

MULTIPLYING CHURCHES THROUGH PRAYER CELL EVANGELISM

A Manual For Church Planting Movements

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Preface

The main stimulus for this manual came initially from a seminar held in Bangkok, Thailand with Mr. Mac Bradshaw and Mr. Russell Self, October 26-29, 1970. The materials from been selected, re-organized and in many cases expanded. New concepts and ideas were also added.

On Dec. 2, 1970 the first duplicated edition of the first three chapters was produced. This was tested in rural areas and taught in workshops in several regions of the country. A second edition in 1971, with an additional three chapters, which developed the primary strategy for Prayer Cell Evangelism was printed soon after. This basic approach was biblical, simple, reproducible, and practical. Approximately seven editions of the text followed with slight revisions. Every edition was produced only in Thai language. But with consistent requests and pressure, I was encouraged finally to do an English edition, so that translation in other languages could be made to share this.

May the Lord use it to see the church planted and multiplied in every community throughout Thailand, and indeed many other places in the world. This manual is aimed at teaching Christians at the grass roots level to spread the Gospel to relatives and friends, and to multiply churches across the lands.

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Introduction

There was once a merchant in Bangkok who enjoyed gardening. He liked flowers. He grew some in his own home. One day he took two identical plants. One of them he placed in a small pot in a darkish room in the center of the house. The other he planted out in the garden in front of his house. Not long after he was called away to Chiang Mai on urgent business, so he left his plants alone for several weeks.

The day he returned from Chiang Mai he noticed how tall, green, and strong the plant he had planted in the garden was. He went closer and saw that it had a lovely bud on it which would soon bloom. He wondered about the other plant also and went to look at it. He was surprised to see that it seemed to be dying. It was not green or fresh looking, nor were there any flower buds on it. It was yellowish, wilted and drooping. Something was wrong!

This merchant was a wise man. He realized that the plant in the garden had grown strong and healthy because it was reaching out to the ground around it for food. But the other plant was weak because it was shut off by itself, closed up in a dark room, and could not reach out for food and sunshine. So he took this sick plant outside and put it in the garden. The plant then reached out to the fresh air and to the sun. It sent its roots deeper down into the earth for food. In a few weeks this plant was looking strong and green and healthy too.

Yes, this man was a wise man. Likewise God has told His church to be wise in building and caring for its growth. The story of these two plants can teach many lessons to the Church.

Chapter 1

CHRIST'S CHURCH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Christ Plants His Church

God is very wise. He knows how to plant His Church so that it is healthy and strong and fruitful. The hearts of believers who make up His Church are God's farmlands (I Cor. 3:9). He is the One who sows the Gospel seed. He is the One who gives the increase (I Cor. 3:6,7). He is the Lord of His harvest (Matt. 9:38; 13:39-41). He is the Head of His Church, the Boss (Eph. 1:22; 4:15; Col. 1:18). So we must follow Him and obey His words. He is our great Leader. Jesus said, "I will build My Church" (Matt. 16:18).

The Church Commanded to Multiply

For this reason the Lord Jesus, who created everything (Jn. 1:1-3) willingly left His eternal glory in heaven. He received the form of man, lived a holy life, and voluntarily sacrificed Himself on the cross in order to save sinners from their eternal doom (Phil. 2:5-8). He rose again the third day to give life to the Church. Before Jesus ascended into heaven He commanded His disciples to go out into all the world to make disciples, that is to reap a harvest of souls from all peoples (Matt. 28:19,20). When Jesus went back to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to be the great Helper and Strengthener of the Church (Jn. 14:16,17; 15:26,27). He ordered the believers to reach out into all the world and in the power of the Holy Spirit to establish His Church globally (Acts 1:8). His will is that the Church be growing constantly in each generation and in every land and people group until He returns. He has promised to be with us until the end. (Matt. 28:20).

The Growing Nature of the Church

The Lord Jesus is the Head of the Church. He calls believers to follow Him and they become the different members or parts of the Church. The Holy Spirit is like the living heart of the Church. He dwells in life-giving power in the heart of every believer (I Cor. 6:19). But what kind of Church does God want? We find God's pattern for a strong and healthy Church in the book of Acts. God's Church is a living thing, a growing organism, the people of God. It pulsates with the life of the Spirit. When God sent the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to be the living Power of the Church, He stamped the nature of the Holy Spirit upon the Church. A fish had the nature of a fish, so a fish has to swim. A bird has the nature of a bird, so a bird as to fly. The Church has the nature of the Holy Spirit so the Church has to grow in living power and holiness. God's true Church was born at Pentecost. From that moment it began to grow. On that first day many different nationalities were present (Acts 2:5-11). God spoke to the nations through the newborn Church by the miracle of tongues, so that they heard the Gospel in their own language. Thus God shows the Church that its task was to reach out unto every nation, tribe and tongue with the Gospel.

How the New Church Increased

It is God's will that the Church throb with life and growth. In Acts we see that the Church grew by adding new believers, by multiplying new members, and by multiplying new churches. There were 120 present on the day of Pentecost. When Peter preached that day, there were 3,000 souls

baptized and added to the Church (Acts 2:41). Acts 2:47 records that the Lord added to the Church daily. A short while later in Acts 4:4 we read that “many of them which heard the Word believed and the number of men was about 5,000.” There were, no doubt, women and children present also who were not included in the 5,000. The dimensions of growth in Acts 5:14 exceeds the definition of finite numbers. “And believers were the more added to the Lord. Multitudes of men and women.” The Word of God increased and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith (Acts 6:7).

Not only were new members multiplied, but churches were also added and multiplied. Under Saul’s persecution the Christians were scattered abroad. As they went they preached the Gospel (Acts 8:1,4). Believers were added and churches established even as far as Phoenice and Cyprus and Antioch (Acts 11:19). After the conversion of Saul, the churches had peace and rest throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria and were multiplied (Acts 9:31).

Family Units Believed

It was not only scattered individuals who believed, like the Ethiopian Eunuch and Saul of Tarsus, but there were also many families who accepted Christ together. Now only the individual can be converted. No doubt each member of the family personally decided to accept Christ, but they did so at the same time. Thus, they accepted the Lord unitedly as a group. This was important in the growing nature of the Church. For example, in Acts 10 we read of the Gentile Centurion named Cornelius who believed with his whole house and many of his friends. Then we read of Lydia of Philippi who responded with her household in Acts 16:14-15, of the Philippian jailer and his house in Acts 16:30-34, and Crispus and his family at Corinth in Acts 18:8.

Vital Two-Way Relationship

A train runs on two tracks. A baht coin has two sides. Effective Christian witness has two equally important aspects, one toward God, the other toward humans. The Church in Acts vibrates with living growth because on one hand they were in close contact with God, their Leader, and on the other hand they were in vital contact with those outside of the Church. That is, on one hand they were in fellowship with God by prayer and dependence on Him, through depending on the power of the Holy Spirit, and through obedience to the Word of God. On the other hand, like a live electric wire, they made dynamic contact with the world around them by their bold preaching of the Gospel, by their changed lives, and by their love and concern for all lost people. This powerful contact with God and also with the community caused others to believe and become changed people. These in turn became new living members of the Church who also proclaimed the Gospel to others. They were especially successful in bringing in their close relatives and friends, and the people round about them came to know the Lord also. The Christians were channels through which God’s grace flowed to a sinful world.

Channels Flowing with Blessings

The rivers of Thailand, like the great Chao Phaya river with its many rivulets and canals, are the channels by which the land is watered. The rain falls down from heaven and flows along the rivers and canals bringing life to the thirsty ground across the whole land. Growth results in green grass and rich harvests. So the Church in Acts, receiving the power of the Gospel from God in heaven, became the rivers and canals to take it into all the world. Like flowing water, the

Church was moving. It was active. As water produced growth in dry areas, so the Church produced spiritual life in dry hearts by the power of God. The Church was on the go. It was in motion. It flowed across the world in life giving power.

Power Lines for God

The Church was like an electric wire in vital contact with God. It became the vessel or the vehicle through which the power of God flowed as believers made contact with a needy world. God was the power house that generated the spiritual electricity. The Church was the electric lines through which God's power flowed across the land, bringing light and life, warmth and growth, and usefulness to a sin sick world.

Common Christians Evangelize

What kind of people were the followers of Christ in Acts? For the most part they were common people – farmers, fishermen, shop-keepers, local officials. Many were poor, but there were some who were rich like Joseph and Nicodemus. Some were high officials like Sergius Paulus, deputy of the country of Cyprus (Acts 13:4,7,12). But all of them were changed people. They had repented of their sin and received new hearts. They knew the Lord Jesus as their personal Saviour by faith. They were also a praying people. They depended on God for everything, and spent much time in prayer alone and in small groups. They were a powerful people, because they dedicated themselves to God and lived under the control of the Spirit of God. They were filled with God's Spirit and God's power. They were a praising people, constantly worshipping the only true God and thanking Him for His mercy. They were a united people whether in prayer, in witness, or in concern for one another and the world around them. They were a proclaiming people. Everywhere in Acts we see the common believers reaching out and proclaiming the Gospel. For example, in Acts 8:1, 4 we read, "And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem, and they were scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria except the apostles; therefore, they were scattered abroad and went everywhere preaching the Word." Despite persecution, they were bold to testify for the Lord in every circumstance. They were a growing people. They grew in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. They also grew in numbers and in strength. In a few short years there were churches established from Spain, to India, and down into Africa. Church History indicates that from the year 30AD until 200AD the Church grew in numbers from a small 500 to about 500,000 amidst much opposition. Their leaders were slain. At times they were forced to flee for their lives. They were persecuted, burned alive, or fed to the lions, but they grew and spread out across the world. This is a picture of the Church in Acts.

Chapter 1 – Summary

1. Christ is the Head of the Church. He is building His Church in the hearts of believers by the Holy Spirit.
2. Christ the Creator sacrificed His life on the cross to save sinners from their sins, and rose again to grant new life to believers. This is the Gospel. I Cor. 15:1-4.
3. Christ commands the Church to spread the Gospel into all the world, calling them to repent and believe Christ. Matt. 28:18-20.
4. The Holy Spirit is the very life of the Church, so the Church must grow. The early Church grew by multiplying new believers and by multiplying new churches.
5. The Church expands by family groups turning to Christ as well as individuals, so aim to win families to Christ.
6. Each person who accepts Christ as Saviour has the responsibility to spread the Gospel to others by witness.

