evidence of salvation and is referenced as such by Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8. In order to be baptized, one must be a believer; therefore, baptism is a sign of an evangelistic effort being made. Someone cannot be converted without hearing the truth, and therefore, in order to make disciples, evangelism and conversion must take place. MacArthur continues this thought, stating, “To baptize literally means to immerse in water. . . .As instituted by Christ . . . baptism became an outward act of identification with Him through faith, a visible, public testimony that henceforth one belonged to Him.”¹⁰ Baptism follows salvation, which must then be connected with becoming a disciple.

For a church to apply adequately this element of making disciples, more than evangelistic sermons and evangelistic events must be in place. The people that make up the church need to be actively sharing the gospel with those around them and those around the world. For this to take place, church leaders must equip and train their Christian members to be effective in evangelistic efforts. This truth leads to the next element that must be included in making disciples: Making disciples must include teaching. “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name for the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, *teaching* them . . .” (Matt 28:19, emphasis added). In the second step of the disciple making process, Jesus says to equip people by teaching them. Disciples must be learners, and thus, must have teachers. Within the process of making disciples, teaching must take place.

During this element of the process, churches might regularly include teaching during times such as Sunday school, discipleship training classes, and sermons. An individual can include teaching with his family, having devotion time together, leading

⁹MacArthur, *Matthew 24-28*, 341.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 343.

Bible studies, or participating in fruitful conversations that lead to teaching the truth. Any situation in which someone can sit under the authority of the Word of God as someone teaches it to them is a part of the disciple making process. In the process of making disciples, teaching is necessary.

This area cannot be circumvented. MacArthur adds,

The church's mission is not simply to convert but to teach. The convert is called to a life of obedience to the Lord, and in order to obey Him it is obviously necessary to know what He requires. As already noted, a disciple is by definition a learner and follower. Therefore, studying, understanding, and obeying 'the whole purpose of God' (Acts 20:27) is the lifelong task of every true disciple.¹¹

Spurgeon writes, "Is it any wonder that many converts fall away, when, in fact, they were never taught to exercise faith in Jesus for eternal salvation, but only of temporary conversion."¹² Teaching the entire truth is necessary for conversion and for spiritual growth.

In order to have an effective missional partnership using the great commission as a guide, teaching must be a part of the partnership. Children, teenagers, adults, leaders, church members, and any others can and need to be taught on both sides of the partnership. During the partnership, both churches need to agree on different opportunities in which believers can be more thoroughly equipped and trained as followers of Christ.

Making disciples includes modeling. It is helpful for people to see the gospel, to understand the gospel, and to watch the gospel. Jesus knew that, so he says the following in verse 20 of Matthew 28: "[T]each them to *observe* all that I have commanded" (emphasis added). The ability to observe the truth in others is helpful. Some commentators and scholars often place this element under the larger umbrella of

¹¹MacArthur, *Matthew 24-28*, 345.

¹²Spurgeon, *The Soul Winner*, 27.

teaching. John MacArthur, Craig Blomberg, and other scholars explain that modeling is simply a part of the teaching process.

A disciple is one who connects with a teacher, learns from him, and even shares life with him. He will not just listen to instructions but also actively take part in whatever is to be learned, much like an apprentice.

Using two different illustrations might help demonstrate this element. A basketball coach and a guitar instructor must both teach and model. A basketball coach teaches and explains the form for shooting, passing, and even dribbling. But any effective coach must demonstrate the correct form for the player to shoot, pass, and dribble. The coach literally holds the ball in his hand, providing an example for the player to follow, accurately shooting the ball into the goal. Similarly, a guitar instructor explains to the learner where to place his fingers in order to play a certain chord, but at times the instructor will also play the chord for him and even help the learner place his fingers correctly by manually helping him. This example is more than just teaching, for teaching takes place in the words that are spoken. It is modeling. Modeling, or giving the learners and disciples something to mimic is something to observe and do as they watch. While not every person has the spiritual gift of teaching every Christian is responsible to proclaim the truth about God in order to most effectively make disciples. Making disciples must include modeling.

An effective missional partnership will include making disciples by using the element of modeling. There must be enough opportunities throughout the year for church members to interact in order to observe and apply what they see in each other. This modeling format may require travel and lengthy stays in order for the observation to be effectively completed.

Another element of making disciples includes mobilizing. For this process to multiply or continue to take place, the mobilization of believers must take place. The responsibility of those who have evangelized, taught, and modeled is to mobilize others

into action. It is their responsibility to equip others, train them, show them, and then send them out to do the same with another group. Making disciples without mobilization suggests that disciples were never actually made. In fact, if making disciples did not include mobilization, the gospel would have stopped moving forward over 2,000 years ago and would not be a part of the global discussion at all. Jesus' command is for those who are His followers, to also be His avenue for making disciples of all nations. Warren Wiersbe helps connect each of these elements, writing, and "a disciple is one who has believed on Jesus Christ and expressed this faith by being baptized. He remains in the fellowship of the believers that he might be taught the truths of the faith (Acts 2:41-47). He is then able to go out and win others and teach them. This was the pattern of the New Testament church (2 Timothy 2:1-2)."¹³

In order for a missional partnership to be fruitful, at its core the two partners must have the desire to make disciples by eventually sending them out to continue the process in others. While various opportunities throughout the partnership will display mobilization, it can most easily be seen in short-term opportunities for members of each church.

In addition to these four elements of disciple making, it is necessary to realize that without the presence of God, disciple making cannot occur. Thankfully, Jesus included a promise that will ensure His guidance through the entire process. He said, "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (v. 20). Charles Spurgeon puts it very plainly, "A soul winner can do nothing without God."¹⁴

Matthew 28:18-20 forces the church to ask the question "What does making disciples include?" The church should respond by saying that making disciples includes evangelism, teaching, modeling, and mobilization. In order to have an effective

¹³Warren Wiersbe, *Be Loyal* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1980), 215.

¹⁴Spurgeon, *The Soul Winner*, 32.

missional partnership, the great commission must be appropriately understood, and each of the elements must be included and applied. To be effective in partnership, there must be evangelism, teaching, modeling, and mobilizing.

Can We Be Most Effective Alone?

Luke 5 includes a story depicting the disciples as they are working. This Scripture provides a picture encouraging the church to ask the question, “Can we be most effective alone?”

On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Genesaret, and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon’s, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, ‘Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.’ And Simon answered, ‘Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.’ And when they had done this they enclosed a large number of fish and their nets were breaking. They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, ‘Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.’ For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.” And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him. (Luke 5:1-11)

This text provides an example of why it is necessary to work in partnership with others. The text actually functions as an example more than a specific instruction. This text models for believers the answer to the aforementioned question, “Can we be most effective alone?”

The answer to that question, according to Jesus, is an emphatic “No.” However, this text displays two different elements which help the reader gain a deeper understanding of this truth. The first element is to know that one cannot do all the work without the help of others. Within this story, it is evident that the disciples needed each other in order to haul in the heavy net of fish. S. Cueva appropriately states, “Mission cannot be developed in isolation.”¹⁵ Luke 5 is a visual illustration of our need for help.

¹⁵Corrie, Escobar, and Schenk, *Dictionary of Mission Theology*, s.v. “Partnership” by S. Cueva.

In fact, the Word says that when Peter, James, and John hauled in so many fish the nets starting breaking, they needed another boat to help them bring in the fish. Robert Stein suggests that Jesus was prepared for such a great catch. He says the words “two boats” in verse 2 are preparation for the miracle found just a few verses later.¹⁶ G. Campbell Morgan descriptively states, “Over went the nets, and it was not long before they were so full that they had to beckon for help, for the boats were in danger of going down.”¹⁷

The point of this text is not to show that believers need to work together, however, it does provide a brief example of the need for people to work alongside one another. Verse 7 states that the disciples called their “partners” to help them. The two boats together hauled in the heavy load of fish. Partnership is not only helpful, in this instance, it is necessary.

A strategic missional partnership will provide the necessary aids for situations which cannot be handled alone. For times when a task is too big for one group to shoulder the burden, partners will provide support. Support will be necessary for financial problems; however the support will not be limited to financial resources. Manual labor, prayers, preachers, teachers, workers, and musicians all will be shared through different trips, videos, emails, and materials. Some tasks cannot be done alone, and the task of spreading the gospel is too grand for one church to do alone.

Not only does Luke 5 provide a reminder that one cannot do all the work alone, it provides a necessary reminder that one cannot do any of the work without the Lord. Notice the difference in these two statements. One church can do *some* of the work without partnerships with other churches, but it cannot do *any* of the work at all apart from the Lord.

¹⁶Robert Stein, *Luke* (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 168.

¹⁷G. Campbell Morgan. *The Gospel According to Luke* (New York: Revell, 1931), 73.

This passage of Scripture indicates that Peter, James, John and other disciples were professional fishermen. Because it was their main profession, they were skilled at what they did. Yet all night long, they caught nothing. Such a night must have been quite disappointing. However, in the morning, the Lord provided them with a miracle, telling them to simply let down their nets for a catch. The act of letting down their nets was not special. The disciples had been fishing all night and had surely fished all throughout this area. The Lord simply chose to give them the fish. He not only gave them some fish, but overwhelmed them with two boat loads of fish. The nets were so full they still began to break.

Through this miracle, Jesus shows the church today why He is necessary in order for any effective ministry to take place. John MacArthur describes Jesus as both omniscient and omnipotent, writing, “That He knew the location of the fish demonstrated Jesus’ omniscience, but the staggering, unprecedented size of the catch revealed His omnipotence.”¹⁸ The absence of Jesus is the absence of effectiveness in ministry.

In an effective missional partnership, both churches must fully rely on the leadership of Jesus. In fact, for an effective missional partnership to take place, both churches must answer the question “Can we be most effective alone?” with an emphatic “No.” Both churches must recognize that they need to partner with others for the sake of the gospel and that they can never be effective without the authority and power given only by the grace of God.

While the first two texts come from the Gospels, the second two will come from the Pauline epistles. Scripture everywhere evidences the need for missions, and in order to most accurately display this need, the use of several different passages will help provide further evidence for such a belief.

¹⁸John MacArthur, *Luke 1-5, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 2009), 306.

How Do We Multiply the Truth?

In Paul's second letter to Timothy, he gives some thorough instruction and insight toward the idea of multiplying the truth. He helps Timothy understand his role and his responsibility not only as a pastor, but also a believer. In the first chapter, Paul reminds Timothy of all that he has been given in knowing the truth and in knowing Jesus. He reminds him to "guard the good deposit entrusted to you" (2 Tim 1:14). But as Paul begins chapter two, he encourages Timothy to do something with the knowledge given to him. Paul writes, "You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim 2:2).

This text helps the church ask the same question that Timothy asked over 2,000 years ago. "How do we multiply the truth?" Paul clearly answers Timothy, with three main points: being strengthened by the truth, hearing the truth, and entrusting the truth to others. A desperate need of the grace of God is the most important reality for the church to understand. When Paul tells Timothy to be strengthened by grace, he is reminding him of what Timothy already knows. Paul is reminding Timothy of the truth that is evident in the life he has been leading and the life in which those around him have been following. Wiersbe states, "It is important that we get our original treasure from the Word of God, and not from the ideas and philosophies of men. We do not test modern teachers by their popularity, education, or skill. We test them by the Word of God, and particularly the doctrines of grace as given by Paul."¹⁹

The church must be reminded of its need for the grace of God, not only for the act of justification, but also for that of sanctification, as well. Paul seems to be specifically concerned with the issues of justification, sanctification, forgiveness, and holiness and their accuracy as handed down. It appears that Paul wants to make sure that Timothy is using the grace of God, not simply his own abilities, or knowledge. Timothy

¹⁹Warren Wiersbe, *Be Faithful* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1981), 129.

did not need more from God, but rather needed to use what he had already been given by God.

As previously suggested, work done without Jesus is fruitless, for His grace is necessary for the strength of the church or missional partnership. Churches entering in to a partnership with one another should soberly remember to seek the help of Jesus first. In order for missional partnerships to be effective, the grace of God must be existent and preeminent in priority. A consistent and faithful reminder of this is necessary for both churches entering into a partnership. This cannot be a fleeting thought, but instead must be a regular, permanent thought in the minds of the leaders of partnering churches.

The church must be strengthened by the truth, but it must also retain the truth. Paul expresses it this way to Timothy, writing, “and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men.” The idea of retaining the truth requires one both to hear the truth and recall what it is. Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin write, “Having been strengthened by God is dynamic grace, Timothy was to serve as a teacher. Paul’s chief concern in giving this command was not merely to transmit beliefs through the proper ecclesiastical channels. Paul had a deep concern for the truth of the gospel in Ephesus.”²⁰ Paul does not want Timothy simply hear the truth, he wants him to apply the truth. People today need to be reminded that they are not only supposed to show up to a worship gathering once a week and hear truth being spoken to them, but in fact, they are to retain that truth, and to understand that truth as well.

This text suggested that preachers and teachers should also be preaching and teaching the truth in order for it to be retained. How can one expect the learners to hear the truth if the teachers are not speaking it? However, it is also necessary for learners to strive to retain what they are learning in order for them to make good use of it in

²⁰Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 34 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 201).

application. For a missional partnership to have any positive effect, the truth must be consistently taught, preached, and proclaimed.

