



Leading God's People into Mission: *A Quest for Missionary Effectiveness*¹

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Preface: This series is concerned with the basic issue of Christian nurture and maturation. I have chosen to emphasize the teaching-learning tasks and the spiritual concerns that underlie them. The application of these lectures within the consultation will be extended in three directions:

1. To the educating of the missionary,
2. To the missionary's own tasks of encouraging the spiritual maturing of new Christians and the developing of leadership in the planted communities of faith.
3. To the intercultural problems which occur within the fulfillment of these tasks.

Monday Afternoon

The Ministry of God's People: To Follow in the Footsteps of Jesus.

1. Identifying the aspects of Christian mission:

- "Light of the world" (Matthew 5:14, 16)
- "Salt of the earth" (Matthew 5:13)
- "Ambassadors" (2 Corinthians 5:20)
- "Witnesses" (Acts 1:8)
- Living out "Spiritual gifts" (1 Corinthians 12 and 14)

2. Special problems that handicap the missionary and the mission in today's urban post-modern societies:

- Over-committed lifestyle,
- Remoteness and social distance,
- Inter-ethnic fear, pride, racism, and hostility,
- Shallowness in spiritual matters, and
- Compromises with ungodly moral choices.

Tuesday Morning

Education and the Mission of the Church: To Make Disciples by Baptizing and Teaching People to do What Jesus Taught (Matthew 28:19).

A. Defining Learning and Teaching:

1. Contrasting views of **Learning**:

- a) Outfitting the mind (filling).
- b) Strengthening the capacity to think and reason (exercise).
- c) Raising the level of thinking (climbing).
- d) Reorganizing experience into more comprehensive meanings.

2. Contrasting views of **Teaching**:

- a) Drilling (as a military activity) for the repetition (recall) of information.

¹ Ted Ward. Leading God's People into Mission: A Quest for Missionary Effectiveness. Seoul Consultation on Missions and Education, May 6-10, 1996. (Adapted from Leading God's People into Ministry: Pastoral Effectiveness, Tokyo Conference on Leadership Development in the Church, April 8-12, 1996)

- b) Coercing and rewarding or punishing to induce conformity.
 - c) Encouraging respect and application to knowledge.
 - d) Participating in exploring and discovery of truth.
- B. Relating teaching and learning to the development of God's people:
 - 1. Biblical teaching on the importance of leadership
 - a) God calls and develops leaders as needed.
 - b) God uses leaders to lead his people.
 - c) God uses different sorts of people and different styles of leader behaviors.
 - d) Leaders are always responsible to God and to godliness.
 - 2. Biblical teaching on sharing tasks of leadership
 - a) The family of Christ as brothers and sisters,
 - b) The temptations of hierarchy,
 - c) The temptations of power and control, and
 - d) Biblical models of shared leadership.

Tuesday afternoon

Learning to be God's Ministers: Consider the Ways that Jesus Developed His Twelve Disciples.

- A. Common assumptions about teaching and learning:
 - 1. Schooling is the most efficient way to teach. (True?)
 - 2. Teaching is mostly done by *telling*. (True?)
 - 3. Learning is an internal mental process. (Based upon what?)
- B. Modes of educational "delivery:"
 - 1. Formal education ("schooling")
 - 2. Socialization (sometimes called "informal education")
 - 3. Nonformal education (deliberate and planned but less tied to the larger "ladder" of schooling)
- C. The teaching methods used by Jesus:
 - 1. His own walk of life as *example*.
 - 2. Inviting his followers into *experience*.
 - 3. Involving his followers in *social interaction*, including difficult experiences across cultural barriers.
 - 4. Building a *learning community*.
 - 5. Encouragement of abstract *reasoning*.
 - 6. Encouraging a respect for Scripture and a deeper *reflection* on the application of God's Word.
 - 7. Empowering and encouraging—*building confidence*.
- D. Considering the deeper meaning of teachings about **family** responsibility for the **development of the new generation** in Deuteronomy 6.

Wednesday morning

Jesus Christ as our "Demonstration Teacher": Consider the Ways that Jesus Related to People.

- A. Many qualities of effective teaching begin with characteristics of the person and personality and thus result from long-term nurture:
 - 1. Interest in others, and especially in the learner.
 - 2. Compassionate concern for the needs of the learner.
 - 3. Supportive and encouraging attitude.

4. Honesty and personal integrity.
- B. Important skills of effective teaching can be deliberately learned:
 1. Careful listening and responsiveness to the learner.
 2. Interactive communication with the learner—posing questions more than trying to give and prove answers.
 3. Capable of evaluating without harshness or rudeness.
 4. Effective in clear communication.
 5. Capable of assertiveness without defensiveness.
 6. Resistance to the temptation of misusing power to control others.
 7. Effective in relating experience to theory.
 8. Effective in helping people find their own resources and to discover their own gifts and potential—helping learners to become something more than they had believed possible.
- C. Many of these qualities and skills are evident in Jesus. Thus we can regard Jesus as our example in effective teaching. John 4 presents a series of illustrations of the qualities of Jesus, our “Demonstration Teacher.”