Personal Questions:

1. Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour? If not, receive Him today. John 1:12.
2. Are you witnessing to others like the early Christians did? If not, ask God to forgive you. Begin by witnessing to your family and friends today.
3. Does your life have the characteristics of the Christians in Acts? If not, ask the Holy Spirit to help you be a bold witness with a clean heart.

Remember: God uses ordinary Christians to spread the Gospel, not just pastors. Every believer must be an active witness for Christ.

Chapter 2

THE CHURCH IN OUR DAY – ITS PRESENT CONDITION

What is the Church like today? What is your church like? Does it exhibit the marks of the Church in Acts? Is it still pulsating with life and vibrating in dynamic growth?

The Church that Grows Out

There are some churches today that are like the Ephesian Church in Acts. Now Ephesus was the capital city of a large province of western Asia Minor called Asia. It was here that Paul and others planted a virile church within two years. Much opposition was faced, but the Christians witnessed and the church grew in strength and numbers. Many that believed came and confessed their evil deeds. Many magicians and soothsayers turned from the spirits and burned their magic books. So the Word of God grew mightily and prevailed (Acts 19:18-20). Because the believers were bold to witness and to reach out far and wide, all the people which dwelt in the province of Asia heard the Word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks (19:10). Revelation chapters 2 and 3 records other churches that were established in this province of Asia. Probably as a result of the Ephesian Christian's testimony. The Ephesian Church was a pattern of the true Church. Is tis a picture of your church?

The Church that Cools Down

Just because a local church starts well and shows growth does not necessarily mean it continues to grow automatically. Look at the church of Ephesus again. Years later the Lord Jesus sent a special message to the Ephesian Church (Rev. 2). He commended them for their patience, for their hard work, and for their hatred of evil and hypocrisy (2:3). But He points out a weakness – that they had left their first love. He calls them to repent and to go back to their first love. He warns them that He would remove His blessing if they did not do so. In a similar way He says to the church of Laodicea that they were lukewarm, that they had left their first love and zeal for the Lord too. Something was wrong in these churches. Though they probably did not think that anything was wrong with their church until the Lord spoke to them. Indeed many churches today do not think there is anything wrong. Maybe God is speaking to the Church today. What is God saying to the Church? Have we left our first love? Have we lost our way? Are we lukewarm?

The Church Weakened by False Teaching

Why do some churches go astray? Sometimes false teaching creeps in and causes them to veer off their original purpose. Paul had warned the Ephesian elders in Acts 28:28-31 that false teachers like ravenous wolves would creep in trying to draw the believers away from the truth. Maybe some of the present day churches have turned away from the truth of God through false teaching. They do not listen to God's Word or His authority. They prefer to accept man's word, philosophies and the world's voice above that of the Bible.

The Church that Shuts Itself Up

Sometimes reaction to persecution causes the church to either get fired up or to cool down. In acts 19:23-40 the devil brought about much opposition to the Ephesian church. The whole city

was brought to riot by jealous Demetrius. After hearing the Gospel for more than two years, many of the unbelievers rebelled. They gathered to worship their idol. This was an image called Diana, which they claimed had fallen down to earth from the planet Jupiter (19:35). They cried out for about two hours “Great is Diana of the Ephesians.” Paul had to flee for his life, but the church stayed there. Opposition like this sometimes makes Christians afraid of persecution. They find it difficult to witness in the world. The Christians, without realizing it, often withdraw into the church. They cut themselves off from the society around them. They no longer go out to the wicked world to proclaim the message of salvation to the lost. They do not forget God. Indeed they pray, study the Word, and worship God even more than before. But they become ingrown. They do not reach out in aggressive witness. They become like the plant that was shut up in the dark room, weak and unhealthy.

The Church that is Over-fed but Under-exercised

There was a certain shopkeeper in the province of Uthaihani who was very fat. He stayed at home and hardly even went out. He sat down in his shop a lot. Everyday he ate a lot of food. He did not do any exercise. He was very fat. Some people thought that because he was fat he was healthy, but doctors tell us that fat people often have very poor health. On the 25th of October, 1970, this man was resting in his shop when he died suddenly. He never woke up from his sleep.

There are a lot of Christians who are like this man. They go to a nice church building and listen to a good preacher, they study the Bible each week, they go to the church, study in Sunday School and worship God on Sunday. They might even attend the prayer meeting. They are spiritually fat, but they do not do much exercise. They seldom use their mouths to speak for Jesus, except in church. They do not go out and visit people who don't know the Lord, nor tell them about Jesus very much. Yet the Bible teaches us that the Christian's feet are to be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15). “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace and bring good tidings of good things” (Rom. 10:15). All the spiritual food that these Christians receive Sunday by Sunday comes down from God to them, but they do not pass it on to others. They become spiritually fat, but not necessarily spiritually healthy. Many Christians are sick because they lack spiritual exercise in reaching out and expending their energies in proclaiming the Gospel. Evangelism is hard work, but it is good spiritual exercise.

The Church that Dams Up Blessing

No doubt you have heard of the Dead Sea. Take a look at the map of Israel. You will see that the river Jordan flows from the North through the Sea of Galilee. Jesus' disciples often went fishing there. There is lots of life in the Sea of Galilee, but there is no life in the Dead Sea. Nothing grows there. There are no fish. No one ever goes fishing in the Dead Sea. Do you know why? The water from the Jordan River flows into the Sea of Galilee and then out on the other side. That is why it is life-giving. Later on the same water flows on to the Dead Sea, but there is no outlet. There is no river flowing out of the Dead Sea. It is just like a dam that holds the water in. Water that is left to stand for a long time becomes stagnant.

Some churches are like the Dead Sea. They receive the Gospel and much blessing from the Word of God. They drink it in, but they never give it out. They never become channels to give spiritual life to others. They become dams to hold the water in, or like buckets to catch all of God's blessings for themselves alone.

The Church that Loves its Building More Than Lost Souls

Once a very shabbily dressed man hobbled along a large street in Singapore. He was dirty and smelly. He was poor and hungry. But he wanted to know how to be free from his sin. His heart was very heavy. Just then he heard some lovely singing and noticed a beautiful church building further down the street. So he decided to go see what was going on. It was Sunday, and as he went inside he saw many finely dressed Asian Christians. Many of the people glared at him as he entered, but nobody spoke to him. Once he thought he heard someone say, "What is he doing here? This is our church. He will cause us to lose face with the respectable community." In a little while he went out again into the street to look for help somewhere else. Some of the churches are like this one. They think more about their church building than about reaching lost people with the Gospel. They spend most of their money in building up the church property. They spend much time planning how to better their facilities. They build big fences around their property to keep those unrespectable people who might contaminate the sanctuary, if not profane it!

Yet the Bible teaches that the church is not a building, but a community of regenerated people. It is not bricks, cement, and wood, but men, women, and children who know Jesus as their Saviour. Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in their midst" (Matt. 18:20). The reason the church exists is to reach people with the Gospel. Is your church reaching your community for God? Is it adding new members to the Lord?

The Church that Dies Out

Many of the types of church above are churches that are not growing like the church in Acts. If they were asked how they are growing, they would probably say they are growing a little bit. Most likely the majority of the additions would be from children of the Christians or from people who had transferred from another church. There might be some conversions from the world, but not very many. How many people were added to your church from the world in the last few years? Other churches who grew much in earlier years would probably say they are not growing very much at present because they have stopped expanding to consolidate and strengthen their church. This sounds like a good argument, but it also has dangers. The botanist tells us that if a tree stops growing to consolidate, it dies. If a church stops reaching out, it becomes cool, and then cold, and sometimes even dies. Some churches today feel that their policy is all right. They don't feel anything should be done to disrupt their present program. They are convinced they are right! But the Bible says, "There is a way which seemeth right unto man, but the ways thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12). It is a very sad thing when a church dies, or when a church is closed down. This eventually happened to the Ephesian Church. In Acts it was a living example of God's Church. Later it had grown cold, and then later still, it died. What is your church like now? What will it be like in a few years time?

Chapter 2 – Summary

1. God's plan is that the Church reach out to the lost with the Gospel through the local Christians. As they pray and witness, He adds to His Church by His Holy Spirit.
2. The devil tries to cause the Church to become ingrown, weak and ineffective. He has many methods.
3. God calls the Church to repent, to return to Him, and to reach out to a sinful hurting world with the Gospel.

Personal Questions:

1. What kind of a Church in this chapter would you like to belong to? Is your church like that? If not, would you pray for a revival in your own church?
2. Do the Christians in your local church go out to witness to the lost people in your area? If not, will you begin to pray and to witness as an example to others?
3. Is there some sin in your heart that is holding you back from being a bold witness for Christ? Has your spiritual life cooled down? If so, God says repent (Rev. 2:3), confess your sin and He will cleanse you (I John 1:9).

Remember: The Church must go out to the world with the gospel. The world will not come into the Church. Repentance and revival amongst Christians is a key factor in helping awaken the Church to reach out to the lost.

Chapter 3

PRINCIPLE OF SURVIVAL – LIFE MUST REPRODUCE LIFE

The Miracle of Reproduction

The Thai people love watermelon. Why are there watermelons each season year after year? When the farmer takes a little watermelon seed and plants it in the ground, it begins to grow. As it grows it begins to spread out across the ground in long, green vines. Then flowers appear at different places along the vines. After this the fruit appears, and then it grows and grows until there are big green watermelons with nice red flesh inside. Usually there is not just one watermelon on a vine, but several at different places along the vine, spread out across the ground. If you take a seed from one of these watermelons and plant it, it will also grow into a watermelon vine, and will produce its own fruit in the same way. That is why there are watermelons year after year.