The church must be strengthened by the truth, retain the truth, and the church must entrust the truth to others. Paul writes, “[E]ntrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2). Here is further evidence that the idea of mobilization is vital for the multiplication of the truth. One cannot expect multiplying the truth to take place without mobilizing people to share the truth with others, and so on. Mobilizing and multiplying connects the reader back to the Great Commission, as discussed earlier. It is completely ineffective for one to hear, know, and experience the truth and then simply keep silent. One must give or entrust that truth to another faithful follower in order for that follower to share with another, and so on. Thus, the process of multiplication begins.

The process of multiplication is more effective than the process of addition. An illustration of the process of addition: if one leader shared with one person 365 days a year for thirty years, the truth would have been shared with 10,950 people. This seems like a large number, and in reality it is. However, consider if the same leader chose to share with *one* person per year, but instead of simply sharing once, the leader invested in that person. If the leader took time to teach, to model, and to mobilize the protégé to do the same, at the end of one year, both the leader and the follower are equipped to take one additional person and repeat the effort with two people. At the end of two years, there would be 4 individuals equipped, and then 8 the next year, 16 the next, and so on. At the end of thirty years, instead of merely 10,950, as in the addition illustration, the total would be 1,073,741,824. That is the power of multiplication, and without question, the power of Christ at work among His people.

Timothy’s life displays the power of multiplication. He personally knew what multiplication looked and felt like. H. F. Mathews writes of their relationship:

Timothy and Titus were only two of the lieutenants of the Apostle [Paul]... When Paul preached at Lystra on his first journey, Timothy was converted and adopted by Paul as a companion and assistant. . . . Timothy's work was widespread. . . . The two men were together when Paul, in prison, wrote Colossians, Philemon and Philippians, and Paul intended to send Timothy at that time on a further mission to Philippi.²¹

C. A. Tretham adds to the discussion of their relationship and the need for multiplication:

Timothy was indebted to Paul and to the many witnesses who had brought him to Christ and confirmed his convictions. Even so, he must transmit the Christian message to other faithful men who would accept the call to service and would guard the sacred truth with their very lives and compassionately pass it on to others. Constantly he must give himself to developing the members of his church so that they might give themselves 'unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ' (Eph 4:12).²²

Lea and Griffin remind readers that "Paul charged Timothy to send on faithfully the message he had received. Timothy was not to be an innovator of religious novelties but was to show loyalty and commitment to the gospel message. Paul demanded Timothy's active involvement in the training of a future generation of Christian servants."²³

Multiplication is necessary for the church to expand. And to multiply effectively, the church must be strengthened by the truth, hear the truth, and entrust the truth to others. This reality must be entrenched in the minds of those in strategic missional partnership. The point of a partnership must be to multiply the gospel through the lives of believers. MacArthur accurately states,

The New Testament . . . does clearly teach, in this passage and elsewhere, that the gospel is to be promulgated from generation to generation. Jesus, of course, was the Master Teacher. He taught the apostles, who then taught others, who taught others, who are still teaching others, and so on throughout the church age. William Barclay comments, 'The teacher is a link in the living chain which stretches unbroken from this present moment back to Jesus Christ. The glory of teaching is that it links the

²¹H. F. Mathews, *According to St. Paul: A Study Course on the New Testament Letters* (London: Epworth, 1956), 104.

²²C. A. Tretham, *Studies in Timothy* (Nashville: Convention, 1959), 103.

²³Lea and Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 200.

present with the earthly life of Jesus Christ' (*The Letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1957], 182). In every generation, God has raised up new links in this living chain of faithful men to pass on the good news of Jesus Christ to the people of their day.²⁴

This truth needs to resonate with the church today in order for the gospel to effectively go forth. The thought of a broken chain in the gospel should cause today's church to shutter in fear and stir the church to action, actively making disciples of all nations. It is evident that ministry is not something that we ought to keep to ourselves. Instead, we are conduits of the gifts of grace that God has given us. It is our responsibility to protect those gifts and invest them in others. The goal, in turn, is for those others to share those same truths and gifts with more believers as well.

William Barclay explains the three-fold understanding by pointing out two things outlined in verses one and two, "the reception and the transmission of the Christian faith." He continues, writing, "It is not only a privilege to receive the Christian faith; it is a duty to transmit it. Every Christian must look on himself as link between two generations."²⁵ These ideas of multiplication must function in order for a missional partnership to be in prime condition. Therefore, application for these ideas should be implemented in both partnering churches and needs to be the driving force behind their desire to partner together.

Are We Partnering with Others for the Sake of Making Disciples?

The final question that the church is driven to ask is "Are we partnering with others for the sake of making disciples?" After the thorough discourse of whether or not partnerships are helpful and necessary, this question is mentioned as a reality check to judge whether or not a partnership is existent, or even available, in an individual church.

²⁴MacArthur, *2 Timothy*, 39.

²⁵William Barclay, *2 Timothy*, The Daily Study Bible Series (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975), 158.

Philippians 4:14-20, is the catalyst for the last question. Paul writes the following to the church at Philippi:

Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble. And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

For a long time the idea of partnership was not as mutually beneficial as suggested in this passage. Cueva states that “Missiologically, mission had been understood in terms of ‘sending churches’ and ‘receiving churches’; but after the international mission conference of Whitby (Canada, 1947) this idea moved towards ‘Partners in Obedience.’” He continues to define the word “partnership,” explaining, “Partnership embodies the theological idea of a ‘covenant’ in which two or more persons agree to participate in a determined vision, action, purpose, target and methodology strategy, in order to accomplish one or more tasks in operation.”²⁶ Malcolm Tolbert added about this text, “‘Share’ (v. 14) and ‘entered into partnership’ (v. 15) are forms of the same word. The concept of partnership of fellowship is very important in Paul’s thought.”²⁷

To most accurately answer the question posed from this text, the church must acknowledge its need to partner and recognize that partnership includes four different aspects. These four aspects will apply directly to any strategic missional partnership, both locally and globally. The four aspects are: the church must give, the church must receive, the church must send, and the Lord must supply.

²⁶Cueva, “Partnership.”

²⁷Malcolm Tolbert, *Colossians, Philippians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, Layman’s Bible Book Commentary, vol. 22 (Nashville: Broadman, 1980), 36.

The church must give. If a church is to have partnership with another church or any other agency for that matter, it must be a giving church. The act of giving is practical proof that the church at Philippi loved Paul. Giving does not refer to finances alone, but includes much more. Cueva expounds,

It begins, though, with what we have in our hands, and the willingness to give what we have unconditionally. However, that cannot be understood only, or mainly, in terms of finance. Our abilities, talents, professions, time, experience, knowledge of other languages, voluntarism, and so on, all help us to put into practice this new theology of partnership.²⁸

Philippians 4:15, 16, and 18 highlight the church's need to give. Paul reminds the church that they have already given, both financially and in the form of supplies. James Robertson explains, "[Paul] indicates that the transaction is a debt. Their giving had, however, overflowed the account."²⁹ Paul clearly enjoys receiving their gifts. He is happy in their generosity for his sake and theirs. Paul seems to be expressing an appreciation for their generous financial assistance, but includes in his statement that finances were not the only gifts. Richard Melick writes,

The other churches failed in their obligations to the gospel. Paul called the Philippian support a matter 'of giving and receiving' (4:15). When he stated that other churches did not support him, he used the common word for 'fellowship' (*koinoneo*) which so characterizes this book. Subtly and without complaining, Paul pointed out that others had received but not given. They had a one-way relationship in the gospel.³⁰

Paul intends for the audience to realize that for partnership to effectively exist, giving must take place. Paul suggests the giver will also benefit, receiving gifts, as well. Melick states, "Paul also listed two benefits to the giver. First, God was pleased. ... Paul

²⁸Cueva, "Partnership."

²⁹James Robertson, *Philippians*, The Abingdon Bible Commentary (New York: Abingdon, 1929), 1249.

³⁰Richard R. Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, The New American Commentary, vol. 32 (Nashville: Broadman, 1991), 156.

pointed out that their gift was an acceptable Christian sacrifice The Second benefit to the believers was that they would experience God’s provision.”³¹

Interestingly, this excerpt suggests the church will have to learn to receive as well as give. In fact, Paul writes in verse fifteen, “in giving and receiving.” He understood that for true partnership to take place, it has to be a two-way street.

At times, in a missional partnership, one church may feel as though they are the only one giving to the partnership. Paul urges his readers to remember that partnership is more than financial. It is unwise to assume that partnership is only financial, and therefore, only one-sided. For a truly effective missional partnership to take place, it must exist on several levels, including, but not limited to, finances.

While one church may be receiving financial benefits, it is quite possible that the other church will gain training for leaders, travel experience, edification of believers, evangelistic efforts, or improvement in other areas of ministry. A partnership should include several different areas of ministry opportunities in order to be effective.

The third area necessary for partnership is that the church must send its people. Paul gives additional thanks to the Philippian church for sending Epaphroditus to visit him. This Scripture illustrates more than a courier service, but a genuine friendship in which Epaphroditus is serving alongside Paul for the advancement of the gospel.

In the previously discussed portion of the Great Commission, *going* is displayed as a requirement for making disciples. In this case, it is easiest for a follower of Jesus to *go* if they are being *sent* by a church. The church is responsible for equipping followers for their travels, praying for them, and even financially supporting them if necessary. In a partnership like Paul and the Philippian church, *sending* followers was vital for Paul.

The idea of sending should be two-way. In a missional partnership, it may frequently seem as though only one church does the sending, but it is wise for both

³¹Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, 157.

churches to actively send members of their church to serve alongside the other. John MacArthur provides unique insight into Paul's gratitude for partnerships. He writes,

Three statements summarize Paul's joy and gratitude. The Greek verb in the phrase "I have received everything in full" was commonly used in a commercial sense in extra-biblical Greek to denote payment in full. This statement is, in effect, Paul's receipt to the Philippians for their gift. Have an abundance translates a Greek verb that means "to overflow," "to have an excess," or "to have more than enough." The Greek verb in Paul's final statement, I am amply supplied speaks of being filled up completely. Taken together, those three phrases show that Paul, having received from Epaphroditus what they had sent to him, was overwhelmed by the Philippians' generosity.³²

The giving, receiving, and sending will mean nothing if the Lord does not supply. The Lord must supply. Melick gives a deeper explanation, writing,

Just as God had met Paul's needs in the work of the gospel, so God would meet their needs. The context of this promise deserves careful attention. Paul spoke to those who actively supported the work of the Lord. His statement of 4:15 indicates what he means: God meets the needs of those who give to him. In the context of ministering, being ministered to occurs.³³

As has been mentioned in each text, the Lord is vital in order for any good to take place. If the Lord is not the focal point of a partnership, the one described in Philippians, or one in modern day, it is a waste of time.

The Lord is described as the great supplier of all needs. In verse nineteen, Paul writes, "And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." He gives exactly what is needed to his church. MacArthur explains the final verses of this text:

Paul knew that the Philippians would not only receive spiritual blessings in heaven for their generosity, but also that God would supply all their physical needs in this life. The Philippians had sacrificially given of their earthly possessions to support God's servant, Paul. In return, God would amply supply their needs; He would not be in their debt . . . They would discover that it is impossible to out give God.³⁴

³²John MacArthur, *Philippians, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 2001), 307.

³³Melick, *Philippians, Colossians, Philemon*, 158.

³⁴MacArthur, *Philippians*, 308.

This text serves as a great reminder to all churches that it is the Lord who provides, not the individuals or even the churches.

Conclusion

The church has been driven to ask four different questions after reading Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 5:1-11, 2 Timothy 2:2, and Philippians 4:14-20. What does making disciples include? Making disciples includes evangelism, teaching, modeling, and mobilizing. These four elements of disciple making are evident throughout Scripture. Scripture proclaims that followers of Christ are to be actively making disciples. The church today is required to do so, as well.

The second question posed is related to the story of the disciples fishing and Jesus providing a miraculous amount of fish. The question: “Can the church be most effective alone?” The answer: “No.” The church needs both the partnership of others as well as the authority of Jesus. He is the only one that can provide what is needed, and having partnership allows for different needs to be met more efficiently.

The third question comes from the example that Paul shared with Timothy regarding the necessity of multiplying the truth. How does the church multiply the truth? That question is most easily answered by understanding three aspects found within the letter from Paul to Timothy. Those three elements are to be strengthened by the truth, to retain the truth, and to entrust the truth to others.

Finally, the fourth question the church should ask is “Is the church in partnership for the sake of making disciples?” Individual churches must ask this question of themselves. To answer this question with a *yes*, a church must give, a church must receive, a church must send, and the Lord must supply.

The transcending theme within all of these ideas is that the Lord is in complete control. He is needed for all things. He is necessary. He is vital for all ministry.

However, He desires for His people to work with each other, partnering for the sake of making disciples of all nations.

