FORMING A BIBLICAL BASIS FOR TRANSFORMATION

A Study Programme for those doing Development

Forming a Biblical Basis for Transformation

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1. TRANSFORMATION : THE CREATION MODEL (Genesis 1 and 2)

1.1 Introduction

In the story of Creation we have a picture (a model) of God's original intention for human life and for the world. We know from history and experience that the world is very far from ideal. Human beings are far from being perfect! The Fall dramatically altered the dynamics of existence and limited the potential of human life.

Yet God has given us a glimpse of the original picture of the ideal world and of how things **could** have been. This has created in every human heart a deep longing to recover the completeness and wholesomeness of an unspoilt world.

Creation is the logical starting point of our Bible study series on Christian Development. However, we must remember that it is "ideal" for it pre-dates the entry of sin into the human heart. From the time of the Fall (Gen. 3) to the future ***"New heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells"*** (2 Pet. 3:13) all history reflects how God has helped man (science for example) and man has struggled to recapture the destiny God originally intended. Perhaps, to be more accurate, (for the Fall didn't surprise God or frustrate His purpose) man has struggled to capture the new future for human society that God has planned for us.

In our broken world, marred by sin, there is a wistful looking back to what might have been and a looking forward in hope to what might come into being. This longing is very deeply imbedded unto our "souls" as human beings.

1.2 God in Action

The major emphasis in Genesis 1 is on the initiative and plan of God in creating the world and human life in particular. Count up how many times in chapter one, the word "God" is used [ ]. The noun "God", ("*Elohim"* in Hebrew) is always followed by an active verb – said, saw, called, made, set, created, blessed.

God is dynamic. His actions can be summarised in four statements:

- He creates the world out of nothing.
- He brings order out of chaos.
- He brings light out of darkness.
- He makes man out of dust.

God's present action in history, His transforming presence and power, are still directed towards these four tasks.

1.2.1 God is the God of new beginnings.

It is so sad that man so often tries to trap God and hold Him in the distant past by traditions. But where there is lifelessness and hopelessness God can still act and He does. He certainly did so in the life and ministry of Jesus. He did so supremely in the resurrection of Jesus. God continues to do so in the lives of individuals. He also does so in societies as the life of God's Spirit activates and motivates. Finally God will be the God of the new heavens and the new earth that He will make.

1.2.2 The universe is an ordered system.

It is man who creates the chaos that is so characteristic of our world with its rivalries and wars, with its extremes of poverty and wealth, its refugees and dictators, its industrial pollution and economic inflation.

The whole of the scientific method is built on the fact of cause and effect and the fact that we live in an orderly universe. As we move into post-modernism there is an increasing disbelief in order. What we observe is the breakdown of order and control.

Yet, **where God is active** there is reconciliation and love, hope and peace, truth and life. From the chaos and randomness of human selfishness there comes the potential orderliness of a Christian community.

1.2.3 The world is also a dark world

The 20th century has seen incredible cruelty and barbarism. What about the kidnapping of babies and young children for their body parts (such as eyes) that are then sold for transplants? It is happening! What about over 100 million killed in wars in the 20th century?

About 795 million people in the world are chronically undernourished and go to bed hungry each night. (www.worldhunger.org.) There are about 65.6 million refugees and forcibly displaced peoples in the world out of a total population of 7.3 billion – i.e. one in nine. (www.unhcr.org/uk)

Because of very high birth rates in the poorest countries, illiteracy is not growing less. Life expectancy among the poorest people is still three or four decades earlier than among the rich. Infant mortality is still fifty times higher in the poorest countries than in the most affluent countries.

But God is still bringing light to this world! Where the Gospel is preached there is transformation. Fear goes, belief is born and fatalism gives way to faith. Ignorance is replaced by the knowledge of a living, loving, light–giving God.

1.2.4 Man's earthliness is demonstrated in so many life-destroying ways.

We exploit people. We exploit animals and the earth itself. We greedily accumulate wealth with total disregard of the unjust ways it was acquired. We trade on sexual desire. We are creatures of the dust and we often seem most at home at that level.

Yet the Bible affirms that we are also bearers of the image of God. We are stamped with "eternity in our hearts". God still brings to life again the dead spirit within us. He still breathes life into men and women so they are more, so much more, than creatures of the dust.