Wednesday afternoon

Christ Makes a Difference in Our Leadership Style as His Missionaries: Consider the Contrast Between Christian and Secular Approaches to Leadership

- A. **Leading** is a central theme in the Bible. God uses all sorts of people to lead. Those whom God chooses to lead use the gifts that God gives them. The result is that no two leaders are alike.
- B. In Christ, we have a *model of leading* and an *ideal* to which we can develop.
 1. In Matthew 20:25-28, and again in Matthew 25:1-12, Jesus clearly warns against styles of leadership that were, and still are, common among human societies.
 2. Specifically, Jesus calls for a leading that is more like the behavior of a servant than of a commander. He warns about hierarchy, control through delegation, and self-important status-seeking.
- C. The **community of Christ** provides the central image for Christian leaders:
 1. We are all members of a family.
 2. We have responsibilities to each other.
 3. Our responsibilities are different and interdependent.
 4. We must be willing to be helped by others, and also to provide help.
- D. The **temptation to aspire to power and glory** through leadership causes many Christians to sin in dreadful ways. Our Lord’s own great period of temptation focused extensively on this matter of becoming a controller of people and events (Luke 4:1-12).

Thursday morning

The Tasks of Those Who Minister to God’s Ministers: Consider the Responsibilities of a Leader’s Stewardship.

A. Effective mission requires developing in God’s people a zeal for working diligently to help each one stand strong in order to be able to fulfill the gifts that the Spirit of God gives. We do not create or even shape the other person. Our calling to mission means that we are called to help others become God’s ministers.

B. Everything we do as leaders should be done to help others become stronger and more able to do things that which God requires of his people. We are not to compete nor to restrict and limit others.

C. Effective missionary leadership works toward sharing the load of responsibilities, not just making ourselves more “puffed up” in our own prideful sense of importance.

The first nine chapters of the book of Nehemiah provides a picture of a man called by God to be sent to a distant place to be a minister to God’s people. The results are spectacular, largely because Nehemiah follows God and carries out his mission in such a way as to respect people and to respect God. We see the following characteristics:

1. Compassion and concern,
2. Prayer,
3. Boldness,
4. Respect for learning through experience,
5. Exercise of gifts that God had provided,
6. Bravery,
7. Use of available resources,
8. Acknowledgment of the worth of others, and
9. Respect for the feelings and motivations of others.

As a result of Nehemiah’s effective following of God, the walls were rebuilt, the city made safe, and the dignity and purpose of God’s people was restored.

Thursday afternoon

The Developing Aspects of Human Life: Reflect on Spiritual Development Within its Context of Whole-person Development

A. Christian spirituality has two directions: **inward** to the resources of God’s Holy Spirit living within us, and **outward** into the world of mission and ministry as the spirit of Christ affects human society.

B. Christian spirituality is not a separate and disembodied mystery; it exists and develops in relationship to every other aspect of human reality. Thus we understand human development as interactions among these aspects:

Physical Development,
Intellectual Development,
Emotional Development,
Social Development, and
Moral Development.

C. Christian spirituality is nurture from three corners of a triad of inputs:

1. Intellectual encounters with the Word.
2. Spiritual disciplines (sometimes called the mystical exercises of holiness).
3. Spirit-motivated works of righteousness (The Epistle of James is concerned with this aspect).

Friday morning

The Outcomes of Christian Development: Reflect on the Changes that Occur Across One’s Lifetime as God Works His Grace in the Life of a Christian.

A. Intellectual Outcomes:

1. Deeper knowledge and understanding of the Word of God.
2. Increased capability of reasoning and discerning moral issues.

B. Emotional Outcomes:

1. Stability and confidence in the face of adversity.
2. Steadiness and strength to uphold others.
3. Resistant to irrational and devilish temptations.

C. Social Outcomes:

1. Faithfulness to family responsibilities.
2. Accountability to the Christian fellowship (church).
3. Effective involvement in the community. Moral and ethical maturity.

D. Spiritual Outcomes

1. Strengthened relationship with Christ.
2. Habits of devotion and meditation on the things of God.
3. Fulfillment in the ministries of worship and works within the fellowship of the believers.

Being “*in* the world but not *of* the world” requires spiritual maturity in the ministry of Christ that is reflected in these ways:

**Moving Closer to God,
Outward into Human Society,
And Inward into the Life of the Spirit.**