CHAPTER 3

SHORT-TERM MISSION TRIPS

Introduction

Short-term mission trips are an integral part of any partnership and are vital for the health of the relationship, specifically, in this case, between Park Place Baptist Church and Nuevo Pacto Baptist Church. To understand all aspects of this strategic missional partnership, one must have a clear understanding of the definition of short-term mission trips. The term, “short-term missions,” is defined as follows:

Short-term mission is a phenomenon particularly of the twenty-first century. The ease of travel and the desire to get involved combine to enable large numbers of people to cross cultural boundaries to serve the world church... There are many definitions of what constitutes short-term mission. They can include individuals and teams, those serving from two weeks to two years, and people involved in specific activities for a particular time frame in their local area, another part of the country or overseas.⁴⁴

Michael Wilder and Shane Parker qualify a short-term mission trip as an “opportunity lasting one to two weeks.”⁴⁵ For the purposes of this paper, Wilder and Parker’s definition is used unless otherwise stated. I theorize that short-term mission endeavors need to take place several times throughout the year in order for a partnership to be most effective. The number of short-term trips is discussed and determined by the leadership of both churches and then will be agreed upon in the covenant.

⁴⁴John Corrie, Samuel Escobar, and Wilbert R. Shenk, ed. *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations* (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2007), s.v. “Short-Term Mission” by I. Makuku and V. Calver.

⁴⁵Michael S. Wilder and Shane W. Parker, *Transformission: Making Disciples through Short-Term Missions* (Nashville: B&H, 2010), 36.

Arguments Against Short-Term Mission Trips

Although this chapter will express that short-term mission trips are beneficial to the work of the gospel, and paramount to a strategic missional partnership, other opinions abound. Stan Guthrie discusses this issue:

Short-term work, whether two weeks or two years, can indeed be effective and pleasing to God. Yes, it can cost a lot of money, disrupt nationals and missionaries, encourage short-term thinking, and inoculate some against career missions involvement. But done well, it can open participants' eyes to the sometimes gritty realities of the world, make them aware of their own ethno-centrism and the gifts and courage of non-western believers, and spark a lifelong commitment to missions. In the best cases, some real kingdom work gets done, too.³

In their book, *Transformission*, Michael Wilder and Shane Parker explain three major arguments against short-term mission trips as well as three major arguments for short-term mission trips. The three arguments against are “misspent resources,” “thinking short-term,” and “misplaced priorities.”⁴ Wilder and Parker discuss these issues and present the arguments by quoting those who hold to them. In his book, *When Missions Shapes the Mission*, David Horner describes other hurdles that must be jumped in order for a local church to fulfill healthy missional strategies. Horner's four hurdles include, “Pastors: uninspired, uninvolved, and uninformed,” “missing role models,” “verbal commitments but practical disobedience,” and “divided hearts and loyalties.”⁵ With several arguments from different resources seen above, the three arguments against short-term trips which will be addressed are misspent resources, disruption of nationals and missionaries, and the short-term mindset.

The concept of misspent resources is a legitimate concern due to the reality of the increasing cost of flights, hotels, and other necessary materials. Angie Fann, a

³Stan Guthrie, *Missions in the Third Millennium: 21 Key Trends for the 21st Century* (Exeter: Paternoster, 2000), 89.

⁴Wilder and Parker, *Transformission*, 40.

⁵David Horner, *When Missions Shapes the Mission: You and Your Church Can Reach the World* (Nashville: B&H, 2011), 29.

proponent of short-term missions, readily admits that money is a significant issue when preparing for a short-term work. She writes, “The last time I led a mission trip, we raised, between the twelve of us, more than \$20,000. Did you know that, depending on the country, it takes only somewhere between twenty and thirty thousand to support one missionary for an entire year? And we were only there for a week!”⁶ The reality of short-term work is that it costs a significant amount of money to accomplish. L. Scott states,

The question of ‘value for money’ is raised in mission, especially in relation to ‘short-term missions.’ From North America it is common that from \$20,000 to \$50,000 can be spent on a single trip [S]ome host churches suggest that it would be a better stewardship of resources if the money could be spent to support national workers or local projects instead of on the large transportation costs of a ‘short-term missions’ trip.⁷

Money is often an issue for the individual traveling as well as a strain on the budget of the sending church.

Horner helps explain that while money is often an issue, it is not something that should cause pastors to place blame on others for their lack of leadership. He explains the mindset of many pastors and their understanding of this issue:

Most of the time, pastors talk about the way their churches are holding them back, thwarting their leadership, restricting their vision. But I cannot remember ever hearing of an Evangelical congregation complaining that their pastors are getting too biblical about missions. Now I have heard budgets debated and argued over when the ministry direction was unclear and the priorities of the church undeclared. But when there has been a consistent move to fulfill the Great Commission in the life of the church, and missions has been recognized as a key to congregational health so that God’s name is most glorified, even the usual detractors fall silent in the face of strategic, comprehensive missions strategies in the local church.⁸

Horner provides a healthy reminder that when the truth of the gospel is present among evangelical believers, arguments over budgets and spending become less important.

⁶Angie Fann, *How to Get Ready for Short-Term Missions* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 59.

⁷ John Corrie, Samuel Escobar, and Wilbert R. Shenk, ed. *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations* (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2007), s.v. “Money” by L. Scott.

⁸Horner, *When Missions Shapes the Mission*, 29.

Jo Ann Van Engen writes similar ideas but concludes that while short-term mission trips are “expensive, they are ‘worth every penny’ if they represent the beginning of a long-term commitment to global mission attitudes and living.”⁹ Donald McGavran shares a similar idea, expressing the need for a commitment to global mission when he writes, “If [Christians] would be honest stewards, if they would carry out the Great Commission, they should not merely ‘carry on mission work,’ but should become experts in how both individuals and peoples come to embrace the Christian faith.”¹⁰ The intention of a strategic missional partnership needs to be a long-term commitment to global mission as Van Engen suggests, and therefore, short-term efforts in this case are not only beneficial, but necessary. The authors of *The Changing Face of World Missions* aptly state, “Money is a two-edged sword—it can either empower or hinder missionary efforts.”¹¹ Scott Moreau, Gary Corwin, and Gary McGee argue similarly, writing, “Short-term missions have arisen in part because of the increase of disposable income for North Americans and the relative low cost of airfare to almost anywhere in the world. Further, those who go on such mission trips can bring with them wealth that dwarfs local resources. This has positive and negative implications.”¹²

In an interview with Honduran partner, Pastora Acosta, she stated, “We believe it’s more important to have people. Money helps to accomplish the projects, but we need people to invest in others because our goal is always people.”¹⁴⁶ This gives credible insight into whether or not short-term mission trips are worth the cost. Former

⁹J. A. Van Engen, “The Cost of Short-Term Missions,” *The Other Side* 36 (2000): 21.

¹⁰Donald A. McGavran, *The Bridges of God: A Study in the Strategy of Missions* (New York: Friendship, 1955), 2.

¹¹Michael Pocock, Gailyn Rheenen, and Douglas McConnell, *The Changing Face of World Missions: Engaging Contemporary Issues and Trends* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 279.

¹²Scott Moreau, Gary Corwin, and Gary McGee, *Introducing World Missions: A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Survey* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 279-82.

¹³Pastora Acosta, interview by author, Brandon, MS, October 11, 2012.

International Mission Board missionary, Shelby Neese, described the *need* for people rather than just money, explaining that without people the work cannot get done. He explained, “It is not an ‘either/or’ situation; instead it is a ‘both/and.’”¹⁴⁷ These present-day missionaries believe others in the mission field do still need money, but they need a refreshing, energetic, partnership that will connect with them, aiding in the work that needs to get done.

This money argument leads to another common argument against short-term mission work: disrupting nationals and missionaries. Horner feels that part of the reason for such disruption is due to the lack of good examples seen by healthy churches and pastors.¹⁵ Wilder and Parker write that

It is often disruptive for a group to come in for just a few weeks. Add to this the certainty that for some of those on the field, these group visits occur year-round, or at least seasonally, and one has a potential recipe for disaster. A group of teenagers and adults that have little or no training may do more harm than good without even realizing it.¹⁶

They continue,

Ron Blue, former president of CAM International and chair of the World Missions and Intercultural Studies Department at Dallas Theological Seminary, ...argues that in order to prevent this undermining of long-term field work, and for short-term mission itself to be effective, short-term efforts must be ‘channeled’ and developed by those leading and planning.¹⁷

Based on the aforementioned concepts, training those participating in the mission trips is crucial. Thorough, detailed training several months prior to any sort of short-term work is necessary for all involved participants. The damage that can be done without quality training can be ineffective ministry and detrimental to the work. B. H. Burns states,

¹⁴Shelby Neese, interview by author, Brandon, MS, October 8, 2012.

¹⁵Horner, *When Missions Shapes the Mission*, 29.

¹⁶Wilder and Parker, *Transformission*, 42.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 43.

With the rise of “short-term missionaries,” the issue of training is in debate. How do we ensure that these young recruits do not mistake a few weeks or months in a new culture as the answer to the church’s missionary responsibility? What kind of training do they need? How do we send ‘short-termers’ who will enhance missionary efforts and avoid mistakes that could jeopardize the career missionary’s long years of work? Correct training is essential for good outcomes in short-term as well as long-term ministry.¹⁸

Donald McGavran raises an additional concern regarding the need for training, writing, “Individualistic Westerners cannot without special effort grasp how people become Christian.”¹⁹ McGavran implies that training, therefore, must not be shallow preparation for the simplistic type or style of work taking place, but instead must include theological and evangelistic training, as well. While he is specifically writing regarding long-term efforts, it is a logical conclusion to make training a significant part of preparation for short-term efforts as well.

Obviously opinions differ on this issue. However, it should be noted that in many situations those in partnership have agreed that short-term trips are deemed beneficial by those being served. Specifically, the pastor, leadership, and church members of Nuevo Pacto Baptist Church have confirmed that short-term mission trips are not harmful, but rather are extremely beneficial.²⁰ Because the pastor, leadership, and church members have decided these trips are not disruptive, but instead are beneficial, it is worth continuing with this sort of planning for the future of the partnership.

Another argument against short-term mission trips is that those who go on short-term trips will keep a short-term mindset.²¹ Wilder and Parker describe this thought by saying, “...short-term exposure and involvement...can lead to students and adults limiting their perspective to that short length of service. This is in part because

¹⁸ John Corrie, Samuel Escobar, and Wilbert R. Shenk, ed. *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundations* (Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2007), s.v. “Training Missionaries” by B. H. Burns.

¹⁹ McGavran, *The Bridges of God*, 8.

²⁰ Pastora Acosta, interview by author, Brandon, MS, October 11, 2012.

²¹ Wilder and Parker, *Transformission*, 43.

they do not get the opportunity to see growth take place in the lives of nationals.”²²

Makuku and Calver lend weight to this issue when they describe short-term missions this way:

There are questions as to how short-term mission activities can be understood in the context of a call to mission. This has led to discussions as to whether short-term trips lead to long-term service. Concern has been raised about an “anti-long-term” sentiment in current mission practice, and the impact of the redefinition of the term “missionary” to include all Christians, thereby reducing an understanding of the specific challenges that those serving cross-culturally face. However, recent research appears to reflect a correlation between short-term mission trips and longer-term service. There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that hands-on experience during a short-term mission trip encourages people into full-time missionary service. However, the debate continues, as there is not currently sufficient statistical data to be conclusive.²³

This statement suggests that there are those who see short-term mission trips as simply traveling to a foreign place without a change of heart upon their return. However, it is also possible, as described above, that while some do not change, some do have a significant life-altering experience. According to the previously stated interviews and writings, one can conclude that short-term trips with long-term relationships allow for a healthy balance that is needed in a strategic missional partnership.

Arguments For Short-Term Mission Trips

There are several positive arguments for short-term mission trips, as well. According to David Horner, mission trips are some of the best opportunities for churches today. He writes, “[One] of the best practices for making a way for people to catch the vision for missions is to plan regular missions trips with enough range and variety that people from many backgrounds and capacities can participate.”²⁴ Short-term mission trips have at least three specific positive characteristics. They provide an opportunity for

²²Wilder and Parker, *Transformission*, 44.

²³Makuku and Calver, “Short-Term Mission.”

²⁴Horner, *When Missions Shapes the Mission*, 163.

people to see the realities of the world, they help provide ministry opportunities that could not otherwise be accomplished, and they supply disciple-making opportunities for the partner. Samuel Reeves, case study researcher, explained, “The partnership led participants to increased cultural awareness and a more culturally cosmopolitan outlook on life, the ministry of the church, and the kingdom of God.”²⁵

Seeing the realities of the world is extremely helpful for those who participate. Wilder and Parker write that “[f]irsthand exposure to the realities, people, and impact of a life lived on mission can enable the participant to get his hands dirty in genuine mission environments. In this way, contact through short-term mission is one gateway to seeing our world and our commission more clearly.”²⁶ They continue, “While ‘learning about’ and ‘learning from’ are progressive steps in developing cultural understanding, Elmer argues that the ‘rarest form of learning’ is *learning with*. He describes this as learning that ‘happens in relationship, in mutuality, in partnership where neither side is above or beneath.’”²⁷

Being exposed to these realities and to the new relationships has the potential to be life-altering for the participant. In an interview with Pastora Acosta, she described the benefits of short-term mission trips, stating, “Short-term mission trips to Honduras are so beneficial because they expose you to another culture and language, they give you a better understanding of the global vision to make disciples of all nations, and they help you see that no matter what country you are from, the need for Jesus in our lives is always the same.”²⁸

²⁵Samuel Broomfield Reeves, *Congregation-to-Congregation Relationship: A Case Study of the Partnership between a Liberian Church and a North American Church* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2004), 76.