As yourself or your team, give a contemporary example of each of these activities of God:

- **Creating something out of nothing**

- **Bringing order out of chaos**

- **Making light to shine in the darkness**

- **Lifting man above his creatureliness**

There are 3 relationships described in Genesis 1 and 2 that we need to study in the light of Christian Development:

- The relationship between man and God
- The relationship between man and his community
- The relationship between man and this world

Each of these has deep implications for the way we do development. These are fundamental principles that must underlie the visions and hopes we have for the way development agencies should function.

1.3 Man and God

The relationship between man and God in these two chapters can be described in four basic ways:

- Man is the creation of God.
- Man is the **best** creation of God.
- Man communes with God.
- Man is responsible to God.

1.3.1 Man is the creation of God.

In many areas, Genesis and modern biological sciences don't disagree. Science doesn't dispute the order of creation as described in Genesis. Rather science endorses the Biblical record – i.e.

light and darkness, then

sea and sky, then

sea, land and plants, then

the atmosphere clearing so sun, moon and stars are observable, then

fish and birds, then

animals and humans.

There are disputes about time scales, but Biblical interpretation is far from being dogmatic (a day ranges from being 24 hours to being an epoch of time).

The major area of dispute between humanistic evolution and the Bible lies in the **causes** behind these developments. For some, **chance** is the causative principle and, together with natural selection, chance is an adequate explanation for all the different forms of life – including man. The Bible is very clear. **God is the causative principle. God made man.**

The implications are clear to both sides of the debate:

- Man does not exist independently of God. There is purpose to man's existence, for he was "caused" to be.
- God is interested in and concerned for human life and welfare.

The choice is stark – **chance or a Creator God**. There can be no **proof** of one or the other. There is just probability.

1.3.2 Man is the best of God's creation.

Man is distinguished from the rest of creation in three ways in the Genesis record.

- ***"It was very good."*** Of all the rest of creation God declared Himself satisfied, "***It was good"***. But with human life He was very pleased – ***"It was very good"***. Only on men and women was this superlative blessing given. It is interesting to note that the only point at which God expresses His dissatisfaction with what He has made is when He says, ***"It is not good for man to be alone."*** (Gen. 2:18) So it is man and woman **together** that are God's best creation.

- **Only humans bear God's image.** In Gen. 1:26 and 27 this point comes through very strongly three times. No other creature is related to God so intimately. The fact that man is in the image of God means that man is like God and represents God. "Likeness" and "image" in Hebrew denote similar but not identical to. There are specific aspects to our likeness to God – moral, spiritual, mental, relational and even physical aspects.
- **Only mankind is given authority in the world**. The fish, the birds and humans are blessed by God and told to ***"be fruitful, and multiply and fill the earth"*** (Gen. 1:22, 28). But to humans God said, ***"Subdue the earth and rule over the fish, the birds and the animals."*** (Gen. 1:26,28)

The implications of this are very great in our study of the Biblical principles of development. Here is one example:

> Mankind has a special place in Creation. This means that human development projects take precedence over ecological development projects. It is more important Biblically to save people physically than to save the whales.

It is important that we keep to the Biblical order of things.

1.3.3 Man communes with God.

In Gen. 1, God speaks to men and women giving instructions how to manage the world. Gen. 1:27-31 says, ***"Have dominion"*** over the rest of Creation. In Gen. 2, He introduces them to the delights and limits of the Garden of Eden and tells them ***"to serve the earth and keep it"*** (Gen. 2:15). In Gen. 3 God comes to the garden seeking communion with Adam and Eve. God is clearly in regular conversation with His unique and special creation – mankind. He wants to be with them and talk with them.

The implications of this are very great:

- There is a universal human awareness of God. We speak to people to whom God can also speak. ***"We are witnesses to these things and so also is the Holy Spirit…"*** (Acts 5:32)
- All human beings are addressable by God. **God is able to speak to all.**

1.3.4 Man is responsible to God.

His responsibility stems from certain facts:

- God gave life to mankind.
- God placed man on earth with a mission – a task with instructions to follow.
- God made man responsible for his actions.