The Reason for Reproduction

Life produces life. In the beginning God created the plants to have seeds within themselves (Gen. 1:11,12). The trees and flowers have seeds within themselves, so that they are able to reproduce after their kind. The life is in the seed. When that seed germinates, it grows because God has placed life there. This is also why animals have baby animals. God has given them power to have the seed within themselves so that they are able to produce after their own kind. It is the same with man. This is why we have children, because the life which God has placed in us reproduces life. It is the same in the spiritual realm. God has given the life of the Spirit to the Church and God expects the Church to reproduce. The Church must grow and expand, like the watermelon vine. It must spread out across the land producing baby churches everywhere.

Developing Baby Churches

When the banana plant grows and has flowers and fruit, it often has little baby banana plants growing up around it. These are called banana suckers. They often form a circle around the main plant. Later they will also bring forth more fruit. The same is true of strawberry plants. Now this is exactly what God expects of the Church. Where there is a church, a group of other little churches should spring up around it as a result of its witness and its life. The life of the Holy Spirit in the Church will produce life in other places and other areas as well. Indeed each Christian should be like this also.

The Problem of Sterility

Sometimes something goes wrong. It is normal for a man and a woman when they are married, to have children. But sometimes some couples cannot have any children. Something is wrong. And it is very sad when a man and his wife are not able to have their own children. It is a sorrowful thing also when a church does not reproduce Christians in other parts of their community. In chapter 2 some problems of modern day churches were mentioned. The main difficulty is that they do not reproduce life from themselves. They stay ingrown and do not reach out like the watermelon plant. They do not reproduce life in other areas. They do not grow out.

Necessity of Life

Sometimes the reason that the Church doesn't grow is that it does not have life itself. Once a man came to the Lord Jesus at nighttime. His name was Nicodemus. He was a religious leader in the Jewish Synagogue. He came to Jesus, but Jesus said to him straight away, "Ye must be born again" (Jn. 3:3-7). You must receive life from God. If a person does not have life, then he cannot reproduce. Something that is dead cannot reproduce life. Only life produces life. So we must have the life of the Spirit in our hearts.

Life Results in Action

In the olden days before there were any airplanes or motorboats, there were many sailing ships. Sometimes sailing ships travelling around the world were caught in what was called "doldrums." This was an area or a place where there was no wind blowing. Because they didn't have any motors, and the wind was not blowing, they couldn't go anywhere. They just sat motionless on the sea. Some churches are like the old sailing ships. They are just sitting. They are not going anywhere. But when God sent the wind of the holy Spirit (Acts 2) He showed that there was action, there was motion, there was movement for the Church. They were to be going places. There was to be life and action. It is the life of the Spirit that gives us boldness to witness to the world, and strength and power to reproduce churches in other areas.

The Danger of Unconfessed Sin

When a person has malaria he is very sick. He cannot go anywhere. He stays at home and lays on his bed. Sometimes the Church is sick. It is sick because of sin in the lives of the Christians, or because of false teaching, or because they have gone away from God's Word. One of the sins is selfishness – thinking only of oneself. Keeping everything for self. This sin clogs Christian hearts. This is why God spoke to the Ephesian Church and others and said, "Return unto Me, repent and come back to Me" (Rev. 2 & 3). Only as Christians are willing to repent of their sin can the Church truly become strong and well and have the life to reproduce themselves.

Life Producing Channels

When water channels or canals are clogged with silt, the water cannot flow out very well. When our hearts are clogged with sin the Holy Spirit cannot flow out to others very well.

In recent years there have been many dams built in Thailand. But why are the dams built? They are not just built to collect water. They are only valuable as they allow that water to flow out through channels across the land. Why are there rivers and canals and klongs criss-crossing the whole of Thailand? They are there to bring the water to the rice fields all over the land. Water gives life. Plants, animals and people cannot live without water. The Church is the channel through which God speaks to Thailand; therefore, churches are needed everywhere so that the Gospel can flow into every area. Evangelism is like digging channels to barren areas. It's taking the water of life across to areas that are now without life.

Using Dammed Resources

The Dead Sea is a big dam that doesn't have any outlet. It does not produce life. But scientists today tell us that there are many valuable minerals in the Dead Sea. So it is in the Church today. There are great resources in the Church today but Christians must use them and let them flow out to a needy world. There's enough spiritual water dammed up in the 100,000 Christians of Thailand to let it flow out to the 65,000,000 people of Thailand.

Transmitting Living Power

The Yanhee Dam in Thailand has a hydro electric generating plant. Power is generated by the flow of water through channels passing through the generator turbines. The Thai government has built electric lines to go right across the whole land, and the power from this dam flows into every part of Thailand through these electric wires. Likewise the Church should be the electric channels that take the spiritual power of God into every community in the land of Thailand.

Reproduce or Perish

Many nature species of wildlife have become extinct. They have died out or been killed out, because humans did not preserve them or maintain their continued reproduction.

Whether it be the North, Central, South or North East, the Church must reach out and reproduce with the living power of God. They must take the Gospel to the Thai, the Lao, the Chinese, the Karen, and other tribal groups. The command of Christ is to take the Gospel to every person, to every tribe, and to teach those who find new life in Christ. Christians are to grow in spiritual maturity and to become life-producing witnesses to others. If the Church does not do this, it is not likely to survive much less grow in multiplying proportions. The church must reproduce its self in every community in each succeeding generation.

Chapter 3 – Summary

1. To survive and to fulfil the Lord's commission, the Church must reproduce itself across the land in many areas. Life produces life. New churches must be planted.
2. Blockages of sin in our lives must be confessed and cleansed away so that the Holy Spirit can use us as channels to spread the Gospel.
3. All the resources of the church should be used to expand the church. Every Christian should be mobilized in the witnessing life of the church. The spiritual blessings and gifts, as well as our money, must be pooled. God will bless them mightily.
4. The Gospel must be planted in every corner of Thailand – in every village, in every province, and to every tribe and class.

Personal Questions:

1. How many new members has your church added as converts from the world in the last year? How many do you believe your congregation can win in the coming year through prayer and witness?
2. How many new churches were planted in your area in the last five years? How many new churches are needed in your area as strong witnesses to the power of Christ? How many “baby churches” can your church establish in the next five years?

Remember: The small dedicated number of Christians can work together in evangelism to make an impact in Thailand. Even thirty thousand revived and witnessing Christians can reach sixty-five million people for Christ. God will multiply Christians and new churches through our bold witness in the power of the Holy Spirit. A good light projected through a tiny lens can illuminate a large screen. So God, the light of the world, will shine through a minority of dedicated Christians who faithfully witness to bring the knowledge of the Gospel to the whole country.

Chapter 4

A STRATEGY – BRIDGES FOR COMMUNICATING THE GOSPEL

Thai people eat rice. They don't eat wheat or potatoes, but rice. They like the taste of rice. Rice is a thing of the Thai soil. So the Church must find ways to make the Gospel a thing of the soil. Thailand is known as the "rice bowl of the East." The Thai farmers know how to plant rice. So the Thai Christians must learn how to plant the Church in Thailand.

Finding Where Hearts Itch

When someone's elbow itches he does not scratch his head, but his elbow. He scratches where it itches. What is the deep spiritual itch in the hearts of the people? The Church must find out what it is and then apply the Gospel to meet those needs. They must scratch where it itches. What do the people want? Is it peace? Is it security? Is it someone to love them? Is it victory over evil spirits? Then we can show them that Jesus gives peace. Jesus gives true security. Jesus is the One who loves them. Jesus conquers the power of demons. Someone who is close to his relatives and friends usually knows what is itching at their lives. If we are close to people we can find out where it itches, then we can "scratch where it itches" with the Gospel. We must know what the felt needs of the people are before we can help meet those needs. How does the Church reach over into Thai society to help them with the Gospel?

Building Bridges Across to the Unsaved

Many years ago there were very few large bridges or good roads in Thailand. If one wanted to cross the large river from one side to the other, he couldn't walk across a bridge. He'd have to go by boat. But today bridge building is a big industry in Thailand. There are many bridges across the rivers in Thailand. The Church must build bridges into the Thai society. Bridges are an important means of communication from one place to another. So the Christians must build bridges to take the Gospel from the Church across into the world.

The Prayer Bridge

How do we build bridges? Well, first of all, one bridge is prayer. Prayer is the bridge that will reach across any gulf, across any distance. There was once a lady in California, USA, who was very sick. She had to lie on her bed in the hospital for twenty years before she died. She was a Christian and wondered how she could reach people with the Gospel. One day she discovered that there was a certain tribe in Africa who had never heard of the Gospel of Christ. So she began to build a bridge to reach those people. She began to pray. This became a real burden for prayer over many years. She prayed for workers to go into that tribe and for translators to produce the Bible in the tribal language. She prayed for national Christians to be raised up. She prayed for national evangelists, and for Bible teachers. Years later a strong church was established and multiplied in that place, although she had never been there. She had built a bridge for the Gospel through prayer.

The Bridge of the Bible

Another bridge the Christians have is the Word of God. The Bible is God's love letter to the sinner. People are interested in the message of the bible. This is why the Bible is one of the world's best selling books. It is why the Bible has been translated into many, many languages. In Indonesia there was a student who bought a New Testament a few years ago. He took it 80 miles back up into the hills where he lived. Three years later there was a church of 800 in those hills. The Bible was a bridge that reached into those people's hearts way back in the hills.

The Family Bridge

Another bridge that God has placed in human society is the close relationships among relatives and friends. We can reach these people easily. We can talk to them easily. We know their problems, their difficulties, and their happiness. In the New Testament we see that God often worked in families and households. Even amongst the twelve disciples we find two sets of brothers – Peter and Andre, James and John (Matt. 4:18-22). It was Andrew who told his brother, Peter, "We have found the Messiah" (John 1:41). In Acts we read of Cornelius and his household coming to the Lord, as well as the Philippian jailer and his family, and Crispus and his family (Acts 10:24; 16:31; 18:8). The family is a wonderful bridge over which the Gospel can pass. Indeed the Asian family is very closely knit and is very much like the Bible families of the Jews and the Greeks. In the early history of the Church in Thailand, the days of Dr. D. McGilvary, we understand that the Church grew much in Northern Thailand through families coming to the Lord. When someone believed he also took the Gospel to his own family, and so many of them came to know the Lord as well. Rev. Fred Magbanua of the Philippines tells of a Colonel in the Philippine Army who used to be a gambler and drunkard. Rev. Magbanua witnessed to him and within two weeks he accepted the Lord. Later he invited Fred to come and have Bible study with the family. This colonel invited his daughter and son to come to hear the Word of God also, and they accepted the Lord. Later he invited his nephews and cousins and his god-father and god-mother, and other relatives to her the Word of God also. Within three years there were 62 different families related to him who had been influenced by the Gospel. Some of these families had become completely Christian. Others had some members were Christians. They travelled to a village a hundred miles away to visit relatives and tell them of the gospel, and there another church was established in that village. God is still working like this in Thailand today. The family bridge is one of the most important bridges for evangelism.