²⁶Wilder and Parker, *Transformission*, 45.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 47.

²⁸Pastora Acosta, interview by author, Brandon, MS, October 11, 2012.

The truth, however, is that mission trips are not intended to provide change for the participant; mission trips are intended to provide change for those with whom missionaries are going to work. This positive change could be argued as more of a by-product of going on a trip. The intention of the trip is to impact the lives of those being served; however, it is almost inevitable that while on a mission trip the one serving is impacted, as well. Acosta helps explain from the nationals point of view stating, “I know it is beneficial in both ways, as a part of the [short-term] team as well as the host team, because it challenges you to be open to others!”²⁹

Short-term trips often allow for projects to be accomplished which would not otherwise be possible. Many times construction projects, sports camps, backyard Bible clubs, or even mass evangelism would not be possible because of the sheer man-power needed to accomplish the work. Also, the nationals and field-missionaries have other jobs and responsibilities that prevent them from taking days or weeks off to accomplish this sort of effort. When a mission team goes to serve in an area, the given task is the primary job to accomplish. With one focused goal, short-term mission teams can accomplish tasks that national or field-missionaries would find impossible without a team present to serve alongside them. However, there are times when short-term trips do not offer opportunities of necessity for a team. It is essential, at this point, for the effectiveness of a trip, that projects remain focused on tasks that could not happen otherwise. One Honduran partner, Joel Acosta, explains focused projects, stating, “The sanctuary would have eventually been built, but what this team did in four days would have taken our congregation four months.”³⁰

Each short-term mission opportunity should help three groups of people. They should help those taking the trip, those being served while on the trip, and the partners.

²⁹ Pastora Acosta, interview by author, Brandon, MS, October 11, 2012.

³⁰ Joel Acosta, interview by author, Brandon, MS, October 11, 2012.

For example, if Park Place Baptist Church is sending a team to do backyard Bible clubs alongside Nuevo Pacto Baptist Church, the three groups would be: Park Place Baptist Church, the participants in the backyard Bible clubs, and Nuevo Pacto Baptist Church. The opportunity for making disciples within the host team is highly beneficial.³¹

If the partner is a missionary, it is likely that they are far away from home. This means that a mission trip has the potential to highly influence, encourage, and motivate the field-missionary's personal journey. Shelby Neese of the International Mission Board states, "Mission teams provide a natural boost of encouragement in such a lonely, dark place."³² Local church planter Matthew Spandler-Davison explains the help, stating, "Mission teams coming to help with a project for one week provide a ripple effect of multiplying ministry for weeks, sometimes months."³³ Current missionary in China, Grayson Orman, states, "I didn't realize I needed encouragement, nourishment, or re-energizing until a mission team came and gave it to me."³⁴

These missionaries indicate one sort of positive influence that a team can have on a missionary. However, some partners are "nationals." Nationals often need training, discipleship, and equipping that is unavailable to them due to their financial means. Honduran partner, Hermando Acosta, explains his need for additional training, stating, "I have trained over forty pastors in their church planting work, but I am only one man, and I have not been able to continue my own education as preferred in order to continue in this process."³⁵ William Goff explains the need for healthy relationships in partnership and the need to develop those relationships:

³¹ Pastora Acosta, interview by author, Brandon, MS, October 11, 2012.

³² Shelby Neese, interview by author, Brandon, MS, October 8, 2012.

³³ Matthew Spandler-Davison, interview by author, Louisville, July 16, 2012.

³⁴ Grayson Orman, interview by author, Suizhou, China, April 6, 2012.

³⁵ Hermando Acosta, interview by author, Brandon, MS, October 8, 2012.

Life in many world cultures centers in the local concept of relationships, whether those are family, friends, or colleagues. Most communities have a dynamic that must be learned and followed if the missionary is going to gain credibility to be heard... Good relationships must be built and maintained with national Christian partners... Wise missionaries understand the importance of developing good relationships with other Christians through participation in church activities, groups of pastors, attendance at camps and associational meetings, and conventions.³⁶

This idea of broadening the mission trip to include extended partners is a necessary piece when planning. In fact, Nuevo Pacto Baptist Church provides particular discipleship opportunities for several of its church members to serve alongside those coming from the United States, in order that they grow more deeply in their relationship with the Lord. This process gives opportunities for service, evangelism, manual labor, and Bible teaching. The “on the job” training provided for these church members has a similar effect as those taking the mission trip from the United States. This sort of training provides for a more stable partnership in which all parties are growing. To use the analogy of a three-legged stool, each leg of this stool holds up the seat. In the case of a mission trip, each party must equally benefit in order for the trip and the partnership to be stable, and not lopsided.

Pocock, Van Rheenen, and McConnell discuss the impact short-term trips have had over the last several years:

As the twentieth century closed, a dramatic shift had taken place. Missionary service was no longer restricted to a career option. Mission trips often were short-term experiences. In the midst of this shift, traditional agencies and churches on the mission fields of the world scrambled to integrate the new wave of volunteers. Simultaneously, majority world missionary movements emerged as a significant force for the global spread of the gospel.³⁷

This sort of change displays both the availability and the significance that short-term work is doing in the world today. A shift of this nature has opened up many strengths in global missions. However, there is without question a need to evaluate the strengths and

³⁶ William Goff, “Missionary Call and Service,” in *Missiology: An Introduction to the Foundations, History, and Strategies of World Missions*, ed. John Mark Terry, Ebbie C. Smith, and Justice Anderson (Nashville: B&H, 1998), 345.

³⁷ Pocock, Van Rheenen, and McConnell, *The Changing Face of World Missions*, 248.

the weaknesses of any given mission trip or opportunity. This evaluation must include researching the project, the receiver, the team being sent, and the church/organization that is sending. Though a thorough process, it is one that is well worth the effort for the effectiveness of global missions.

Arguing the absolute necessity of short-term mission trips might be difficult. While several mission projects might go undone, according to several missionaries, those unfinished projects do not stop the gospel from being spread. For approximately two thousand years, short-term mission trips did not exist, yet the gospel clearly has spread throughout the world anyway.

However, the argument that short-term mission trips are effective is quite simple. According to the evidence previously listed, short-term mission trips are effective for reasons such as spiritual growth, as well as new spiritual life. Although some could say that short-term mission trips are not necessary, in general they *are* necessary for effective partnership to take place. Short-term mission trips allow for the relationships to be strengthened and to flourish without requiring months and years outside of one's personal element. They allow for healthy accountability and for effective equipping. Therefore, short-term mission trips are an integral part of any strategic missional partnership.

C. M. Brown states, "Intercultural congregation-to-congregation partnerships potentially can result in many beneficial outcomes."³⁸ Therefore, in an effort to evaluate other churches and organizations in their missional partnerships, four churches in the Mississippi and Alabama region were interviewed. These churches were of different sizes, in different settings, and gave a wide range of perspectives on the topic of missions.

Dawson Memorial Baptist Church (Dawson) is located in Homewood, Alabama. It has approximately 3200 people in attendance each Sunday in worship

³⁸ Robert J. Priest, *Effective Engagement in Short-Term Missions: Doing It Right* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2008), 211.

services. During the 2012 calendar year, twelve international mission projects took place and twelve to fifteen mission projects taking place domestically. Ben Hale, Minister of Missions at Dawson, elaborated on these projects in an interview: “Sometimes a mission team is just two or three people and other times it is thirty to forty volunteers.”³⁹ Dawson specifically desires for their money and people to go to the same place. Meaning, if they financially support a missionary or a ministry, they strive to send people to help support them, as well. This allows for a stronger, healthier relationship for the two parties involved. Hale said, “Many of our projects support the strategy that the missionary or ministry already have in place.”⁴⁰ This gives continuity to the teams as they are preparing. One distinction at Dawson is that they strive to understand the strategy of the partnership before they even enter into the partnership, making sure they can fulfill the needs required.

Dawson does have intentions of long-term commitments with missionaries, ministries, and churches, but does not have a covenant agreement with any of their partnerships at this time. Interestingly, even without covenants, long-term partnerships have proven effective through their longevity. Hale explained,

It is our hope that all of our projects lead to long term partnerships. Most of our partnerships are long term. For example: Sudan (nine years), Ecuador (ten years), Honduras (ten years), Haiti (four years), Indonesia (six years), Ukraine (six years), M-Power (fifteen years), Spirit of Luke (six years)...The longer our people go and the longer we serve in a place, the better we know each other and the more effective we can be.”⁴¹

Hale is adamant about the necessity of short-term efforts being partnered with long-term work:

I think there is very little value in short-term projects if they do not at least intend to become long-term partnerships. In fact, they can do harm to the missionary's ministry if people are not careful. There is a place for vision trips, and first time

³⁹ Ben Hale, interview by author, Brandon, MS, November 8, 2012.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ibid.

projects, but all of them should have the potential to lead to long-term projects and partnerships in order to be effective.⁴²

Dawson has proved, through longevity with several partners, that it is making progress with its partnerships. The church has made a conscious effort to be missional in their endeavors, both locally and globally, and is seeking to do so through short-term mission trips with long-term partnerships. This provides an excellent example of the effectiveness of partnerships and the short-term work that coincides within them.

Scott Ross is the Missions Pastor at Crossgates Baptist Church (Crossgates) in Brandon, Mississippi. Crossgates has an average of nineteen hundred in attendance in their Sunday morning worship services. Ross provides assistance to over 125 mission projects a year. Some assistance is more heavily involved than others, but at a minimum, he provides the general oversight of the partnerships and mission efforts taking place locally and globally. Within a year at Crossgates, anywhere from thirty to forty international mission trips and close to one hundred domestic mission opportunities take place.

Crossgates has fourteen strategic missional partnerships. However, those fourteen partnerships may provide several opportunities within the 125 counted. They do not have any covenants with the fourteen partners but do have lengthy relationships with them all. Their commitment to long-term partnerships includes places such as Asia, North Africa, Peru, Philippines, Mexico, Haiti, Canada, Jackson, Mississippi, Central Mississippi Correctional Facility, and Rankin County Benevolence, according to Ross.⁴³ Ross explains more about these partnerships:

Each of these partnerships is open ended. We are committed to serving long-term with each of these partnerships as long as they are on the ‘field’ and as long as they are firmly committed to the Gospel and the Great Commission. While these partnerships are open-ended, we evaluate each of our partnerships on an annual basis to determine strategic fit and partnership needs.⁴⁴

⁴² Ben Hale, interview by author, Brandon, MS, November 8, 2012.

⁴³ Scott Ross, interview by author, Brandon, MS, October 9, 2012.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Ross continues to describe Crossgates' desire for long-term partnerships, saying, "We believe that long-term relationships are most beneficial and productive for missional purposes. While there are times that we will work with a missionary or organization on a single project, our overall partnership structure is based on long-term relationships."⁴⁵ Crossgates clearly provides ample opportunities for church members to serve in mission contexts, and they desire to do so within the structure of short-term mission trips with long-term partners.

First Baptist Church, Jackson, Mississippi (First Baptist) has an average of twenty-five hundred people in its worship services each Sunday morning. Bob Gladney is the Executive Pastor and helps organize mission efforts both locally and around the world. They send approximately twelve short-term mission teams each year throughout the world. Specifically, they have three international strategic missional partnerships. Those partnerships are with organizations in Moldova, Haiti, and England. They also have two local partnerships that they help fund and support - Mission First and City Church. Mission First is a non-profit ministry in the inner-city that provides for the community through meeting needs in the areas of medical work, dental work, childcare, and legal aid. City Church is a recent church plant that First Baptist has helped from its inception.

Uniquely, First Baptist has partners for three-year commitments with a renewal option at the end of three years. There are situations in which they have already committed to a long-term stay, such as that in Haiti. Gladney states, "It is most beneficial to create long-term relationships for missional purposes."⁴⁶ Their partnership with Haiti is particularly unique because the former Pastor of First Baptist began a non-profit organization to help build an entire community in Haiti following the earthquake of 2010. This partnership will last until the project is complete, and potentially longer. They have

⁴⁵ Scott Ross, interview by author, Brandon, MS, October 9, 2012.

⁴⁶ Bob Gladney, interview by author, Brandon, MS, November 5, 2012.

already sent long-term medical missionaries on the field and regularly send teams to serve alongside the field-missionaries.