God didn't give Adam and Eve complete freedom to do whatever they wanted to do. He didn't ignore their actions. He wanted to know what they had done and why. They were accountable and had to bear the consequences of their sin. They couldn't hide from God! He sought them out and the trees of Eden couldn't conceal them.

Some implications:

- We need to **know** and **follow** God's instructions.
- When we fail we need to confess and seek God's forgiveness **and** restoration.

> As a team, plan a small model development programme and highlight the points at which man's relationship with God shapes **the process** and the **expected outcomes** and relates to other dimensions of the programme.

1.4. Man and Society

God's intention for human relationships can be summed up in 3 key words:
Equality, **harmony** and **community**.

1.4.1 Equality

This is clearly taught. Man and woman both equally bear the image of God. They are blessed together and both are instructed to rule the earth. In Gen. 2, Eve is one with Adam for she is ***"bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh."***

Inequality is one of the most pervasive aberrations and is found in all cultures. It is found in cultures that lower the status of women. It is the basis of racism. It is seen in the division of rich and poor. Division on the basis of inequality is fundamental to human life as we know it today. It is the major means by which the principalities and powers manipulate societies.

Implications: beliefs and practices that make some people second-class are unbiblical.

Applications:

- If you are involved in an educational programme or teaching English, begin to focus on the Biblical teaching on equality.
- Bring equality of opportunity to society by ensuring the poorest and weakest are the major beneficiaries of your development programmes.
- Stress and also model the obligation of the rich to help the poor so that none will suffer or be poor – Deut. 15.
- Recognise and teach that human suffering hurts God – Mt. 25.
- Model, in the leadership of the churches being planted and in the Development Agency, equality between men and women, between those educated and those not, between different people groups etc. Avoid hierarchical leadership structures.

1.4.2 **Harmony** (unity and diversity)

Deep within most cultures there is a longing to get back "the Garden" (although it may not be phrased that way). "In the Garden" life was simple, peaceful and idyllic. Gen. 1 and 2 give us a picture of an ordered universe of peaceful co-existence in the animal kingdom and a profound unity in human society and between man and God. Since the Fall, the opposite has been true, predators and murderers have begun to dominate, truth is submerged and evil seems to conquer good.

Implications:

- Harmony and unity are God's hope for society – John 17.
- My actions always affect others. In the global eco-system all are inter-related.

Applications:

- Seek to find and maximise points of agreement between the personnel on your development project.
- All development work should arise out of a consensus in the community.
- Peace-making should be pursued as a priority in all situations.

1.4.3 Community

The promise to Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply was extended to their descendants. The promise was repeated to Abraham and Sarah whose children and grandchildren were to be

"as numerous as the sand on the sea shore" and a blessing to all the families of the earth. God's plan from the beginning was to form a community. The 'shape' of this community has changed over time. Originally it was a universal brotherhood. From Abraham to Pentecost it was a chosen nation. Now it is the church.

The human tendency is to limit the size of our relationships and so limit our responsibilities. Our concerns are limited to our family, our people and ourselves. We are all asked, "Who is your neighbour?" In answering, we try and make the circumference as small as possible! We find it hard to comprehend a God who loves the world. (Jn. 3:16)

Implications:

- The good of the community is a higher principle than the wants and needs of an individual. This ethic contrasts with current western individualism.
- In the story of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10) Jesus stressed that neighbourliness extended beyond family and race. He showed that it took precedence over religious duties and commercial interests.

Applications:

- Development projects that only benefit one family or a small group and therefore deny the principle of community should be closed down!
- In our projects we need to encourage people to shift their concern from self to the family and from the family to the community. This is the Biblical pattern.
- Community is a much bigger concept than communalism. Building bridges between communities and ethnic groups is a Kingdom activity. It accords with God's intention at Creation.

Home Work

Take one of the applications stated above in <u>each</u> of the sections equality, harmony and community:

- State how this is practised in your development programme or how it could be practised (if it is not, but you would like it to be).
- State the steps necessary to act on the principle.
- Describe the difference applying these principles might make.

1.5 Man and the World

In this final section of the Creation Model of development work we will examine how we are to relate to the world around us.