The Bridge of Natural Relationships

The Christian has natural bridges for the Gospel through relationships with his friends, and with his business associates. After hearing Christ's call to follow, Philip went and found his friend, Nathaniel, and told him about the Lord also (Jn. 1:45). There are bridges between the Thai farmer and the rice merchant, or between the shop keeper and his customers, or between the government officials and their contacts. In Thailand there are bridges between the Thai and the Chinese, or the Thai and the Lao. In the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 the disciples became the link between the lord Jesus and the hungry people. They were the bridges between Jesus and the people. Jesus is the Bread of Life. The people around us are spiritually hungry. The Church must be the bridge between the Bread of Life and the hungry people.

Bridges Through Prayer Cells

One practical way to combine these three important bridges, that is prayer, the Word of God, and the family, is the evangelistic prayer cell. Rev. Fred Magbanua of the Philippines was a pastor for 15 years. He tried many methods of winning souls to the Lord. He tried big campaigns, open air meetings, and had special speakers. He found that there were some good results, but they didn't seem to last very long. He felt he was like a man who was trying to row a boat which was filled with passengers, his own church members, who weren't helping to row. So he decided to change his method, and to start down at the bottom. He got the Christians to form into small groups for prayer and witness, and pretty soon he found that his church members were doing a lot more work than he could ever have done himself. Now he felt like everybody in his congregation were sitting in the boat and they were all rowing together. Within five months there were 11 groups started and in three years his church membership grew from 60 to 350 with groups in many places. The Philippine Christians all over the whole land have now taken this method as their main way of evangelism. They have planned to establish 10,000 evangelistic prayer cells within the next three or four years. Prayer cells played an important part also in the Indonesian Revival. A study reveals that most of those won to the Lord has contact with a prayer cell, or decided to follow Christ in the prayer cell. It may be God's time to have the Church here in Thailand move in, working in prayer cells in this way.

Chapter 4 – Summary

1. Local Christians must learn to plant and multiply churches so as to meet the hearts needs of the people across the whole country.
2. Build bridges across to the unsaved through prayer, the Bible, and our natural relationships with relatives and close friends.
3. Prayer cell evangelism is one of the best ways to bridge the gap between Christians and the unsaved.

Personal Questions:

1. Has Christ met some of your hearts needs? Tell others how the Lord helps you regularly.
2. Are you concerned that your relatives and friends find Christ? Then pray and witness to your family and friends.
3. Do you pray with someone else about your family and friends? Then ask God to help you start a prayer cell.

Remember: God has given us some wonderful bridges to help reach our unsaved relatives and friends. Use them. Encourage others to start prayer cells.

Chapter 5

A PRACTICAL SOLUTION – PRAYER CELL EVANGELISM

In Thailand there are many ways to fish. The ingenuity of the Thai fishermen has produced many different types of traps and instruments for catching fish. Sometimes a fisherman goes out by himself to catch fish, but most times Thai fishermen like to help each other. So they go out in small groups. They feel more secure. It is more fun. Generally the group catches more fish than the individual fisherman.

Strength in Small Groups

Now God has called each Christian to be a “fisher of men.” God wants Christians to win men through their witness. Many Christians say it is hard to witness alone. It is difficult to pray alone. It is not easy to study the Word by oneself. That is why small groups like prayer cells help strengthen the Church. Remember Jesus had a group of 12 disciples. He sent them out two by two. He sent the 70 out two by two. Paul and Barnabas always had a few others working with them in the ministry. Prayer cells help the Church have more effective witness. They encourage the Church to reach out to the community around.

How to Start a Prayer Cell

It is not difficult to start a prayer cell. It does not depend on the missionary or the pastor to set up a prayer cell. Where there are two or three Christian anywhere who are burdened to pray and to witness, they can set up a prayer cell. All they have to do is to decide amongst themselves to meet, at what time to meet regularly, and where to meet. That is all they need to do to start a prayer cell.

Seek Someone to Join You

Sometimes there is only one person who is really burdened to pray and witness, and so it is difficult to find someone else to join in a prayer cell. Rev. Mac Bradshaw said that he prayed for one and a half years before another person joined him in the prayer cell. And so if there is only one, then he should pray earnestly that God will raise up someone else to meet with him for prayer.

Relationship to Church D.M. (?)

You don't necessarily need to meet at the church for the prayer cell. It could be held in a home of one of the Christians. It could be changed from home to home, or even held out under a tree. The time to meet needs to be suitable to all the members of the prayer cell. This doesn't necessarily need to replace the church prayer meeting, but could be held at another time which wouldn't affect the church program.

Limit Number in Each Cell

Prayer cells should not have too many members. A prayer cell of three to five is sufficient. If there are many more than that, it could be divided into two prayer cells, or three. There are three

things that are needed to start a prayer cell: (1) burdened hearts, (2) a regular time to meet, and (3) a regular place to meet.

Three Vital Aspects

The evangelistic cell has three important parts. They are: (1) Prayer, (2) Bible Study, (3) Witness. Through prayer we talk to God. In our Bible Study God talks to us, and then in witness we tell God's Word to others. Prayer reaches out to spiritual power. Bible Study provides spiritual food. Witness is spiritual exercise.

The steam train needs wood, fire and water to produce power to go. Rice needs ploughed ground, sufficient water and plenty of sunshine to grow. Even so the Christian needs prayer, Bible study and witness for full spiritual growth. If an engine has no petrol, or if a spark plug does not work, the engine will not do. If a Christian does not pray, study the Bible, or witness he is frequently not very effective for God.

What to Pray For

In most church prayer meetings prayers are very general. We pray for the whole of Thailand, we pray for the king and political leaders, we pray for the whole world, we pray for our church. But what should we pray for in our prayer cells? We pray more specifically for our close relatives and friends. We pray for them because we want to witness to them. We pray for them by name – specific names. Evangelism is intensely personal. The Bible says, “God loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). This is very personal. So we need to pray for personal people. We need to be specific in our praying. Remember Jesus called His disciples by name. He said, “Andrew, follow thou Me,” or “Peter, follow Me.” So we need to pray for specific people by name, especially our relatives and close friends. In the prayer cell we share prayers for the families of our fellow Christians in that prayer cell. We pray for their relatives and friends by name.

Feedback from Witnessing

When we have gone out to witness from this prayer cell, we often run into problems, or find someone who shows genuine interest in the gospel. Next time the prayer cell meets, we pray about these problems or encouragements. If we witness a lot, then there will probably be a lot to pray about. If we witness only a little bit, we will probably find it is hard to know what to pray for.

New Christians

We can also pray for the people who have become new Christians, that they will grow in the Lord. We can expect God to answer specific requests when we've prayed for our families and friends by name, and when we've witnessed to them. Prayer prepares the way for witness. When we pray specifically to God for someone, the Lord prepares the heart of that one before we go and witness to him. We must be careful to spend a good part of the time in our prayer cell in praying for people by name. We must be careful not to let many other things crowd into the prayer item.

The Brief Bible Study

After we have talked to God in prayer, we ask God to talk to us through His Word, so we spend some time in Bible study. We do not spend a long time in the bible study, but ask God to teach us and help us be prepared as we go out to witness through His Word.

Choosing the Passage

The leader or one of the Christians will select a passage from the Bible to study. Each member of the prayer cell should spend time during the week looking for passages in Scripture that would be helpful and useful in witnessing to others.

Method of Study

When they come to the cell group meeting they will just discuss this passage briefly and help themselves to discover the answers in a short period of time. They will do three things:

1. Read the passage
2. Summarize the story in easy words
3. Share practical lessons from the story

This is very simple, but it is also very helpful. The Bible is the basis of evangelism. The Bible Study often helps us to answer the questions of those to whom we witness.

How to Witness

When the members meet in the prayer cell they spend much time in prayer, praying for individuals by name, especially their own relatives and friends. They also spend time in Bible Study, so that God will speak to them and prepare their hearts. After this time, they will spend time during the rest of the week in going out to witness to those for whom they have been praying. They can go by themselves or with another Christian. They will witness to their relatives and to their close friends.

Here are a few things to help as we go out to witness:

1. Jesus has promised to be with us, so we don't need to be afraid. He said, "Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world" (I Jn. 4:4).
2. Smile when you go to visit someone. A kind smile can win a lot of friends; a worried look makes people become suspicious. When we go to share the good news, we should show that we are happy and joyful in the Lord, so SMILE.
3. Sometimes we may be nervous in witnessing. We are afraid people are looking at us too much. If we take a colored Bible portion or a colored tract along with us to give to the person, they will notice that and look at that more than looking at us. This is one way of building a bridge. Remember the Word of God is powerful. Sometimes we will be asked, "What is that you have in your hand?" Then we can tell them about what the Bible says about salvation.
4. Ask questions rather than speak or preach a lot. Ask questions to get their attention. Jesus asked questions all the time in the New Testament. He asked the woman of Samaria for a drink of water (Jn. 4:7). He asked Paul, "Why are you persecuting

- Me?” (Acts 9:4). Philip asked the Ethiopian, “Do you understand what you’re reading?” (Acts 8:30). Ask questions about things that would be interesting to that person. Ask simple questions. Ask short questions.
5. Use story pictures. Tell a brief story of something that happened in the village and then ask them what they think about it. Thai people think in pictures. Remember Jesus used to speak in pictures? We read in the Bible that “Without a parable spake He not unto them” (Matt. 13:34).
 6. Spend time listening. Do not talk too much. Let the other person talk. Ask questions so that they will talk, and listen to what they have to say. Rev. Russell Self says God has made us with two ears and one mouth, so we should spend twice as much time listening as we do talking. Dr. Toyotome speaks about the evangelism of the ears. Witnessing is going out to listen to the heartbeat of Thailand.
 7. When they ask questions that relate to the Gospel, we can witness to them, having gained their confidence. Sometimes Christians are afraid that they cannot answer all their questions. If people ask us a question that we cannot answer, then say so. Admit it. Say, “I don’t know, but I will try to find out for you. I’ll bring you an answer later.” This will give you an opportunity to go back and to visit them once more. Then you can take that problem back to your prayer cell and talk about it. Or you can take it back to your pastor and see if he can help you answer it.