First Baptist strives to provide local and global opportunities for their church members to take the gospel to the lost. First Baptist also provides opportunities for the mission partners to come and share their experiences with the partner church once a year at a missions rally. This missions rally allows for the church to be more aware of current situations and provides opportunities for relationships to be more solidified, as well.⁴⁷

The Church at Brook Hills (Brook Hills) is in a suburb of Birmingham, Alabama, and has an average attendance of over three thousand in its weekly worship gatherings. They have established a large missions staff, including the Pastor of Global Disciple-Making as well as a Local Disciple-Making Pastor. These positions, along with several others, help lead the staff that coordinate, direct, and organize short-term mission trips and opportunities. On the Brook Hills website, they explain more of their philosophy behind short-term mission trips:

Our goal as a faith family is to pour ourselves out for the sake of the lost, the poor and the global church. At Brook Hills our approach is two-fold: *strengthen* the church in “reached” contexts (where there is at least some presence of the church) and *establish* the church in “unreached” contexts (where there is not an existing church). Short-term trips are the primary means to achieve the goal of *strengthening* the church in a “reached” context.⁴⁸

In 2013, Brook Hills is offering twenty-three opportunities for international short-term mission trips. Brook Hills does have explicit requirements regarding participation in a mission trip, including participation in training events prior to leaving.⁴⁹

On the Brook Hills website, several partnership descriptions are found. They state the following:

⁴⁷ Bob Gladney, interview by author, Brandon, MS, November 5, 2012.

⁴⁸ “Why Are We Doing Short-Term Trips?” accessed November 9, 2012, http://www.brookhills.org/global/pray_go_give/go/short_term.html.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

The Church at Brook Hills is honored to partner with other like-minded organizations, making disciples of all nations. Listed below are our partners, many of whom offer short-term trips nationally and internationally. Many of these organizations are led by members of The Church at Brook Hills, are locally based here in Birmingham and all are endorsed by our Global Disciple-Making Team. They are knowledgeable, experienced, and provide great opportunities to join a short-term mission team and provide resources for the advancement of the gospel around the world.⁵⁰

In an interview with David Platt, Pastor of Brook Hills, he made it very clear that short-term work was crucial to their plan for making disciples of all nations. He described the availability of international travel and the financial capability of several members at Brook Hills, noting the waste if both availability and finances existed and there was not a greater emphasis placed on serving through missions. He also argued that this was not the only way to make disciples, but it is the strategy that Brook Hills has decided to implement.⁵¹

These four churches provide evidence for the effectiveness of short-term mission work both locally and globally. Local partners, as well as international ones, are both welcomed and encouraged by each of these churches. They work with long-term planning using short-term means to get there. These churches lend credibility to the argument *for* short-term mission trips.

Conclusion

Through the research provided and the churches listed above, it is this author's conclusion that short-term mission work with long-term partners is effective. Additionally, within a long-term partnership, short-term mission trips are necessary for the developing and strengthening of relationships. Short-term mission trips must always be evaluated prior to commitment. They are expensive, they can lead to short-sighted behavior, and they can be more of a hindrance than a help to the partner. However,

⁵⁰ "Why Are We Doing Short-Term Trips?" accessed November 9, 2012, http://www.brookhills.org/global/pray_go_give/go/short_term.html.

⁵¹ David Platt, interview by author, Brandon, MS, April 16, 2012.

according to research, others on the field and local churches today, the cost is worth it because short-term trips can also lead to long-term mission work, and they can provide work that would not be possible without short-term teams.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

The launching of a strategic missional partnership is a thorough, lengthy process requiring extensive effort from all parties involved. Because this partnership was between a church in Pearl, Mississippi, and a church in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, many logistical details had to be configured due to limitations of communications and travel. Before the project was underway completely, an understanding between the leadership of the two churches was necessary in order to proceed with this effort. Long before the project began, I made arrangements to travel to Honduras and provide the leadership training that was needed for Nuevo Pacto Baptist Church (NPBC). Therefore, while the launching of this project did not begin until December 31, 2012, the preparation for the launch began months before.

In 2007, I took a short-term mission team to Honduras to work with a church providing preaching, music, and Vacation Bible School for children. I was serving at a church in Birmingham, Alabama, at the time and the church in Honduras was called Luz y Verdad Iglesia Bautista. That trip proved to be instrumental in my understanding of making disciples of all nations and began what would become a life-long friendship with the Acosta family. Hermando Acosta, Pastor of Luz y Verdad, and his family stayed in close contact with me through the next few years.

In 2010, after moving to Mississippi, I led another team to Honduras. This time it was to partner with Nuevo Pacto Baptist Church which was planted by the same Acosta family. After taking and sending two different short-term mission teams to serve

with them, we decided to bring some of the Acosta family to Mississippi for a short-term visit. We have sent four additional teams back to Honduras since then. In light of our flourishing relationship, I decided to pursue this project.

Project Details

The week of December 31, 2012, I began the process of selecting and recruiting a mission team from Park Place Baptist Church (PPBC). This mission team would study the significance of strategic mission partnerships and then help provide substantial planning, wisdom, and insight toward this project. This team was comprised of some members of the PPBC missions committee as well as others from the church who have served in a missional capacity. During my request, I made potential team members aware of the number of meetings necessary, as well as a possible schedule for those meetings in order for them to adequately decide whether or not to participate. The team was made up of the following individuals: Korbi McQueary, Allen Stephens, Danny Epps, Josh Howard, Chad Reynolds, Sherri Albert, Rhonda Culpepper, and Gary Culpepper. I also requested that Sarah Nicholas, Judy Lowe, Charles Mooney, and Louis Alexander participate in this team, but they were unable to commit to the time requirement.

Upon each individual's acceptance of responsibility, I provided them with a copy of the project proposal to read and study in order to discuss at our first meeting. This provided each member a clearer picture of the direction that our meetings would have and gave them a small glimpse of what was necessary for this project to be completed.

The week of January 6, 2013, I traveled to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, to provide NPBC with leadership training. This training focused mainly on the area of making disciples. The topics covered included praying, studying, giving, going, and mobilizing.

I preached five expository sermons while there in addition to offering planning meetings for their worship leadership, pastor, deacons, and ministry leaders.

While speaking specifically on prayer, I focused on Colossians 4:2-4, which reminds us how to pray and what to pray for. Paul explains that believers ought to be constant in prayer, watchful in prayer, and thankful in prayer. He then explains that believers ought to pray for open doors, declaration of the Word, and a clear explanation.

As for studying, I lead the leadership of NPBC through Nehemiah 8 and 9 in which Ezra reads Scripture leads people to respond in a manner that pleases the Lord. I shared that believers should always be prepared in our response to God's Word in order to both please the Lord and effectively make disciples.

The sermon on giving focused on Matthew 6. Due to the nature of the financial state of the Honduran country, I exercised sensitivity in preaching this text by sharing very specifically what Scripture teaches instead of my own opinions on giving; the sermon was easier than I anticipated.

Acts 13:1-5 provided the basis for the sermon on going; to the Holy Spirit's power in the life of a believer was emphasized. The essential message of the sermon was that when opportunities to take the gospel to the lost arise, we should assume that God wants us to take advantage of each opportunity until He says to stop.

In the final message, mobilization, there were two focal passages. Second Timothy 2:2 functioned as a launching pad to address the issue of making disciples through multiplication, while Luke 9 and 10 functioned as a more in-depth study of leading others to follow Christ in this way.

I met with the worship leadership team specifically in order to teach them the responsibility of leading worship. In my discussion, I answered questions regarding band rehearsal, song choices, leading style, and the theology of worship. These areas were particularly important due to the young age of the worship leadership team. Three of the

six leaders are teenagers and have little experience in this area; however, they have great zeal for the Lord.

I met with the pastor to discuss his broader vision for NPBC and how PPBC can be a part of that vision. He shared with me his desire to continue to plant other churches by raising up leaders and sending them out. He also shared that he would like to plant another church himself and raise up a leader to take his place at NPBC. We discussed specific construction needs such as children's Sunday school classrooms, parking, and another small building. We also discussed the spiritual needs of the people. He described the need for the people in his community to have a stronger desire to evangelize with their neighbors.

I spent a significant amount of time with Joel Acosta, one of Pastor Hermando's sons and was able to encourage him in many ways. He is currently praying about being a church planter. This time with him provided me the opportunity to share scripture, pray, and encourage him to seek the Lord during this time.

Another young man I counseled was named Henry. Henry is confident of a call to ministry. He is seeking the Lord's instructions regarding his partnership and connection with NPBC. He is eager to serve but is waiting for the right time. I shared with him and prayed with him during our time together.

One afternoon, I was able to minister to some in the community who were suffering due to illness or loss of a loved one. These opportunities provided me with excellent insight into the ministry of the pastor and some of the deacons who went with me on these visits. Three specific visits gave me unique insights regarding the leadership. Whether it was their perseverance, their kindness, or their prayers, I was very pleased to have observed them in this way.

During the rest of my time in Honduras I was able to continue to assess the needs of NPBC as well as the areas in which NPBC could benefit PPBC. I continued meetings with Hermando Acosta and the rest of the family to more firmly establish trust

and relationship, as well as obtaining feedback toward previous short-term trips and their health.

The week of January 13, 2013, I evaluated my time in Honduras. I interviewed the leadership team at NPBC to get more feedback about the training sessions. The interview feedback given was quite encouraging because everyone on the leadership team thankful, pleased, and grateful for my time.

I asked the leaders to evaluate my training sessions in four different ways using a scale from one to ten where one represented very bad and ten represented very good. I was hoping for constructive criticism, but, all four areas on my survey received tens from all of the leaders. The areas to evaluate were “the quality of the teaching,” “the quality of the material,” “the quantity of the material,” “the time allowed for each session.”

The next area of questions required a yes or no answer. All of the leaders answered yes to all three of the questions. The three questions were “Would you recommend this training to other leaders?” “Would you like to do something like this again?” and “Did you enjoy your time of training?”

In the final section of the interview, I asked them each to respond to questions using their own words. The first question was, “What was the most helpful thing you learned due to this training?” Their different responses included, “Be constant in prayer,” “Learn more about God’s Word in order to teach others,” and, “To see the way Chad shares the classes/every class was based on the Bible/great Bible examples.” The second question was, “What were the strengths of this training opportunity?” Two of the answers included, “To build strong and closer relationships with others through the study of God’s Word,” and, “To encourage the leadership of the church.” The third question was, “What were the weaknesses of this training opportunity?” Two of the answers were the same, stating, “Lack of materials for the ones receiving the training.” In this case, they were referring to materials such as handouts or printed material. The language barrier presents a problem for printed material, but, it is something to consider for future

visits. One of the other suggestions was to include leaders from other churches in the future in order to most effectively equip as many as possible. The other feedback included comments of gratitude and kindness toward the time spent and the effort given.

I also personally evaluated my time there through a process of re-studying the material I provided and making adjustments for future opportunities. In my own evaluation, I felt as though I could have used some of my time more effectively during the day with them. I was able to do some things during the day, but main ministry time was in the evenings.

The week of January 20, 2013, I met with the PPBC mission team to evaluate the proposal. This was the first time that we discussed the project as a group. I began the meeting with prayer and then discussed the history behind this project and how this team would function to help complete the launch.

As we discussed the project proposal, the team's questions were focused on the timeline, their involvement, and the involvement of PPBC throughout the launch itself. A majority of the meeting was spent discussing the fifteen-week calendar portion of the proposal to help them have the clearest picture possible.

The calendar included each of the sessions that they would be meeting with me, as well as times in which I would be addressing the church and/or the staff. These specific events helped the team know what to prepare for and what to share with others within the church regarding the project. The team seemed to receive all the information with clarity and were excited about the work to come.

Regarding their involvement, we discussed that the team would need to do outside of our meetings in order to prepare for interaction during the discussions. For example, they would need to have completed the assigned readings as well as given me insight into other ideas, such as the covenant.

It was also during this meeting that I had the team fill out a basic questionnaire that gave me an understanding of their knowledge on this topic, in order that I could

prepare my training sessions most effectively. This was a brief portion of our time together, but it was beneficial for future meetings.

The week of January 27, 2013, I met with the PPBC mission team to present results from NPBC leadership training. Four of the eight members of the mission team have served short-term with the Acostas and all of the team has had the opportunity to meet them. Thus, they were able to ask some questions that were particular to the Acostas and NPBC as it related to my time with them. They asked questions about the male-to-female ratio in leadership, the accommodations, the daily activities, and even discussed the quality of the food provided. All of these questions were intended to help provide a more thorough evaluation of both the trip and the project proposal for the future.

Sherri Albert specifically asked about the male-to-female ratio during the leadership training because she had just returned from a trip to NPBC in which she had worked closely with some of the women there. She invested significant time in the lives of several women who had attended the training I provided.

They were curious about my accommodations because those who have gone before knew only of the group lodging that would not have been as conducive for an individual. I let them know I had stayed in the Acosta's home, which was in the city, and that I had my own room while I was there. They provided all of my meals; the arrangements were quite generous.

They questioned my daily activities knowing that I did most all of my leadership training during the evening. When others from the team had gone to Honduras, they did all of their ministry work during the day and had down time during the evenings. Because of their use of time, they were interested to hear what I did during the daytime hours, specifically. I was able to explain my time and the focus of it and help the team understand the multiple facets of my trip.

Those who had gone before were particularly anxious to hear about the food I was given. The short-term teams in the past have appreciated the food; therefore, they were interested to know whether or not I was given the same food or something different knowing I was there without a team. I assured them that the food I was provided was well-prepared and always satisfying in both portion and flavor.