1.5.1 Man is part of the world

The creation of human beings was the climax of God's creative activity, but people are still only part of creation. Continuing human life on this planet depends on our collective recognition that we depend on the other parts of creation for our survival. We are part of an **inter-**dependent system. While human greed has always threatened to upset the balance, it is only in the second half of the 20th century that man has really had the capacity to destroy the environment. Huge population growth to over 7.3 billion means that man has become a destructive presence in the world. The richer countries are particularly responsible for this.

Question:

In some world religions, men have been venerated as gods. In other belief systems, rulers (those in power) claim absolute power – dictatorships. According to the Bible, **where does man fit** in relationship to God and the world?

1.5.2 Man shapes the world

God asked man to name the animals (Gen. 2:19, 20) so implying an intimate knowledge and study of each one. Man was told to look after the garden – tend the plants and work the soil (implying not only ploughing but mining) (Gen. 2:15). All of creation was placed under man's direction with maximum freedom to develop it. It is true that human energy and creativity has shaped the earth in a huge variety of ways. Some of these are positive, others are negative. The development of science and technology in the last two centuries has provided us with tools to do immense good (e.g. the eradication of smallpox) as well as terrible evil.

Question:

What are some of the beneficial and destructive forces shaping the life of the community your development programme is engaged with?

1.5.3 Man uses the world

The freedom given by God (Gen. 2:16) and the mandate extended to man gives us extremely wide powers over the world. Only the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was forbidden. (Gen. 2:17)

In disobeying God, Adam and Eve chose evil and since that time the danger and tendency has been for man to misuse the resources of the world in damaging and exploitive ways.

Question:

What resources in the country where you are working have become, or may soon become, exhausted because of over use? What steps have been taken to reverse this abuse? Can you do anything about this?

1.5.4 Mankind as stewards of the world

The mandate in Gen. 1:28, ***"Fill the earth and subdue it"*** (NIV) or ***"bring it under control"*** (GNB) can also be translated ***"replenish"*** or ***"renew"***. Recent scholarship has preferred these words not just for syntactical reasons, but because this emphasis fits in with the rest of Scripture. Man should not primarily be a user or a consumer. He was appointed to be a steward and a preserver of the earth.

The transformation process of Christian development seeks to affect change in both attitudes and practice so we all become good stewards and not just consumers of the good resources on the earth.

It is interesting to note how often the main actors in the parables of Jesus were **stewards** and not consumers or owners!

Question:

Clearly there is a conflict between man the consumer and man the steward. Give some examples of how this is seen in the people of your community.

1.5.5 Man is responsible to God for the world

Man is responsible to God. He is accountable for his actions. But he is not only accountable to God for himself **and others** (neighbours = all those in need), but **also for the world – the earth**. God is the owner of the earth***. "The earth is the Lord's."*** (Ps. 24) He owns the animals ***"He owns the cattle on a thousand hills."*** (Ps. 50:10) He owns the plant life and the minerals. He owns everything. Man is a steward (a caretaker) under God. In history man is responsible for his use of the earth's resources.
We will be judged as to how we have exercised this authority.

Applications to think about

- The global warming we are experiencing today is probably due to the rising amount of CO_2 in the atmosphere. The increase in CO_2 is due to the heavy burning of fossil fuels **and** to deforestation – especially of the tropical and sub-tropical rain forests. During daylight plants remove CO_2 from the atmosphere. The replanting of forests should be a priority everywhere. Is your development agency able to help in this area?

- Land ownership patterns vary from individual ownership with absolute rights, to state ownership of the land. In between there is a whole continuum of co-operatives, companies, families, tribal groups and multi-nationals. In the culture where you work, which pattern of ownership best promotes stewardship of the earth? (There is no ubiquitous pattern.)

- In countries and cities with an ever-increasing population growth, the environment can easily become a casualty. Yet we can look at Singapore with its high population density. It is one of the cleanest cities in the world. Why is this so? Because there is extensive legislation to punish offenders! What can you do in your N.G.O. to encourage the government to clean up the environment?

- A relationship with the land is part of many people's understanding of themselves. Being a refugee is terrible because it involves a loss of identity. This is part of the image of God in people. For the landless and for most city dwellers this relationship is broken. Urbanisation often causes a break in the social fabric of human existence. What can your N.G.O. do to suggest and promote alternatives that might **affirm human dignity –** especially for the newly urbanised?