God Uses Common Christians

Many of the apostles were not highly educated officials. They were common people. Yet through their witness people of every level of society came to hear the Gospel, right up as far as kings and rulers. Even the Jewish religious rulers marvelled at the boldness of Peter and John, because they knew that they were unlearned and ignorant men, but they had noted that they had been with Jesus (Acts 4:13).

Five Laws for Prayer Cell Evangelism

Look at your hand. It has five fingers. This reminds us of five things that are important in prayer cell evangelism.

1. Pray for your relatives and close friends.
2. Witness to them using the Word of God.
3. Go back to visit those who are interested.
4. Teach them to grow in the Lord Jesus Christ when they have believed.
5. Instruct them to go back and repeat the whole process.

As we pray for our relatives and friends the Lord prepares their hearts, and He prepares our hearts also to go to them. As we go to visit them, we witness to them using the Bible, the Word of God. Such passages as Gen. 1 and John 1 are valuable in teaching about God and Creation. John 3 and Luke 24 depict Salvation God offers. Thus the Bible is important, revealing spiritual truths to man. The Word of God speaks to hearts and we see that some of them will show interest. And so we go back to visit those who show interest. We go back to visit them often, teaching them more about God. Through the prayers of the prayer cell and through the teaching of the Word of God, the Holy Spirit will work to cause some of them to believe. Then it is our responsibility to move on to help them grow in the Lord Jesus Christ, to teach them as much as

we know about the Lord. But we must not just stop there, otherwise they will not go on to reproduce life.

The Vital Little Finger

The little finger is small, but important. We must teach new believers to pray for their relatives and friends, to witness to them, to return to visit those who are interested, to teach those who believe to grow in grace, and in turn those who believe to repeat the same process. Thus, the cycle of witness keeps going on. It is the cycle that gives movement. It is important that the Church keeps continuing on, that it keeps reaching out, that it keeps reproducing. There's one important thing about learning to ride a bicycle – that is that you must keep pedalling or you'll stop and fall off. So we must keep the church going. We must keep the cycle of witnessing going on by teaching the new believers to go back, and to pray, and to witness, and to visit and teach their relatives and friends.

Laying Foundations

Now when the five principles of the hand takes on strength in the lives of every Christian across the land, then this form of evangelism becomes the basic foundations for our church building and planting. The other forms of evangelism will then take on meaning. Radio, literature, films, campaigns, etc. will have greater effect because the foundations are being laid by the cell group evangelism. As new people are added to the Lord, it will probably be found necessary to set up new church groups, little sister churches or baby churches in different areas or villages. This is what happened in the New Testament. The Church would aim to plant a church in every community, so that everyone will hear the Gospel.

Example to Follow

In conclusion, let us look at the chart of churches. No. 2 pictures the Church of the New Testament. It is a church that is reaching out. It is a church that has prayer cells and witnessing teams going out constantly. It is a church that is spreading out into villages, as we see in No. 3. When people accept the Lord in that village, they are either added back into the church (No. 2) or they will branch out by starting a new church as in No. 4, because there are so many Christians there. The new church (No. 4) will be taught by the Christians who helped them become established, then each out to other villages as in No. 5, and possibly a new church would also be planted there too, and so on. This goes on endlessly.

Danger to Overcome

Look again at church No. 2. This illustrates the Ephesian Church originally. But then they became cold and lost their first love. They became ingrown. They became the church shown in No. 1. This is the picture of many churches today. We must constantly guard against becoming ingrown. The way to overcome it is to set up cell group evangelism. Christians who pray in little groups for their relatives and friends, and who go out to visit them using the Word of God, are not likely to be ingrown. As this cycle of evangelism continues on, the gospel reaches out further and further. This is the way God wants His church to grow. Evangelism is action. It is hard work. Sometimes it is discouraging work, but it is God's work. God calls us to be fishers of men. He

wants us to work together in winning Thailand for Christ. So let us build bridges, let us start prayer cells, let us use the five principles of the hand in evangelism.

You Are God's Choice

The most important thing in the rice growing industry in Thailand is not machines, nor methods, but people. It is people that plant the rice. It is people that transplant the rice. It is people that harvest and winnow it. People are very important. God's main resources are people, not things. In Acts 1:8 He said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me." It is the dedicated lives of Christians moving out for God and proclaiming the message in the power of God that is God's best means of evangelism. God has chosen many common people to do this. We will have to be dedicated to the Lord. We must depend on the Lord. We need to be diligent to keep the cycle going. We have to be determined when opposition and discouragements confront us. The Lord will build His Church, but WE are His instruments.

Chapter 5 – Summary

1. Thai people like to meet in small groups. It is more fun, more fruitful and strengthens each other. God encourages small groups to pray and witness for Him.
2. Prayer cells are simple to start.
 - a. Two with kindred hearts can begin.
 - b. They agree where to meet each week.
 - c. They agree when to meet each week.
3. Three ? vital elements of prayer cell evangelism are
 - a. Prayer
 - b. Bible Study
 - c. Witness
4. in the prayer cell the members pray for
 - a. Relatives and friends by name
 - b. The results of the previous witnessing encounters
 - c. Those who newly believed
 - d. Preparation of heart and opportunity for future witness
5. The Prayer Cells use simple Bible Study method
 - a. They read a story or selection from the Bible
 - b. They summarize the contents of the story read in simple language
 - c. They suggest practical lessons for spiritual growth and witness
6. The members in the prayer cell witness during the visit by
 - a. Sharing to the unsaved for whom they are praying
 - b. Witness to him about Christ
 - c. Urge him to commit his life to the Lord
7. Review the 5 fingers of the witnessing hand

Personal Questions:

1. Are you practising these principles in your daily life and witness? Do you belong to a prayer cell that does this?
2. Is your church reaching out to the community and surrounding villages to plant new churches?

Remember:

1. Prayer Cell Evangelism is the foundation for church expansion because it involves all believers in prayer, Bible study and witness to unsaved relatives, friends, and neighbours.
2. The Church must continue to reach out to plant churches in all surrounding villages across the whole land. As rice seedlings must be pulled out and transplanted to grow and produce harvest so the church must be willing to suffer and transplant itself in other areas producing spiritual harvest.

Chapter 6

CONFRONTATION – THE WITNESSING ENCOUNTER

Life is full of beginnings – our first breath after birth into this world, our first taste of new food, our first steps, our first day at school, our first job, etc. yes, life is full of beginnings. Every new beginning is not easy. Often Christians want to witness about Christ to relatives and friends, but do not know how to begin. It is hard to start talking to a non-Christian about Christ. Furthermore, it seems difficult to urge him to commit himself to Jesus. Many Christians in Thailand find it difficult to help a person accept Christ, even when he is ready to do so. Because of these problems, some helpful suggestions are given here to encourage Christians in the witnessing encounter.

Motivation (reason) for Witness

Supposing a man had six children. One day when he returned home he saw his house was burning and his six children were inside. What do you think he would do? No doubt he would try to rescue all six of his children from the burning flames, even if he had to die in doing so. Why would he do that? Surely it would be because he loved his own children! This is the kind of love Jesus showed to us when He died on the cross to redeem us from our sin (John 3:16). This is also why Jesus commanded His disciples to tell the Good News to all God's lost children.

When we respect and love someone very much, we do all we can to please that person and obey his commands. Therefore, every person who truly loves the Lord should follow Christ's order "to be witnesses unto Him" and preach the Gospel to everyone everywhere (John 14:15; Acts 1:8). Paul said he was "constrained by the love of Christ" to dedicate himself in witness to every person (II Cor. 5:14; Rom. 1:14,15).

The Meaning of Witness

In a court of law the judge call each witness to give his testimony before the verdict is decided. The general meaning of witness is that one person openly declares what he has seen and knows personally to be true, in defence or accusation of another person.

In the Bible, the word "witness" comes from a word which also means "martyr", or one who sacrifices his life. Jesus said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me" (Acts 1:8). Therefore, a Christian witness is a person who boldly declares what he has seen, known, or experienced himself concerning Jesus Christ. He also is prepared to testify to this truth, even to the point of sacrificing his life, if necessary.

Personal Experience Essential to Christian Witness

A person must know Jesus Christ by first-hand experience to be a true witness. Just knowing about Him is not enough. He must be someone who is born again and has received Jesus into his heart as Lord and Saviour. To introduce someone else to a particular person, one must know that person first. It is not enough to know about him. There are many people who know about Jesus, but they cannot be real witnesses unto Him, because they do not know Him personally in their lives. Jesus said that a blind man can't lead another blind man, as they would both fall into the

ditch (Matt. 15:14). Therefore, before a person can witness in power, he must first know Him in his own life.

Necessity of Knowing the Gospel

A Christian witness must also know the Gospel and its meaning if he is to witness to it. Someone who doesn't know anything about cooking cannot teach someone else how to cook; neither can someone who has never repaired an engine teach someone else to be a mechanic. In the same way, it is necessary for a Christian to know the Gospel before he can teach it to someone else.

We've seen already what the gospel is in Chapter 1, paragraph 2, concerning I Cor 15:1-4. The gospel relates to Christ's voluntary death and resurrection to redeem men (Luke 24:46-48) with the promise of forgiveness of sins on the basis of true repentance and faith. Thus, the Christian must witness to man's sin and his salvation through Christ the Saviour, urging him to receive the Lord into his life.