The week of February 3, 2013, I met with the PPBC mission team for the first of three training sessions. The training sessions were different than the other meetings in both form and function. I began the first training session by opening in prayer. I then handed out a rough draft of the second chapter of this project. I took time to explain each portion of the theological and biblical reasoning behind this project.

I explained that there were four passages that I studied in detail in order to have a greater understanding of strategic missional partnerships. As has been expressed in a previous chapter, these four passages provoked four different questions that would need to be answered in order to have the most fulfilling understanding of this project. The four passages I studied were Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 5:1-11, 2 Timothy 2:2, and Philippians 4:14-20.

This first training session, being different than the others, was more like a Bible study in function because of the intense study of God's Word. After a brief explanation of the chapter and its purpose, I led the team to read through Matthew 28:18-20, most commonly referred to as the Great Commission, and asked them to consider the question, "What does disciple making include?" While I was careful not to read word-for-word out of my writing, I did use the same explanation to provide guidance for our study. I explained that disciple making, based on my study of the book of Matthew, includes evangelism, teaching, modeling, mobilizing, and the presence of Jesus.

I then led the team through Luke 5:1-11 to help them answer the question, "Can we be most effective alone?" The team clearly was aware that the answer to the

question was “No.” However, they may not have been able to give the explanation *and* distinctions made prior to this training session.

Two particular elements I emphasized in teaching were that individual believers always function best in conjunction with others, and that all believers not only need the help of others, but absolutely need the power of the Lord. The discussion which followed was healthy conversation of team members sharing their personal experiences of trying to accomplish mission efforts without the help of the Lord.

Following discussions on chapter 2, I led them to read 2 Timothy 2:2. I had previously preached a sermon at PPBC on this very passage so I was somewhat hesitant to spend too much time on this portion of our time together. However, I was able to share some additional insights that seemed to produce thoughts and discussion that had not been previously considered. The question needing an answer from this text was “How do we multiply the truth?” Four topics were discussed regarding this question. First, just as was discussed in the previous two passages, I pointed out that there is nothing productive without the grace of God. The other three areas of discussion and study were being strengthened by the truth, hearing the truth, and entrusting the truth to others.

This provided a catalyst for a discussion on the final element of entrusting the truth to others. The team discussed how easy it can be to go do “good work” on a mission trip without sharing the truth that gives the reason for the work. Seven of the eight team members are leading mission efforts in conjunction with PPBC, and this training provided a reminder for each of them to express this need to their short-term teams as they prepare for their work.

I continued by leading them through a brief study of Philippians 4:14-20, which led to the question, “Are we partnering together for the sake of making disciples?” In response to this question, I explained that in order for the answer to be “Yes,” a church

needs to fulfill four functions. The four functions are as follows: the church must give, the church must receive, the church must send, and the Lord must supply.

This question and portion of the training session one was the most personal. The other three questions led to answers where general explanations sufficed; however, this question was more introspective by nature. After a thorough explanation of the text, the PPBC focused its ability to follow through in this area.

I concluded this training session by asking Josh Howard to pray. I was encouraged as he prayed specifically that PPBC would fulfill the necessities of these passages of Scripture and that God would be honored by efforts to do so.

The week of February 10, 2013, I explained the necessity of strategic missional partnerships to the PPBC staff. This meeting took place as an addition to our regularly scheduled weekly staff meetings. It is common that I teach the staff in Bible study each week. However, in this case, I began by explaining that this teaching component would be different than our average teaching time.

I began by explaining the doctoral work that I had already completed as well as the current assignment in my ministry project. I expressed my gratitude for PPBC allowing me to pursue this degree and encouraged the staff in the same manner. I continued by describing the title, the purpose of its length, detail, and precision. In approximately thirty minutes, I shared with them the practical, theological, and biblical purposes of this project. I expressed my desire to see this be a more common function for the PPBC mission efforts and explained that this partnership would function as a prototype for other covenantal partnerships in the future.

The staff present during this meeting included Keith Grubbs, Jeff Jones, Jeremy Nicholas, Danny Epps, Korbi McQueary, Heather Reynolds, Sarah Scoggin, Gary Culpepper, and Chryste Roberts. Three of these staff members are also participants in the PPBC missions team. However, the overlap in participation proved beneficial as Danny,

Korbi, and Gary were able to provide other insight to the discussion as well as productive feedback afterward.

The week of February 17, 2013, I led the PPBC mission team through training session two. This training session was focused specifically on the significance of short-term mission trips. I called on Danny Epps to begin our time with prayer and then proceeded with the training.

In this training session, I explained to the team how essential short-term mission trips are in order for this partnership to be most effective. However, it was necessary for me to also provide adequate education as to why short-term mission trips are beneficial at all. Each of the individuals on my team have served on a short-term mission team before and were aware of the personal benefit in participating in such work, thus, my convincing them of short-term mission trips was not difficult. The challenge came in explaining why some individuals are opposed to the idea of short-term mission trips.

I explained to them some of the arguments against short-term work and how that could affect PPBC is work in Honduras. The three arguments against short-term trips which I addressed were misspent resources, disruption of nationals and missionaries, and the short-term mindset.

The area of misspent resources was one that seemed to make most sense to the missions team. Because of the team's vast experience in travel and providing finances for such travel, they could see the argument being made for a better way to spend money. Moreover, as we discussed this issue, each person was able to share an experience about the trip always being worth the money. I was able to share personal experiences in which missionaries and natives were overwhelmed by the presence of brothers and sisters in Christ instead of a simple financial contribution to their church or organization. I had to cut this discussion short, realizing that there were still other topics to cover during our time.

Disrupting nationals and missionaries was an issue that had not been considered by the team. As we discussed this issue, the team came to the conclusion that they did not see short-term trips being a disruption because in the trips the team members had taken, the missionaries and nationals had been such gracious hosts that they never realized that it could have been quite difficult for the nationals to accommodate the team.

This conversation developed into a conversation of ways that short-term teams from PPBC could be more helpful for the missionaries and nationals in order to strengthen the relationship. Some of the ways mentioned were providing gifts, eating meals together, serving the missionaries instead of being served, and not complaining. I also expressed a desire to enhance the training of short-term teams from PPBC in order to prepare them most effectively to not be a disruption.

As I described the third argument against short-term mission trips being those who keep a short-term mindset, I noticed puzzled looks on a few faces. Sherri Albert spoke up and celebrated how God had used short-term mission trips to keep her from being a short-term mindset, instead of the opposite argument.

I continued teaching by explaining the arguments for short-term mission trips. Just as discussed in chapter three, I shared three possible positive outcomes of short-term work. Short-term mission trips provide an opportunity for people to see the realities of the world, they help provide ministry opportunities that could not otherwise be accomplished, and they supply disciple-making opportunities for the partner.

The first reason is actually somewhat selfish. Short-term mission trips are beneficial for the participant. However, if the participant is made aware of the realities of the world, and thus challenged to engage and meet the needs of such challenges, then a short-term trip will have a long-term global impact instead of simply changing one person's viewpoint. These realities are visible through the urgent physical and spiritual needs throughout the world. The realities are not limited to third world countries, but are seen and experienced in nearby neighborhoods as well.

The argument that ministry opportunities could not be accomplished otherwise speaks directly to the purpose of the partnership between PPBC and NPBC. I told the missions team that this argument was one of the most significant reasons for us to consider this partnership. Several tasks that have been accomplished in Honduras due to our teams serving there would not have been completed as quickly without our help. There have been over ten houses fixed, an entire sanctuary built, a children's ministry wing completed, and hundreds of families fed due to the teams from PPBC serving with NPBC. The PPBC missions team unanimously agreed that this is an extremely significant reason to pursue this partnership.

The third argument for short-term work is the disciple making opportunities provided for the nationals and missionaries. Simply beginning this portion of the training session revealed a myriad of examples shared by the team describing personal experiences on their trips. Josh Howard shared specifically about four teenagers in Honduras, members of NPBC, and how they have grown significantly over the past three years. They have gone from speaking only when spoken to, to leading in the worship ministry and sharing the gospel with neighbors and friends regularly.

This training session was an encouraging time as we were reminded of why we have participated in the different trips over many years. I reminded the team of the date of our third training session and closed in prayer.

The week of February 24, 2013, I presented the project proposal to PPBC during the Sunday evening worship service. Prior to beginning this project, I met with Keith Grubbs, pastor, to discuss possible dates for this presentation. He allowed me this specific opportunity to share with the congregation and explain the purpose of the project and how it would affect PPBC members both then and in the future.

I took time to explain how this project was connected to my seminary studies and shared in detail elements of the project itself. I told the congregation the title of the project and what each word meant, as well as sharing some details about the implications

of the work being accomplished. I spent the majority of my time presenting the biblical reasons undergirding the project and shared my convictions about short-term mission work.

The congregation had heard me speak several times regarding mission work, specifically short-term mission projects, but they had not heard me explain the significance of strategic missional partnerships, nor had they heard of covenantal partnerships. This presentation provided the opportunity for me to share in much greater detail the significance of such a project.

The week of March 3, 2013, I led the PPBC mission team in the third training session. This final training session covered one topic, covenant writing, that would guide our next meeting, as well. I began our time with prayer. I again expressed my appreciation for the team, their dedication, and perseverance during these few weeks.

I explained to them that while we seemed to all agree that a strategic missional partnership was of great benefit, we did need to write a covenant to provide an agreement between PPBC and NPBC. I told the team that throughout my research, both interviews and in books, I was unable to find any covenant agreements between churches regarding strategic missional partnerships. I expressed my opinion that an agreement in writing would be the best form of communication.

I told the team that I had already been in discussion with NPBC in order to form a covenant. NPBC leaders had decided to allow PPBC to write the covenant, however, NPBC would make suggested changes to any area in which they felt unfit for the partnership. I took time to provide different categories I thought were best to be covered in the covenant. After such instruction, I asked for thoughts and comments regarding what specific topics the team would like to have in the covenant. Chad Reynolds, a lawyer, provided insight regarding specific wording with several portions of the covenant. Sherri Albert and Korbi McQueary were particularly interested in ways in which NPBC would be able to serve globally, as well. These insights and questions

provided me with groundwork for the covenant which would be written and discussed in the next meeting.

The week of March 10, 2013, I wrote the covenant between PPBC and NPBC (see Appendix 5) and presented it to the PPBC mission team for adjustments and approval. The covenant included a description of who was partnering together, how long the partnership was to last, how it would be evaluated and adjusted, how it would be translated, and how it would be communicated.

Upon agreement, PPBC commits to the following elements: to provide an annual financial contribution of \$5,000, to provide at least two short-term mission teams per year for the purpose of evangelism, to provide at least three short-term mission teams over five years to provide training, and to provide yearly updates regarding projects and ministries collaborated with NPBC. NPBC commits to the following elements: to organize adequate transportation, translators, and/or equipment for the short-term mission trips taken by PPBC, to send three short-term teams over the five years to provide training and evangelism at PPBC, to plant one church in the five years, to provide yearly updates regarding projects and ministries collaborated with PPBC. Both churches commit to combining their efforts to reach the nations through a joint short-term mission trip in which members of both churches will serve together in another country.

The aforementioned covenant was unanimously accepted by the members of the PPBC mission team for submission to the NPBC leadership. I closed in prayer and expressed my gratitude and excitement for the team and their hard work.

The week of March 17, 2013, I submitted the covenant to the NPBC leadership for evaluation and adjustment in any areas they felt necessary. I submitted the covenant early in the week and had ongoing conversations with Pastora and Hermando regarding the different elements. Hermando, as pastor, presented the covenant to his leadership for their approval. NPBC leadership, along with the entire Acosta family, unanimously agreed to join in this covenant. While I was expecting different areas of possible change,

they had no suggested changes. One of the most exciting areas of their agreement was that of planting a church. The NPBC leadership had been praying toward planting a church for several months and considered this covenant as a confirmation that they were moving in the right direction and found that this would keep them accountable to follow through with the direction they felt the Lord was providing.

The week of March 24, 2013, I presented the training results and covenant to the PPBC staff. Just as I had previously met with the staff to describe the project, I explained to them that I had completed the three training sessions and the covenant writing, and that NPBC had agreed to all of the elements of the covenant. As mentioned earlier, Korbi McQueary, Danny Epps, and Gary Culpepper were a part of both groups. Therefore, they knew of the NPBC results prior to the meeting with the rest of the PPBC mission team.

I shared with the staff that the training sessions proved to be mutually beneficial as a result of the healthy discussions shared throughout the sessions. I explained that I hoped the team had grown in their knowledge of strategic missional partnerships and that I was going to ask some probing questions in our final meeting to see what information they had retained during the training sessions.

The week of March 31, 2013, I had a final meeting with the PPBC mission team to evaluate the covenant and the training. After I opened the meeting in prayer, I asked for the team to share some general thoughts regarding the training. They answered in somewhat vague ways, speaking positively but without many specifics. Therefore, I asked some specific questions that helped me gauge their level of learning and the quality of my explanations. I asked them the same questions that were in the training sessions: what does making disciples include, can we be most effective alone, how do we multiply the truth, and are we as a church partnering with others for the gospel?