- To be a steward involves being given some responsibility. One of the negative consequences of communism was that it deprived people of taking responsibility. Central planning removed this. What can you do (not only those of you in post-communist countries) to encourage the community you are working with to take more responsibility?

- There can be "no responsibility without accountability". How does this apply in your development programme? To whom are you accountable? To the local people?

1.6 Finally

The "Creation Model" of transformation gives us **an ideal picture**. This model may not be attainable in a fallen world. We need to be aware that using only one model, in isolation from others, will lead to bias and all sorts of undesirable consequences. So you need to study the other 17 models as well!

2. TRANSFORMATION : THE LIBERATION MODEL OF EXODUS

2.1 Introduction

2.2 The Conditions

2.2.1 The whole people were kept in slavery

2.2.2 They were oppressed by hard labour

2.2.3 They were mercilessly beaten and tortured

2.2.4 They were killed

2.3 The Concerns of God in situations like this

2.3.1 God is responsive to human suffering

2.3.2 God is opposed to unjust laws

2.3.3 God delivers people from oppression and injustice

2.3.4 God prepares His servant to share in the work of liberation

2.4 A Liberator's Call

2.5 The High Cost of Liberation

2.5.1 The Cost to the Liberator – Moses

2.5.2 The Cost to the Poor and the Oppressed

2.5.2 The Cost to Pharaoh and the Egyptian People

2.6 The Option of Violence

2. TRANSFORMATION : THE LIBERATION MODEL OF EXODUS

2.1 Introduction

The Exodus is the great salvation event of the Old Testament. It is one of the most dramatic events of human history! This is why movies like **Prince of Egypt** are so popular. This study will look at the story in a way that helps us to deduce some models of doing Christian development work.

We will look at four headings:

- The Condition of the People
- The Concerns of God
- The Call of Moses
- The Cost

This is a difficult model because many people die in the story. For some of these deaths Pharaoh and the Egyptians are responsible. For one death Moses was responsible. For many, God was the initiator of the process that led to death.

For many in liberation movements, this story is the model of what they are trying to achieve. Even in modern theology, Liberation Theology is in vogue. The hard question this model poses concerns **the use of violence**. Is there any occasion in our development work where we should use violence or condone the use of violence by others – such as in Kosovo?

It will be helpful if you read Exodus 1-14 to familiarise yourself with the whole story.

2.2 The Conditions

These were not unique to about 1500 B.C. Sadly, in many parts of the world in the 21st century you can find parallel situations. Conditions in Egypt for these slave people were extremely harsh. They suffered in several ways:

2.2.1 The whole people were kept in slavery

There was clearly strong racial prejudice against these people. This ethnic discrimination took many humiliating and hurtful forms. It was a typical example of apartheid. An enslaved people worked hard building the grandest and most modern cities in that world for others. They received no wages and no rewards for their work. They had no rights and liberties. The great cities of Python and Rameses rose up in the Delta, but under them lay the bodies of thousands of slaves who built them.

2.2.2 They were oppressed by hard labour

The sad stories of slave labour in Hitler's concentration camps and in Stalin's Gulags in Siberia are similar to the Exodus stories of God's people in Egypt. The experiences of those in bonded labour in many parts of the world today are not much better – especially the children. Sadly, slavery is growing in the world. Moses appealed to Pharaoh to release the people from their labour that was already ruthlessly oppressive. The result of his appeal was that their labour was **increased**! This is a typical experience for many through the centuries.

2.2.3 They were mercilessly beaten and tortured

The cruelty to which Moses reacted in Ex 2:11 was one of countless such incidents. ***"In all their hard labour the Egyptians used them ruthlessly"*** (Ex. 1:14). ***"The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out."*** (Ex. 1:23) They had no rights, no freedom, no wages, no right to appeal against brutality and no union.

2.2.4 They were killed.

Deliberate genocide was practised. First they were enslaved. (Ex. 1:9, 10) Next they told the midwives to kill all the male children. (Ex. 1:15, 16) Did this work? See Ex. 1:17-19.