Paul said, "Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel." He also warned that there is no other Gospel, even though an angel from heaven comes and declares one (Gal. 1:6-9). We must understand that witnessing is telling the good news of Christ. It is not comparing Christianity with other religions. It is not proclaiming a religion, but is testifying to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only way of salvation (John 14:6; Acts 4:2).

Good News Spreads

If a person receives good news, he likes to share it with others. He may have bought some good quality clothes or tools at low bargain prices. He will quickly share the news. If he gets a large cash gift, he will soon tell everyone about his good fortune. Good news is spread easily throughout a village. In a very short time it travels from one end to the other.

Christians should also spread the good news of Christ! But why has the Gospel not been spread everywhere? It is hindered mostly by the opposition of Satan, who is God's enemy, and sometimes by the silent lips of Christians.

Responsibility to Tell Important News

If we have important news that will help someone else, we are obliged to tell them. If we saw someone going to step on a poisonous snake, we would quickly warn him about it. Otherwise, we would feel responsible for his being bitten.

Suppose a wild tiger or a mad dog came into your village. Most of the people did not know it was there, but one man saw the dangerous animal. He knew it could cause the death of some of the village people. Suppose he does not tell everyone about this danger, and some of the people are bitten and die! What will the people do to this man later when they find out he knew but did not tell?

The Christian is like a person who has important news, which he is responsible to tell to everyone. Noah knew God would save those who repented, and not let them perish in the coming flood. He boldly warned the people for 120 years, even though they did not listen (Gen. 6). Also

read what God says in Ezekiel 33:8,9. Paul said that he warned the people at Ephesus for 3 years night and day (Acts 20:31). Let us follow his example.

A Big Problem – Fear

When a baby starts walking, he is fearful at first. He falls many times. But as he is encouraged by his parents, and as he practices, he soon is able to walk. If he never takes a step because he is afraid he will fall, or afraid he can't walk, he will never walk!

Probably the reason most Christians find it hard to witness is fear. They are afraid to start. They are afraid of what others might say or do. They are afraid of making mistakes. They are afraid of not being able to answer all the questions. They may feel ashamed to stand out as Christians. Fear is like a big mountain between them and those to whom they want to witness. It brings a big lump in their throats when they think of witnessing.

God's Answer to Fear

1. Smile – God has given us the wonderful ability to smile. It can help us overcome fear. Smile when you go to visit someone. A kind smile can win a lot of friends; a worried look makes people become suspicious. When we go to share the good news, we should show them we are confident and joyful in the Lord, so SMILE!
2. Jesus is with us – The Lord Jesus promised “I am with you always, even unto the end of the age (Matt. 28:20). He lives in the hearts of His children. I John 4:4 says, “Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world.”
3. His Holy Spirit helps us – “God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind” (II Tim. 1:7). The Holy Spirit helps us to overcome fear, and teaches us what to say even in trying circumstances (Matt. 10:18-20).
4. God answers prayer for boldness – When fear, opposition, or difficulties come, pray immediately for God to overcome with boldness from His Spirit. This is how the early Christians overcame fear. Read Acts 4:29-31.

The Value of the Word of God in Witness

A good knowledge of God's Word is not only helpful in overcoming fear, but is also important for use in the witnessing encounter. The Bible is the Word of the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21), as well as the Word of the Lord Jesus. That is why it is important to study it in order to be a faithful witness to Christ (2 Tim. 2:15). The Bible is valuable for teaching how to grow into Christian maturity (2 Tim. 3:15-17). Furthermore, the Word of God speaks to the hearts of unbelievers like a sharp sword. It is living and powerful (Heb. 4:12).

Answering Awkward Questions

Many questions asked by enquirers can be answered by the Word of God. However, Christians don't need to fear if they cannot answer all their questions. If someone asks a question you cannot answer, then admit it! Say, “I don't know, but I will try to find out for you. I'll bring you

an answer later.” This will give you the opportunity to go back and visit them once more. Study the Bible to find out an answer to that problem. You can also take the problem back to your prayer cell and talk it over with them. Or you could take it to your pastor and see if he could help you answer it from the Bible.

Practical Points of the Witnessing Encounter

1. Use Bible Literature – Sometimes we may be nervous in witnessing. We are afraid people are looking at us too much. If we take a colored Bible portion or a colored tract along with us to give to the person, they will notice that and look at that more than looking at us. This is one way of building a bridge. Remember the Word of God is powerful. Sometimes we will be asked, “What is that you have in your hand?” Then we can tell them about what the Bible says about salvation.
2. Ask questions – Rather than speak or preach a lot, ask questions. Ask questions to get their attention. Jesus asked questions all the time in the New Testament. He asked the woman of Samaria for a drink of water (John 4:7). He asked Paul, “Why are you persecuting Me?” (Acts 9:4). Philip asked the Ethiopian “Do you understand what you are reading?” (Acts 8:30). Ask questions about things that would be interesting to that person. Ask simple questions. Ask short questions.
3. Use story pictures – Tell a brief story from the Bible or about something that happened in the village, and then ask them what they think about it. Thai people think in pictures. Remember Jesus used to speak in pictures? We read in the Bible that “without a parable He not unto them” (Matt. 13:34).
4. Spend time listening – Do not talk too much. Let the other person talk. Ask questions so that they will talk, and listen to what they have to say. Rev. Russell Self says that God made us with two ears and one mouth, so we should spend twice as much time listening as we do talking. Dr. Toyotome speaks about the evangelism of the ears. Witnessing is going out to listen to the heartbeat of Thailand. It is finding out the needs people feel throbbing in their hearts.

Attitude During the Witnessing Encounter

As prayer and Bible study are necessary for hearts preparation, so our attitudes in witness are important.

1. Clean heart – Our lives speak to others, as well as our lips. We must have a cleansed heart before God at all times. Sin is our greatest hindrance in witness. Follow John’s suggestion in I John 1:9.
2. Show respect and love – Sometimes those to whom we witness will oppose us. We should not fight back with words, but endeavour to show love and respect to them at all times. Be careful that zeal for the Lord is balanced by love and a calm spirit.

3. Be humble – We are to glorify the Lord and proclaim Him to our friends and relatives. Jesus said, “I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all men unto Me” (John 12:32). Do not boast of ones self, or even of the church, just humbly speak of our wonderful Lord.
4. Be patient – Some will find it difficult to understand Christ’s sacrifice. Others will be confident in their old religion. We must patiently depend upon the Holy Spirit to work. He is the One who convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:8). Only He can open darkened hearts to the light of Christ’s words.
5. Be determined – The Christian witness must be ready to face difficulties and not become discouraged or disappointed by lack of interest or by opposition. He must not be ashamed of Christ, but continue to witness faithfully to those for whom he is praying. Read Rom. 1:16; Matt. 10:32,33; and 2 Tim. 2:12.
6. Be always ready – the Christian must be “ready always to give an answer to every man who asks you a reason of the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15). We are to take every opportunity to witness (Eph. 5:16). Paul said that as best he could he was “ready to preach the Gospel” to others far away (Rom. 1:15).

The Method of Witness

There are many ways to tell the one message of Christ to others. One of the best ways is to give your personal testimony of accepting Christ to them. Another way is to use a passage in the Bible, e.g. Luke 23,24. There are also several tracts that have been translated, summarizing various approaches to giving the Gospel message, e.g. “Four Things God Wants You to Know,” “The Four Spiritual Laws,” etc. these can be helpful as an outline to follow in witness, but many people do not understand sufficiently. A weakness in some of these tracts is that they start at the point where the unbeliever is expected to at least know about God. This is a problem in Thailand, especially where people often think of Jesus as only being a good man and a great prophet, but not as God the Creator. Therefore, another suggestion is made below for use in witnessing. It concerns God’s power. There are six steps. Let’s call it “The Power of Redemption for You.”

1. The Lord Jesus Christ is the all powerful God. He is the Creator and Governor over all (John 1:1-3; Col. 1:16,17).
2. God created man in the image of God, and gave him power to govern the world (Gen. 1:26,27)
3. Man forfeited true power by sinning, and became slaves unto the power of Satan (Rom. 5:12; Gen. 3; Eph. 2:1-3).
4. The Lord Jesus came to break the power of Satan in our lives and to redeem us from sin. He gives us new power through His Holy Spirit (John 1:14,18,29).
5. We can have this power in our lives by receiving Christ into our hearts as our personal Saviour (John 1:10-13).
6. We must pass on this message of God’s power to others, urging them to also accept Christ (Matt. 28:18-20; John 1:36,37).

Memorize these six points and use them as an outline for witnessing to your relatives and friends.

Urging a Commitment for Christ

Both the Christian and the interested seeker should understand clearly what it means to accept Christ into one's heart. Because many Christians are not sure about this, a brief summary is given here to help. In the decision to accept Jesus Christ, there are two important things. They are: (1) Repentance towards God, and (2) Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21).

The person who wants to believe in Jesus should:

1. Believe that Jesus Christ is the only true God, the Creator, who died voluntarily on the cross and rose again the third day to redeem the sinner (Rom. 10:9,10; John 3:16).
2. Confess sin and repent from all sin, idols, and evil spirits (Acts 19:18-19, 26:18; 1 Thess. 1:9,10; Mark 1:5).
3. Turn to Christ by faith and accept Him as personal Saviour (John 1:12; Rev. 3:20).
4. Receive the Holy Spirit into his heart and life (Luke 11:12,13; Rom. 8 :9; Acts 2:38).
5. Determine to follow Christ wholeheartedly from that day forward, and to witness for Him (Luke 9:63; 1 Cor. 15:58; Heb. 10:35-39).

A Pattern for Praying to Receive Christ

Someone who is prepared to follow Christ as outlined above may ask, "How do I receive Jesus?" We can answer simply, "Ask Him to come into your heart by faith and prayer." If he is uncertain how to pray, we can lead him phrase by phrase in a prayer like the following:

"O Lord Jesus, the Creator of all, I confess my sin to you. I truly believe that Jesus is the only true God, who died on the cross to redeem me from my sin and rose again. Right now I repent from all my sin. I turn from evil spirits and all idols unto Jesus. Please come into my heart and forgive me from my sin. Give me your Holy Spirit to live in my life. I determine to follow Jesus and depend upon Him from this day forward. Thank you, God, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

Baptism – A Symbol of New Life in Christ

Those who truly repent and believe should be baptized early, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is not only a bold declaration of their new faith, but it is the symbol of their true repentance towards God as commanded in the Scripture. Baptism does not give new life, but is an outward sign of having received new life within. Baptism is not the end of the Christian life, but it is the beginning of a new life to be lived for God (Mark 1:5; Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:37,38).