Their answers allowed me to see that the team had grown in their understanding of these areas over the course of our sessions. I was encouraged as they

described the components of making disciples and clearly explaining how we multiply the truth.

We also discussed the final agreement of the covenant and the team celebrated all that would be taking place as a result of this covenant. Gary Culpepper was specifically interested in knowing if this was something that might take place with other churches and organizations we have participated with short-term in the past. I was excited to suggest this become a more common way for PPBC to work.

The week of April 7, 2013, I spent time on personal evaluation of the covenant and the training. I looked back over all my notes from the meetings and over the minutes from those training and planning sessions. I was reminded of all the work the team did to make this a successful transition and was thankful for all that was able to take place. I sent a final copy of the covenant to NPBC and asked them to continue to pray that we would begin this partnership in January 2014.

Conclusion

The entire project was completed within these fifteen weeks. All of the travel, training, planning, and was accomplished during this time. The PPBC mission team and the NPBC leadership gave much of their time and many of their prayers toward the effectiveness of this project. This project is a testimony of the effort of many men and women striving to further develop this relationship.

CHAPTER 5

REVIEW

Introduction

This comprehensive fifteen-week project provided a unique journey for PPBC and NPBC to experience. This opportunity allowed a group of individuals an in-depth study of the significance of short-term mission trips, the theological reasoning of partnerships, and the necessity for the gospel to be spread throughout all nations. This project involved several different people in Mississippi and in Honduras. Some of the people involved included Sherri Albert, Josh Howard, Allen Stephens, Korbi McQueary, Gary Culpepper, Rhonda Culpepper, Chad Reynolds, Danny Epps, Hermando Acosta, Joel Acosta, Henry Sierra, Naomi Acosta, Pastora Acosta, and Angela Acosta. These individuals provided helpful feedback, instruction, and at times constructive criticism regarding each element of the work.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

As mentioned in chapter 1, the purpose of this project was to lead Park Place Baptist Church in Pearl, Mississippi, to launch a strategic missional partnership with Nuevo Pacto Baptist Church, in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. Originally, the title did not include the word “launch.” However, after advice from Jeff Walters, I added the verb launch to communicate the purpose of the project. In order to understand whether or not the purpose was accomplished, the word “launch” must be defined. Chapter 1 reflects definitions for strategic, missions, and partnership; however, a concise definition

of *launch* is helpful. Launch, in this case, indicates the partnership has been initiated, with full explanation for both parties, in such a way that upon approval and suggested dates, the project can begin.

The most significant element in regards to launching the strategic missional partnership was that of an agreed upon covenant between the two churches. The covenant was accepted by leaders from both churches and has moved toward the implementation stages already. The covenant will be signed publicly by both church leaders in Honduras at a New Years Eve celebration at NPBC.

According to the definition of this project, the purpose of this project has been accomplished. After fifteen weeks of diligent effort by many individuals, the purpose has been completed and the launch of a strategic missional partnership between PPBC and NPBC has begun.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

In order to accurately understand whether or not the goals of this project have been accomplished, each goal will be addressed individually. The first goal of providing training for NPBC was accomplished in two different ways.

During my trip to Honduras, I provided extensive leadership and discipleship training for several members and leaders of NPBC. I was able to devote significant time to this part of the project and was able to address several issues for which they had requested assistance. NPBC leaders had asked for insight regarding making disciples and leading worship. As mentioned in chapter 4, NPBC was appreciative of my time and expressed through interviews that the training was helpful and challenging.

Additionally, I was able to provide a guarantee of further training by including three training opportunities for NPBC within the five-year covenant. This one portion of the covenant will allow for NPBC to be strengthened and for the ministry of PPBC to be multiplied. PPBC will not be a crutch for NPBC continuously because PPBC will be

providing training for the members of NPBC in order that they can learn to carry out responsibilities without the constant presence of PPBC. Due to my trip to Honduras and the specific portion within the covenant regarding training, the first goal was accomplished.

The second goal of the project was to train the PPBC mission team to comprehend the need for strategic missional partnerships. In order to accomplish this goal, I specifically recruited a mission team and provided several weeks of training. In addition, I had each individual of the team study the first three chapters of this project, and the scripture texts mentioned throughout, in order that they develop a deeper knowledge of the purpose for this project and a deeper appreciation for God's Word.

To understand whether or not this was accomplished, I asked some general questions of the team before and after the training. Chapter 4 gave helpful explanations of the questions I asked and the effectiveness of the training. Based on the answers given by the mission team, evidence proved that the training was productive and helpful for the individuals of the team. Therefore, the second goal of this project was accomplished.

The third goal of this project was to lead the PPBC mission team and NPBC leaders to write a covenant agreement. This goal was worked on throughout several weeks of the project. While I was in Honduras, I spent time talking with the leadership of NPBC about what they would like to see be a part of the covenant. Upon my return, I spent time hearing from the PPBC mission team as to what they thought should be included in the covenant. Based on input from both groups, I drafted a covenant that was first read by the PPBC mission team. They made a few minor adjustments and provided helpful insight regarding the particular wording of each element. I emailed the second draft to the leadership of NPBC, and upon translation, they responded with no changes and agreed to the covenant as written. Following their approval, I returned to the PPBC mission team to make them aware of the agreement and to celebrate the good work they

had put into this effort. The third goal was accomplished and is leading to an exciting partnership between two churches.

The fourth goal was a personal goal. It was my desire to have a biblical understanding of partnerships between churches. To accomplish this goal I devoted a significant portion of my research and preparation for chapter two to this very topic. I studied different partnerships throughout Scripture. I looked at Paul and his relationships with churches and how they provided for him as he similarly provided for them. I studied the partnerships that the disciples had with one another which helped them to accomplish more in their ministries. All of these studies gave me a deeper understanding of why partnerships are not only beneficial today, but are, more importantly, exemplified throughout Scripture. While partnerships of this sort are not biblically mandated, it is evident that they are displayed throughout Scripture as healthy relationships solely focused the advancement of the gospel. Due to my intense study of these texts, I feel as though I have grown to have a better understanding of partnerships and can confidently state that this goal was also accomplished.

All four goals were accomplished. These goals helped provide focus for the project and have since given me a greater awareness of the effectiveness of the project. Having these goals guided me on the right track throughout the course of this project.

Strengths of the Project

Every project of this nature must have at least one aspect that stands out as a positive. This project is no different. There were three noticeable strengths of the project. The strengths were the training opportunity at NPBC, the PPBC mission team training, and the biblical study of partnerships.

The training opportunity at NPBC has been attempted numerous times over the past several years. This project forced the training to take place and showcased the need for a higher degree of training. Not only was this one of my personal favorite portions of

the project, the feedback provided gave me evidence that the people of NPBC were pleased with this portion as well. In fact, the training deepened their understanding of what could be provided for them in the future based on the covenant agreement. Another strength of the training opportunity was its uniqueness. The opportunity to travel and provide such training was unusual and yet proved to be very effective.

The PPBC mission team training was extremely beneficial for me as I had to be able to articulate the purpose, goals, and tasks of this project on a consistent basis. It forced me to keep the project moving forward because I met with the team on a regular basis throughout the fifteen weeks. Not only was it beneficial for me as the teacher, but thankfully it proved to help the team as well. The team provided positive evaluation of their learning through an interview process. Additionally, the team filled out questionnaires (see Appendix 4) before and after the training to establish whether or not they learned the material. Each individual displayed a clearer understanding of partnerships and making disciples after the training. The training will also guide this team in future decisions, as well. In fact, there has already been discussion of creating a covenant agreement between PPBC and a mission organization in Kentucky due to this study.

The biblical study of partnerships proved to be a strength because of what it provided for me, the leaders of NPBC, and the PPBC mission team. Without this study, the partnership would have been an arbitrary effort to provide some continuity between two organizations. However, because of the evidence displayed in Scripture, all three parties were able to come to a more thorough understanding that eventually provided a detailed covenant and the launch of a partnership.

Weaknesses of the Project

This project was far from perfect and has areas that can be described as weaknesses. As with the noticeable strengths, three noticeable weaknesses occurred.

The weaknesses were the lack of communication between the leadership of NPBC and the PPBC mission team, the lack of educational resources specifically regarding covenant based missional partnerships, and the inability to complete the signing of the covenant.

The lack of communication between the leadership of NPBC and the PPBC mission team was a weakness that could not be avoided. Because of the distance to Honduras and prohibitive travel costs, it was not possible for the PPBC mission team and the leaders of NPBC to join together at any point to jointly discuss the covenant. In addition, the language barrier was the reason a conference call would not work. While the lack of communication did not seem to be a significant problem, the project would have felt more effective if the leaders of NPBC and the PPBC mission team had been in contact.

The number of educational resources regarding specific covenant based partnerships was surprisingly low. While there are several resources regarding partnerships, short-term mission trips, missions, and strategy, there are few specifically addressing issues of covenantal partnerships. While this is described as a weakness for this project, hopefully my research will prove to help answer future questions regarding this issue and could potentially lead the way as a resource for others.

The inability to sign the covenant at this point is also a weakness. The project is left with something yet to be accomplished. However, the project, as previously mentioned, has been launched and is not incomplete. The only reason that the covenant has not been signed is due to the distance between PPBC and NPBC. It will be signed when the next short-term mission team goes to Honduras. The team will be leaving December 27, 2013, and will sign the covenant together with the NPBC leaders on New Year's Eve as they celebrate and serve together.

What I Would Do Differently?

Contemplating different strategies for a finished project suggests displeasure with the completed work. However, it is helpful to see areas in which, if circumstances had been different, I would have acted differently in this project. If possible, I would do three things differently in this project. I would have taken someone else with me to help train the leaders of NPBC, I would have had leaders from NPBC come to Mississippi to meet with the PPBC mission team and help write the covenant, and I would have trained more PPBC members as I did the PPBC mission team. These three areas of change would provide a more thorough sense of discipleship and would allow for more involvement from others.

I wanted to take someone else with me to help train the NPBC leaders because I am confident it would have been beneficial in three ways. First, I would have been investing my time in an individual while simultaneously providing the training. Showing others how to make disciples by making disciples in front of them, instead of teaching with words only, is wise. Second, the one that traveled with me would have been able to provide insight through his teaching that I could not bring. There is always a benefit when two like-minded believers can teach and share regarding the same topic. Such opportunities provide the listeners two common approaches from different perspectives. And third, having another person with me follows the biblical example set by the disciples and others who followed Christ. While it is not evident in Scripture that traveling in pairs or groups is mandated, or even suggested, strength in numbers is how the apostles most often traveled and proclaimed the gospel together. I did seek out another PPBC member to travel with me and serve alongside me in this way, however, I was not able to work out the scheduling, and thus traveled alone.

In order to deepen the relationship between NPBC and PPBC, I would have loved to have brought Hermando, the pastor, and Pastora, the coordinator and translator, to Mississippi to help prepare the covenant together. The trip would not have been cost

effective, and therefore, I chose not to request it of the Acostas. However, it would have allowed greater discussion and a more thorough study together of the covenant and partnership. As mentioned earlier, all of the PPBC team members have met the Acostas before, but this would have allowed them to ask questions directly and have an open discussion regarding the different elements of the covenant. I also feel like it would have strengthened the trust level for NPBC knowing that the Acostas were able to meet with and affirm PPBC's commitment to the partnership.

I classify this as something I would do differently, yet I am not sure how I could have accomplished this task. The cost was too great for me to justify bringing them. However, perhaps a church member or a group of church members would have been willing to help cover the cost for such an expenditure.

The third area I would change would have been in the breadth of my training. I believe that the depth of the training I provided to the PPBC mission team was appropriate; however, I would have liked to equip a larger portion of the PPBC congregation in this same manner. In order to accomplish this most effectively, I would have offered an additional class to all those interested in learning more about this project and the concept of strategic missional partnerships. I would have offered this same training in conjunction with the discipleship training classes PPBC offers. I would have spent four to six weeks covering the topics I covered with the team, studied all of the same passages of Scripture, and equipped a larger portion of the PPBC membership with this information. I was pleased with the opportunity to share this project with the congregation at large. However, I believe it would have been most effective to offer an opportunity for others to grow deeper in their knowledge of this subject in order that they become aware of what PPBC is providing and receiving in this and future strategic missional partnerships.

Theological Reflections

One of the areas that excited me the most was the area of my biblical knowledge on this topic. As I studied the selected passages, it became more evident to me that God desires for His people to work together. Through my studies of these Scripture texts, I was reminded of four different desires God has for His people. I was reminded that God desires for His people to make disciples by first evangelizing the lost, to work together in order to be most effective, to multiply the truth by equipping others who equip others, and to make disciples through intentional relationships with people from around the world.

As I studied Matthew 28:19-20, I was reminded that Jesus explained the plan by which all nations would be reached. He explained that the method he chose to reveal Himself was through His people. This simple truth was never far from my thoughts, however, it was a refreshing reminder that God desired for me to be the one that bears witness to the difference He has made in my life. It is His plan to always use people to tell people of His love, grace, and other attributes. It is His desire to use His people instead of using any other source. Therefore, this reminder was a call to action for me, a call to rejuvenate my evangelistic fervor and my intentional efforts in teaching others how to do this very thing.