Finally, Pharaoh instructed all his people to throw all male babies into the river Nile. But this also failed in the case of Moses (Ex. 2:1-10). Some were saved with God's help, but many thousands of babies, as well as adult labourers, must have died.

Contemporary Parallels

Describe either a situation of ethnic cleansing or a situation you know, from your country/area, where people have to live in conditions similar to those of God's people in Exodus.

Collect from magazines, newspapers etc. information about an oppressed people group. Why is this happening?

The concerns of God in situations like this

Clearly the central figure in the drama of the Exodus is God Himself. It is God who takes the initiative to rescue His people from slavery. In this story God's concerns led to action on behalf of the oppressed.

2.2.5 God is responsive to human suffering

Moses forgot the plight of his brothers. Once he burned with indignation at injustice, later he settled down in quiet, rural Midian looking after sheep. But God did not forget His people. At the burning bush He says to Moses: (Ex. 3:7)

"I have seen _

I have heard _

I am concerned" _

(Complete the verse)

"The cry of the Israelites has reached Me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them." (Ex. 3:9)

The language is anthropomorphic (it speaks of God in human terms) but His seeing, hearing and concern for people who are being hurt by injustice is graphically expressed.

2.2.6 God is opposed to unjust laws.

When the Hebrew midwives were ordered by the government (Pharaoh) to kill all male babies, they refused. What was their reason for refusal?

Ex. 1:17

___

___

They knew that God, the Creator of life and Author of justice, would not approve of such action.

Moses' parents had disobeyed a law to drown all male babies. It is likely that many of their neighbours, friends and relatives knew about their civil disobedience. God blessed them for their opposition to Pharaoh's decrees. Moses' mother was paid for nursing her own son after Pharaoh's daughter had rescued him! Also the Hebrew midwives were blessed for their disobedience to the law by having many children.

Quote examples of laws you know that should be disobeyed.

What about Romans 13 where it says leaders are appointed by God and should be obeyed.
Is this a contradiction?

Yes/No? Why/Why not? See also Rev. 13 where the ruling power is evil.

2.2.7 God delivers people from oppression and injustice

When the Book of Exodus states that God has seen the problems and heard the cry of the oppressed People of God it continues: ***"So I have come down <u>to rescue</u> them from the hand of the Egyptians ...."*** (Ex. 3:8)

Dr. Martin Luther King was in a court appealing against racial discrimination in the United States in the early '60s. A Supreme Court decision was handed to the magistrate, who then announced it to the court – "Bus segregation is now illegal." An Afro American stood up and shouted, "God Almighty has spoken from Washington D.C." There was no doubt in his mind. God had come down and rescued them! In the celebrations that followed huge crowds gathered singing, "Free at last, free at last. Praise God Almighty! We are free at last."

When the People of God in Exodus heard God was going to deliver them, what do you think their reaction was: (disbelief, cynicism, amusement, anger, reverence, excitement, hope?)

2.2.8 God prepares His servant to share in the work of liberation.

The preparation for Moses consisted of:

- **40 years in the palace** – a period preparing him to confront Pharaoh
- **40 years in the desert** – a period that gave him the skills and knowledge to enable the people to survive in the inhospitable land where water, food and protection would be in short supply

The Prophet Muhammad said, "He will never be a prophet who has not first been a herdsman."

Unknown to Moses and despite his feeling of hopelessness during the second period, God was preparing him **throughout his life** for this great task of liberation.

The contrasts in life experience for Moses were very great. The first 40 years he was a prince, favoured, educated, rich and powerful. The second 40 years he was in the desert surviving as a shepherd and struggling to keep himself and his flock alive.

In **your** life, God may be using the experience of a good home, quality education, wealth and influence to enable you to be a liberator of the poor and oppressed. But God is equally able to use the opposite experiences – being an orphan, living in a poor village in the rural outback, being poor and having to struggle to survive – as exactly the preparation you need to be a liberator and to lift up the oppressed. Moses had both backgrounds.

In your life what experiences have best prepared you to understand and help the poor?

2.3 A Liberator's Call

The call of God on Moses' life is recorded in Exodus 3:10; 4:17. It is a conversation between God and Moses with four interchanges of command – excuse – promise.