Immediate Follow-up

A new Christian has received new life. He must be helped to grow in that new life. Think of a newborn baby. At first it must feed on its mother's milk, then it begins to drink cow's milk, eat soft food, then thick food, and finally vegetables and meat. The parents must love it, feed it, and teach it. This is also true of new Christians. New believers must be taught right away to:

1. Pray daily for growth in Christ and the salvation of relatives and friends (1 John 5:13,14; 1 Thess. 5:17).
2. Read the Bible daily and share it with relatives and friends (Matt. 4:4; John 6:63; 2 Tim. 3:15,16; Rom. 10:9,10).

3. Meet regularly with local Christians for fellowship and worship (Heb. 10:25).
4. Confess sin immediately to Christ when aware of it in his life, and ask God's forgiveness and cleansing (1 John 1:9).
5. Depend on the Lord Jesus to give victory over the devil, temptation, and opposition that will come from the world (1 John 4:4, 5:4-5).

Integrate Non-Believers into Local Churches

We must continue to follow the new believer up and teach him the principles of the five fingers of evangelism (Chapter 5). We should help him to grow, to become an active member of the church, and encourage him to help in the planting of new churches in new areas.

Chapter 6 – Summary

1. The motivation for witness is the love of God in our hearts, together with the command of our Lord.
2. A witness boldly declares what he has seen, known or experienced concerning Jesus Christ.
3. It is necessary to know Jesus Christ personally, and know the Gospel, to be a witness for Christ.
4. The problem of fear can be overcome by God's help and presence.
5. Attitudes in witnessing are important, especially as we "lift Christ up" before the people.
6. Revise(?) the method of witness, and urging a commitment to Jesus.
7. We must love, feed, and teach new believers through the Word of God, prayer, and fellowship. Help them in worship and witness.

Personal Questions:

1. Do you know Jesus personally by being born again? Do you witness to others about Him?
2. How much time do you spend studying the Bible in order to help you witness better to your relatives and friends?
3. Do you persevere in witnessing, and in following up new Christians until they are active witnesses in the church?

Remember: It is not easy to be a good witness to Jesus Christ, but as we depend in the Holy Spirit to help us, God will work in hearts and add to His Church.

Chapter 7

MOBILIZATION – EVERY CHRISTIAN AN ACTIVE WITNESS

At the beginning of Chapter 5 it has already been seen that the Thai people like to go fishing in small groups. They also enjoy doing many other things together. The more people work uniting their energies with one heart and mind, the more fruit results. Each one is encouraged by the others. Furthermore, it is more fun working together.

Mobilized for Planting and Harvesting

When the rice seedlings have grown big enough, the Thai farmers join together in large groups helping to transplant the seedlings in the rice paddies by hand. During this season everyone is busy helping. Schools are often closed so that all, young and old, men and women alike, can work together in planting the crop.

Later when the rices is ripe, everyone is again found working together harvesting the golden grain. They work in long rows, cutting off the heads of rice with sickles and bringing them together in sheaves. This is a very busy time, as the rice must be gathered in before it is spoiled, stolen, or gets overripe.

In the same way, the Lord Jesus calls all Christians to help in both spreading His Good News, and especially in helping reap His spiritual harvest field throughout the world (Jn. 4:35-38). He calls the Church to mobilize its members in prayer and witness to gather in a great harvest of souls who need Him as their Saviour (Matt. 9:37-38).

Relationship for Co-operation in Witness

In Thailand even distant relatives of the same family feel a special relationship towards one another, and a responsibility to help each other. The bible says the Church is the “family of God” (Eph. 2:19). Therefore, each Christian has an important relationship to each member, because of his special relationship to the Lord Jesus (Rom. 12:4,5).

The Bible explains that as a body has many different parts, so the Church is made up of many different members. In I Cor. 12:27 we read that the Church is Christ’s Body, of which each born again believer is a member. As every part is necessary for the full functioning of a body, so every Christian is important to the Church and its work. Therefore, each true Christian in every church should join hands together in fellowship and witness in spreading the Good News of Christ. They should all be involved in expanding the Church and helping gather lost sinners into His Church.

A Secret of Victory or Failure

In the Old Testament there are many illustrations of the united strength of God’s people against their enemies. Probably one of the greatest victories was at Jericho. In obedience to God’s command Joshua mobilized the whole of Israel including the soldiers, the priests, and the people (Joshua 6). After a week, and 13 marches around Jericho, all the people shouted in unison when the priests sounded the alarm, and the city wall fell down flat. It was a great victory through God’s power.

The next city called Ai, was very small, so Joshua sent only a small number up to take it. Thus, not everyone was involved in the battle. The people of Ai killed 36 Israelites and sent the rest fleeing for their lives (Joshua 7:1-5). It was a shameful defeat caused both by Achan's sin and Israel's pride. After Achan's sin had been dealt with, God commanded Joshua to mobilize the whole army of Israel to go up and take Ai (Joshua 8). Another great victory was won by the united forces under God's command.

Where the Church in our day is weak in witness or is not expanding, the problem is often sin in the Church, or a lack of vision and action in mobilizing the church members to reach out to the lost souls around them. God calls us to confess our sins and to mobilize our energies in His work. Then He will also bless us.

The Church as God's Army

The Thai government wisely mobilizes the nation for its own defence forces. This is done both through encouraging volunteers and by conscription. In each village ordinary people are volunteers for local defence in time of crisis. This gives strength to the Thai armed forces and protection to the nation. Everyone feels they have a part to play in giving sons, or husbands, or in providing food and "support" in times of emergency.

The New Testament compares Christians with being soldiers for Christ in the spiritual conflict (2 Tim. 2:3-4). Paul calls his helpers in the ministry "fellow soldiers" (Phil. 2:25). Furthermore, every Christian is commanded to put on the whole armour of God (Eph. 6:10-18). So the Church is like God's army called to do battle against the powers of spiritual darkness. Through obedience and the power of the Gospel they are to rescue those already captured by sin and who are under the control of Satan and his evil spirits. An army of scattered individuals is without strength, but one that unites its energies towards a target is powerful indeed. As the nation mobilizes its military forces, so the Church should mobilize every Christian in effective witness to the lost world around. Every local church should be a strong united army for Christ.

God Equips Every Christian for Witness

Before a soldier is sent out to face the enemy, he must be bold, equipped and well trained. So likewise the Christian. God commands every Christian to have "his feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace" (Eph. 6:15; Rom. 10:15). Each one is to be equipped with "the sword of the Spirit" namely, the Word of God (Eph. 6:17). Every Christian is to "confess with his lips the Lord Jesus" (Rom. 10:9,10). These are the weapons with which God equips His Church.

God also gives leaders to train and mobilize the Christians in witness (Eph. 4:11,12). The Holy Spirit gives both power and boldness to proclaim the Gospel (Acts 1:8, 4:31). God's equipment is ready, the world of dying sinners is waiting, God is also patiently calling for Christian volunteers to arise in wholehearted dedication to Him.

The Great Problem

A man was trying hard to pull his water buffalo up a wooden ramp onto the back of a truck. The buffalo was stubborn and would not move. Sometimes it ran off to the side, pulling the man

behind it. He was having a difficult time. His friends were standing by watching all of this and not helping one bit. Finally the man urged his neighbours and friends to help him. They agreed to unite in this task. Some pulled on the rope, others pushed the buffalo from behind. Still others stood by the side so the buffalo could not run off. In a short time the buffalo was safe and sound in the truck ready to be moved to another place.

In many places along rivers in Thailand there are little ferry boats which take passengers back and forth across the streams. The passengers sit in the boat while the ferry owner at the stern of the boat rows them across to the other side. He collects a small fee for doing so.

Unfortunately, this is a picture of many churches where the pastor is seen as the one who does the work in the church. The church members just sit in the meetings and since they pay the pastor's salary, they expect the pastor to do all the evangelism, teaching and visitation. They are not involved in the work of the church.

Not many years ago during the Thai New Year's Season, called Songkran or Water Throwing Festival, there was interesting activity held near many Buddhist temples. It was the boat race. Long narrow boats, filled with 10 to 15 eager men, challenged each other along the river as they competed in the race. Each one was a participant, not a passenger. In the hands of each one was an oar. Together every member in each boat co-ordinated his efforts and united his strength to make the boat move towards the goal as speedily as possible. This is a good example of how church members in every church should share together in evangelism towards a heavenly goal.

The Example of the Early Church

The early Christians met together daily, both at the temple and from house to house, ceasing not to teach and preach Jesus Christ (Acts 2:46; 5:42). When the great persecution rose against the Church, the ordinary Christians were scattered abroad and went everywhere preaching the Word (Acts 8:1-4). So the Church spread through ordinary Christians to Samaria (Acts 8) Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch (Acts 11:19-21).

All this time the apostles were still in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1; 11:22; 12:1-3). It was the ordinary believers who boldly witnessed and started churches wherever they went. God calls the Church today to mobilize ordinary Christians in this ministry.

Church Leaders Given to Help Prepare the Christians for Witness

In the army there are a few generals who direct the strategy and guide the action. But there are many ordinary soldiers who do the work of fighting the battles.

When a car full of passengers breaks down, the passengers don't just sit and let the driver get out and push. Usually it is the other way around. The passengers all get out and push, leaving the driver in the car to steer and control it. They do all the work.

Some people think that is the work of the pastor or the evangelist to do all of God's work in the church. But Ephesians 4:11,12 explains that God has given apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to prepare and train the church members to serve the Lord in the work of the

church. Paul told Timothy to commit the word of witness to faithful men who would in turn teach others also (2 Tim. 2:2).

The Lord Jesus Trained Disciples for Mobilization

During His three year's ministry on earth the Lord Jesus majored in training 12 ordinary disciples to carry on after He returned to heaven. He sent them out to practice two by two (Matt. 10). He also prepared another 70 followers and sent them out to serve two by two in a similar fashion (Luke 10).