As I studied Luke 5, I was reminded of God's desire for his children to have a willingness to embrace the strengths and weaknesses of others and other churches in order to most effectively reach the lost and equip the saved. This passage displayed the need for the men in the boats to help one another bring in all the fish. They needed help in order to accomplish their purpose. This important truth did not change any theological belief that I held previously, instead it reminded me of areas in which I needed to improve.

The study of the 2 Timothy 2 passage reminded me that God desires to equip people through other people. He uses leaders, teachers, and trainers to provide adequate

training in order to strengthen their capability for teaching. The concept of multiplication is one that has not been foreign to me, but one that I have preached for many years. However, during this particular study, it became clear to me that this is an area in which it is not as much a suggestion as it is a requirement to be effective in ministry.

The fourth passage, Philippians 4:14-20, reminded me of God's desire for his people to engage with one another from all around the world. Even as Paul thanks the people of Philippi, he is in another town. Of course, at that time, travel was not as simple as it is today, and yet there is still great evidence that partnerships between churches in different cities and countries were not only welcomed, they were necessary for the spread of the gospel. This biblical truth is a display of the heart of God for all of His children to be in relationship with one another as one Holy Church for His glory.

These theological insights were all found as a result of my biblical study for this project. Uniquely, those insights proved to be one of my greatest points of learning from the entire project. The idea that all of my knowledge of God comes from a knowledge of the Bible provided the reminder that God desires for His people to read His Holy Word.

Personal Reflections

As a result of this project, and specifically as a result of the aforementioned theological reminders, I have realized quite a few different areas in which I need to improve my personal relationship with the Lord. I hope that this project will benefit my ministry long-term and will affect my decision-making processes in the future.

I realized that I have been too arrogant at times by assuming that I, and not even my church, is the only one who can provide adequate help to the lost. I realized that there are partnerships that must not only be considered but must be forged in order to most effectively reach the lost and equip the saved. My studies gave way to my confessing the sin of arrogance to the Lord as I seek to partner with others instead of assuming that I am

the best resource for all things of God. I am pleased to be leading PPBC to consider other strategic missional partnerships with other churches and organization. My goal is to have four strategic missional partnerships by the beginning of 2014. PPBC will potentially partner with a missionary organization in Jackson, Mississippi, a missionary organization in Kentucky, NPBC in Honduras, and a church plant in Scotland. These four partnerships would broaden our ministry and deepen our relationships with others for the sake of making disciples of all nations.

I realized that I have not been providing adequate leadership, training, or discipleship for other leaders at PPBC. The 2 Timothy passage reminded me of my task to train the leaders and teachers of PPBC. As a result of this study, I specifically started a training class for all Sunday school teachers participating in the 2013-2014 church year. I spent significant time preparing and studying the best ways to teach teachers, and gave great thought toward the very passage discussed in this project. I offered three different training sessions and had over 90% participation from all of my teachers. As an additional result, I have committed to regular meetings with all the individual teachers in order to continue to provide accountability, training, and input for all the classes offered. This new method of training is not new to many. However, it is an effort by which I am striving to follow the instructions Paul gave to Timothy to teach those that teach others.

Conclusion

In the beginning of this project, I already knew that it would come with strengths and weaknesses, areas I would want to do differently, and areas I would want to keep the same. I was sure that this project would provide me with new insights, helpful reminders, and I hoped that it would lead to new and innovative plans for PPBC. Overall, this project has been a great benefit to me as an individual and as a minister. It has helped PPBC deepen their desire to make disciples and has strengthened their ability

to do so. This project has opened up new communications between PPBC and NPBC as well as other organizations and churches.

APPENDIX 1
SURVEY FOR MISSION TEAM

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Uncertain		Agree		Strongly Agree	

Fill out the following questions based upon the above chart.

1. Strategic means purposeful _____
2. Missional means practical service _____
3. Partnership only means relationship _____
4. Strategic Missional Partnerships found specifically in the Bible _____
5. Strategic Missional Partnership are most effective for churches today _____
6. It is necessary to know the other group before beginning a partnership _____
7. Missions is only for those who are uniquely called to full time service _____
8. Missions must include the gospel of Jesus Christ _____
9. In the New Testament Paul speaks to the importance of partnerships _____
10. Jesus does not display the importance of partnerships _____
11. Evangelism is every believer's responsibility _____

Answer the following questions in your own words.

1. What does making disciples include?
2. Can we be most effective alone?
3. How do we multiply the truth?
4. Are we as a church partnering with others for the gospel?

Results FT (First Test Average) ST (Second Test Average) D (difference)

1. Strategic means purposeful FT__8__ ST__9__ D__1__
2. Missional means practical service FT__3__ ST__1__ D__2__
3. Partnership only means relationship FT__1__ ST__1__ D__0__
4. Strategic Missional Partnerships found specifically in the Bible FT__3__
ST__2__ D__1__
5. Strategic Missional Partnership are most effective for churches today FT__5__
ST__8__ D__3__
6. It is necessary to know the other group before beginning a partnership FT__6__
ST__8__ D__2__
7. Missions is only for those who are uniquely called to full time service FT__1__
ST__1__ D__0__
8. Missions must include the gospel of Jesus Christ FT__6__ ST__9__ D__3__
9. In the New Testament Paul speaks to the importance of partnerships FT__7__
ST__10__ D__3__
10. Jesus does not display the importance of partnerships FT__6__ ST__8__ D__2__
11. Evangelism is every believer's responsibility FT__10__ ST__10__ D__0__
1. What does making disciples include?
 - Praying, studying, giving, going, mobilizing, teaching, evangelism, equipping, training. (these were the words chosen for both surveys by different people)
2. Can we be most effective alone?
 - No (answered by all in both surveys)
3. How do we multiply the truth?

Through teaching others who teach others (this phrase was previously taught in a sermon and had significant impact in both surveys- All had this answer)
4. Are we as a church partnering with others for the gospel?
 - Yes (answered by all in both surveys)

APPENDIX 2
EVALUATION SURVEY FOR HONDURAS LEADERSHIP

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Very Bad	Bad		Not Applicable			Good		Very Good	

Answer the following questions based upon the above chart.

1. The quality of the teaching provided _____
2. The quality of the material provided _____
3. The quantity of the material provided _____
4. The time allowed for each session _____

Answer the following questions with Yes or No.

1. Would you recommend this training to other leaders _____
2. Would you like to do something like this again _____
3. Did you enjoy your time of training _____

Answer the following questions with your own words.

1. What was the most helpful thing you learned due to this training?
2. What were the strengths of this training opportunity?
3. What were the weaknesses of this training opportunity?

Results

Answer the following questions based upon the above chart.

1. The quality of the teaching provided _10___
2. The quality of the material provided _10___
3. The quantity of the material provided __10_
4. The time allowed for each session _10_

Answer the following questions with Yes or No.

1. Would you recommend this training to other leaders __Yes___
2. Would you like to do something like this again __Yes___
3. Did you enjoy your time of training __Yes___

Answer the following questions with your own words.

1. What was the most helpful thing you learned due to this training?
 - To know and learn more about God's Word to teach others
 - To see the way Chad shares the classes, every class was based on the Bible
 - The Content of the classes and the way it was shared with us
 - Be constant in prayer, be watchful in prayer and be thankful
2. What were the strengths of this training opportunity?
 - To know that we are sent by the Holy Spirit
 - Everything in the classes was based on the Bible.
 - To encourage the leadership in the church
 - To build strong and closer relationships with others right through the study of God's Word
3. What were the weaknesses of this training opportunity?
 - Need more time
 - Lack of material (handouts)

APPENDIX 3

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR LEADERS OF CHURCHES

1. How many short-term mission teams do you send in one year?
2. Do you have any strategic missional partnerships in your church ministry?
 - a. If so, how many do you have?
3. Do you have any covenantal relationships with other mission organizations or churches?
 - a. If so, how many do you have?
 - b. If so, how long are those relationships?
4. Are you committed to serving in one location with one organization for any length of time?
 - a. If so, where?
 - b. If so, how long?
5. Does your church feel that it is most beneficial to create long-term relationships for missional purposes?

1. How many short-term mission teams do you send in one year?
 - Each church had anywhere from 20 to 50 teams in a year
2. Do you have any strategic missional partnerships in your church ministry?
 - Each church had at least 5 strategic missional partnerships and up to as many as 14
3. Do you have any covenantal relationships with other mission organizations or churches?
 - 0 churches had any
4. Are you committed to serving in one location with one organization for any length of time?
 - Each of the following places were mentioned: Asia, North Africa, Peru, Philippines, Mexico, Haiti, Canada, Jackson, Central Mississippi Correctional Facility Rankin County Benevolence, Sudan, Ecuador, Honduras, Haiti, Indonesia, Ukraine, M-Power, Spirit of Luke
5. Does your church feel that it is most beneficial to create long-term relationships for missional purposes?
 - Each church answered yes

APPENDIX 4
PROJECT CALENDAR

- Week 1- December 30
 - Set up the PPBC mission team
 - Provide project proposal
- Week 2- January 6
 - Meet with NPBC leadership for training
- Week 3- January 13
 - Evaluate the training sessions with NPBC
- Week 4- January 20
 - Meet with PPBC mission team to evaluate the proposal
- Week 5- January 27
 - Meet with PPBC mission team to present results from NPBC training
- Week 6- February 3
 - First training session with PPBC mission team
- Week 7- February 10
 - Teach Staff the necessity of strategic missional partnerships
- Week 8- February 17
 - Second training session with PPBC mission team
- Week 9- February 24
 - Present Proposal to PPBC
- Week 10- March 3
 - Third training session with PPBC mission team

- Week 11- March 10
 - Work with PPBC mission team to write covenant
- Week 12- March 17
 - Work with NPBC leadership to evaluate and adjust covenant
- Week 13- March 24
 - Present training results and covenant to PPBC
- Week 14- March 31
 - PPBC Mission Team evaluation of covenant and training
- Week 15- April 7
 - Personal evaluation of covenant and training

APPENDIX 5

COVENANT BETWEEN PARK PLACE BAPTIST CHURCH
AND NUEVO PACTO BAPTIST CHURCH

- This covenant is to ensure a commitment between the ministers and congregations at Park Place Baptist Church (PPBC) and Nuevo Pacto Baptist Church (NPBC)
- This covenant is to begin in January 1, 2014 and will conclude December 31, 2019
- This covenant will be at least annually evaluated and adjusted if needed by church leaders and ministers at PPBC and NPBC
 - Any changes to this covenant can only be made per the communication of the leadership at both PPBC and NPBC
- This covenant will be translated and communicated in Spanish for NPBC
- Communication regarding this covenant will be maintained through email, facebook, twitter, and skype
- PPBC commits to providing an annual financial contribution of \$5,000
- PPBC commits to providing at least 2 short-term mission teams per year for the purpose of evangelism
- PPBC commits to providing at least 3 short-term mission teams or individuals over the 5 year span to provide equipping and training
- PPBC and NPBC commit to combining their efforts to reach the nations through a joint short-term mission trip in which members of both churches will serve together in another country
- NPBC commits to organizing and at times providing adequate transportation, translators, and/or equipment for the short-term mission trips taken by PPBC
- NPBC commits to sending 3 short-term teams or individuals over the 5 year span to provide equipping, training, and evangelistic efforts at PPBC
- NPBC commits to planting 1 church in the 5 year span
 - PPBC commits to assist in planting by providing manual labor, evangelism, prayer support, and training for the church plant
- NPBC commits to providing yearly updates regarding projects and ministries collaborated on with PPBC
- PPBC commits to providing yearly updates regarding projects and ministries collaborated on with NPBC

PPBC Leadership _____

Date _____

NPBC Leadership _____

Date _____

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ABSTRACT

LAUNCHING A STRATEGIC MISSIONAL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN PARK PLACE BAPTIST CHURCH, PEARL, MISSISSIPPI, AND NUEVO PACTO BAPTIST CHURCH, TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS

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Chapter 1 is an introduction to the project. It contains general information about Park Place Baptist Church and the rationale behind the creation of the project itself. It also includes the ministry context and demographic information for Rankin County as well as the goals of the project.

Chapter 2 gives a biblical basis for the project. There are four choice passages found within this chapter including, Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 5:1-11, 2 Timothy 2:2, and Philippians 4:14-20.

Chapter 3 provides a thorough explanation of the concept of short-term mission trips. The intent is to provide evidence as to whether or not short-term mission trips are beneficial to those hosting teams.

Chapter 4 contains the details of the project and the meetings, travel, and training therein. The launching of this partnership included several training meetings in Mississippi as well as in Honduras. These training meetings provided opportunities for the missions team and the leadership of Nuevo Pacto to study the significance, biblical importance, and practical application of such a partnership.

Chapter 5 evaluates the effects of the project and its outcomes. It gives explanation toward the responses of both congregations as well as the leadership teams from each.

VITA

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Recreation Assistant, Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Homewood,
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Student/Recreation Associate, Green Valley Baptist Church, Hoover, Alabama,
2004

Minister of Recreation, McElwain Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama,
2004-09

Associate Pastor, Park Place Baptist Church, Pearl, Mississippi, 2009-