Jesus urged those who trusted Him to be witnesses. When Jesus cast out the unclean spirits from the man at Gadarenes, He commanded him to return to his home and witness to his family and friends. As he went he proclaimed his testimony to the whole city (Luke 8:38,39; Mark 5:19,20).

After the Resurrection the Lord Jesus ordered His followers to "make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:18-20). In this great commission He promised the power of the Holy Spirit to help them (Acts 1:8). On the day of Pentecost there were about 120 disciples present when the Holy Spirit was given to the Church (Acts 1:5; 2:1-4). Thus the Lord (1) delegated His work to the disciples, (2) gave them authority, power, and responsibility to carry it out, and (3) required them to account to Him when He returns on the day of judgment (Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:9-11). The Commission of our Lord is still as valid today as it was in the days of the early disciples.

Advance Through Mobilization at Local Church Level

In rural Thailand the district headmen (Kamnan) mobilizes the people from the villages in his district to build roads and canals valuable to the area. Both men and women come to help. They are not paid to do so, but every family volunteers to help in response to the call of the district headman. This helps develop the area.

In the same way, each local church should mobilize its members in prayer, Bible study, and witness to those in their area. The local church leadership should train the believers to serve the Lord voluntarily. Small witnessing bands could also go out from the local church to extend the Gospel in other areas, aiming to plant new churches there.

Thus, when Christians are mobilized at local church level, the united work at district level, denominational level, and national level can easily be developed. God calls us to start where the church is, and move out until the whole land is reached, by establishing new churches in every province, district and village.

An Outstanding Illustration of Mobilization

Rev. Tongkham Pantupong tells the following valuable story concerning mobilization in the Chiangmai area of North Thailand. Some years ago the road to the top of Doi Suthep mountain was rough, dangerous, and difficult to climb, especially in the wet season. Thus, it was awkward to reach the famous Buddhist temple situated right on the top of the mountain.

A Buddhist priest named, Khruba Seewijai, who had much respect and influence among the people mentioned the problem of the road, and suggested that the people might like to do something about it.

As the news was spread by word of mouth, people came from near and far to help build a new road to the top of Doi Suthep. Altogether some 100,000 Thai people were mobilized to help. There were young and old, rich and poor, who volunteered time and energy to do this job together.

It was hard work – digging, shovelling, lifting rock and stone. Yet all worked together to accomplish this difficult task. Highly educated men, government officials, and rich businessmen worked alongside the poor and illiterate. They did not choose the easy jobs, but all took turns in digging, shovelling and lifting, until their hands had blisters and their backs ached. But every one was happy to be working together towards a common goal. It seemed only a short time passed before the road was completed to the top of the mountain.

The single request of Khruba Seewijai was thus fulfilled by the mobilized volunteers who came from every walk of life and many places. His suggestion had met with a great response.

God is calling the Christians everywhere to work together in spreading His Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit. Yet the command of our Lord Jesus Christ to make disciples of all nations appears to have been neglected by many Christians and many churches in our day.

The Call to Dedication

Yes, God is calling His Church to revival. Will you dedicate your life to serve Christ where you are? Let us work together in our local church to proclaim Christ, to witness to His power in our lives, and expand new churches in our area. Everyone, young or old, rich or poor, has a vital part in working together, until every Christian, in every church, of every denomination throughout the whole of Thailand is actively witnessing to the lost about Christ, and bringing the new believers into the Church.

The Lord Jesus says, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Luke 9:23). The apostle Paul also calls us to dedicate ourselves to serve the living God in our daily lives. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:1,2). Dedicate your life to Christ today!

Chapter 7 – Summary

1. Thai people like working together in fishing, planting fields, harvesting rice, etc. This is a good example for Thai Christians to follow in witness.
2. Mobilization is a secret of strength and increased fruitfulness.
3. The Church is God's army to battle unitedly against spiritual darkness in each locality.
4. God equips each Christian for witness, not just a few select ones. Ordinary Christians are most important in spreading the Gospel.
5. Pastors, teachers, and evangelists, etc. are called to prepare and train the ordinary Christians to serve the Lord (Eph. 4:11,12).
6. God calls every believer in each church to share in the united task of making disciples of all nations.

Personal Questions:

1. Are you like the church member who leaves the work of the church to the pastor?
2. Are you working together with the Christians in your local church to bring the message of Christ to your area?
3. Will you ask God to revive your heart, and dedicate yourself to serve Him?

Remember: The Lord Jesus commands His Church to mobilize the energies of every member in making disciples among all nations.

APPENDIX

The Power of Redemption for You

The Christian Bible is a miracle Book. It begins at the Creation of all things and finishes beyond the end of time. It traces the history of man from the first couple through Abraham, who obeyed God by faith, to the divinely chosen nation of Israel. After thousands of years, the promised Saviour of the World came to redeem men from their sin. In Christ He is still showing forth His power in redemption to all those who believe.

The Bible is the revealed Word of God. “All Scripture is inspired by God” (2 Tim. 3:16a). “Because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God” (2 Pet. 1:21). David said, “The Spirit of the Lord speaks by me; His word is upon my tongue” (2 Sam. 23:2). Jeremiah explains, “Then the Lord put forth His hand upon my mouth, and the Lord said to me, Behold, I have put my words in your mouth” (Jer. 1:9). So during some fifteen hundred years God spoke to some 50 different men of different social strata, inspiring them to record accurately His Word. They all witnessed to one united theme, to the one and only true God and the salvation from sin provided through the Lord Jesus Christ. Many people think that Jesus is only a man or a prophet. Who is He really?

- I. The Lord Jesus Christ is the true, eternal God who created everything by His almighty power.

The first verse in the Christian Bible says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). “By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all their hosts by the breath of His mouth. He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle, He put the deeps in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord. Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him, for He spake and it came to be, He commanded and it stood forth” (Psalms 33:6-9). “By faith we understand that the world was created by the Word of God” (Heb. 11:3a).

One name for the Lord Jesus is “The Word.” Jesus is God the Creator. “In the beginning was the Word, and Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:1,3). “For in Him all things were created, in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, principalities or authorities. All things were created through Him and for Him. He is before all things and in Him all things hold together” (Col. 1:16,17). “Then Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me” (Matt. 28:18). The Lord Jesus is the true, eternal God who created everything through His almighty power.

- II. Man was created in the image of God with power to govern the world.

“Then God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle on all the earth, and every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created man in His own image. In the image of God He created him, male and female, he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and

subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth” (Gen. 1:26-28). Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being. And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden in the East, and there He put the man whom He had formed. The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till and keep it” (Gen. 2:7,8,15). When I look at Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast established, what is man that Thou art mindful of Him, and the Son of Man that Thou dost care for him? Yet Thou hast made him a little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honour. Thou hast given him dominion over the works of Thy hands. Thou hast put all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the sea (Psalm 33:3-8). Yes, God created man in the image of God with power to govern the world. The first couple were named Adam and Eve, in the Hebrew language. In Thai they are sometimes called Pusangasaa and Yasangasii. In the beginning they knew the true God. They worshipped the Lord Jesus Christ. What then caused man to become separated from God?

III. Man rebelled against God, forfeited true power, and became enslaved to sin under the devil’s power.

And the Lord God spoke unto man saying, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it, you shall die” (Gen. 2:16,17).

The Source of Sin

The Bible teaches that the serpent often represents the devil. For example, Rev. 12:9 declares, “The great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world.” Now the serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God say you shall not eat of any tree in the garden?” And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but God said you shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.” But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not die, for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband and he ate (Gen. 3: 1-6).

The Result of Sin

And he heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. And the Lord said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle and above all wild animals, upon your belly you shall go and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise you head, and you shall bruise his heel.” To the woman He said, “I will greatly multiply your pain in childbearing. In pain you

shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband. He shall rule over you.” And to Adam He said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded, you shall not eat of it, cursed is the ground because of you. In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life, thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you, and you shall eat the plants of the field, in the sweat of your face you shall eat bread til you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken, you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Gen. 3:8,14-19). “For the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23a).

“Therefore, as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, so death spread to all men, because all men sinned” (Rom. 5:12). Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely his eternal power and deity has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made, so they are without excuse. Although they knew God, they did not honour Him as God, or gave thanks to Him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man or birds, or animals, or reptiles. Therefore, God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity to the dishonouring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and the served the creature, rather than the Creator who is blessed forever. Amen. (Rom. 1:20-25). So man rebelled against God and forfeited his power, becoming enslaved to sin under the devil’s power. “Behold the Lord’s hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear dulled that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you so that He does not hear (Isaiah 59:1,2). But.....

IV. Christ came to redeem man from the curse of sin and the power of the devil, by giving new power in the Holy Spirit.

When the first parents sinned, the great spiritual conflict began between God and the devil in the hearts of men. The devil incites men to reject God. God calls men to repent and return to Him. He promised to save them from their sin. Many promises are given of the coming Saviour in the Bible. One hundred years before Buddha was born, Isaiah prophesied concerning the Lord Jesus’ coming, “Therefore the lord himself will give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call His name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14; Matt. 1:21). About 600 years later, “In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph of the house of David. And the virgin’s name was Mary. And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God, and behold you will conceive in your womb and bear a son and you shall call his name Jesus.” And Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have no husband?” And the angel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you, therefore, the child to be born will be called Holy, the Son of God (Luke 1:26,27,30,31,34,35).

After Jesus was born and grew up, He began His great ministry of teaching and healing. “Now when the sun was setting, all those who had those that were sick with various diseases, brought them to Him and He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them and demons also came out of many crying, You are the Son of God. But He

rebuked them and would not allow them to speak because they knew that He was the Christ” (Luke 4:40,41). And Jesus went about all the cities and villages teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom and healing every disease and every infirmity. When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd (Matt. 9:35,36).

And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve disciples aside and on his way He said to them, Behold we are going up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes and they will condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged, and to be crucified, and He will be raised on the third day (Matt. 20:17-19). “An I when I am lifted up will draw all men unto Myself.” He said this to show by what death He was to die (John 12:32,33). And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life (John 3:14,15).