Fill in the Chart

	God's command	**Moses' excuse**	**God's promise**
1.	3:10 ***"So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."***	3:11 ***"Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"***	3:12 ***"I will be with you."***
2.	3:12 ***"When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."***	3.13	3:14 ***"I am who I am.*** (the Living God) ***This is what you are to say to the Israelites: `I am has sent me to you.' "***
3.	3:16	4:1 ***"What if they do not believe me or listen to me***"	4:2-9 "***I will show my power through you."***

4.		4:10 ***"O Lord, I have never been eloquent…….. I am slow of speech and tongue."***	4:12
5.		4:13	4:14-17

Moses didn't volunteer to work to liberate the poor. If God had not called him at the burning bush, he would no doubt have spent the rest of his life raising sheep.

Is a 'call' from God a necessary starting point for such work today? Why? / Why not? What difference might having a sense of 'call' make?

2.4 The High Cost of Liberation

In the Exodus the stakes were very high. Everyone had to pay a high price to change the tyranny of a generation of racial discrimination and oppression. Huge numbers of lives were lost!

2.4.1 The Cost to the Liberator – Moses

It was a hard and difficult road that Moses had to take. He was often "between a rock and a hard place". For him the cost of obedience and involvement in God's liberating work was:

- To give up his quiet country life
- To take enormous risks
- To accept enormous responsibilities
- To lead some extremely tough negotiations
- To trust God completely
- To win/keep the confidence of his people even when it was getting rougher and rougher

The German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a pastor of the Confessing Church in the 1930s and 1940s, wrote a book called **The Cost of Discipleship**. It was about the hard decisions a Christian has to make in the face of injustice. His discipleship led him not only to speak out against Hitler, but to join what turned out to be an abortive assassination attempt on Hitler's life. This landed him in a concentration

camp where he ministered to his fellow prisoners. He was executed 6 days before the camp was liberated. He chose the way of the Cross and refused to violate his conscience. He chose to reject the way of "cheap grace" (accepting salvation from God but doing nothing to achieve salvation for others).

You are the leader of a team and you become aware of, and concerned about, a group of exploited people in the region where you are working – maybe an ethnic minority. What advice do you think the following people might give you?

Your Field Leader: Your team: Your family: The majority people who are the exploiters: The oppressed group: God:

Often within churches opposing decisions have been made:

- Case 1. **The South Korean Churches**

  During the Korean War of the late 40s and early 50s the country was devastated. After the war, reconstruction started. In this situation the church became the voice expressing the hopes of the people. The church had a message of hope and was totally involved with the poor in their struggle to survive and build a better future. Many of today's famous pastors started with a tent in the middle of a patch of ground. One of the reasons for the massive growth of the Korean church in the latter part of the 20th century is that, at least in the 50s –70s, the poor saw the church as their advocate and friend. In the 90s church growth slowed as the church grew more powerful with more who were educated, middle class etc.

- Case 2: **The Reformed Church in South Africa**

  With a few notable exceptions, this church and its leadership endorsed the legitimacy and the actions of the white minority government in the suppression of the majority black population in the 40s – 90s of the 20th century. The church was an instrument of oppression rather than of liberation! In the 90s their attitudes changed.

Why do you think these two churches adopted such different attitudes and actions? **Think in terms of cost**.

2.5.2 The Cost to the poor and the oppressed

The People of God also had to face a struggle. The price of liberty is never cheap or easy! This is true of all people in your development projects. For the oppressed and poor in Exodus to achieve their freedom they had to:

A. Overcome their defeatist attitude

B. Work harder during their freedom struggle

C. Exercise faith and perseverance

D. Face danger

Below are some quotations from Exodus. Put A, B, C or D after each verse.

5:4 ***"The King of Egypt said, 'Moses and Aaron, why are you taking the people away from their labour? Get back to your work!' "*** ( )

5:6-8 ***"Pharaoh gave this order to the slave drivers and foremen in charge of the people: 'You are no longer to supply the people with straw for making bricks; let them go and gather their own straw. But require them to make the same number of bricks as before; don't reduce the quota.' "*** ( )

5:9 ***"Make the work harder for the men so that they keep working."*** ( )

5:15 ***"The Israelite foremen appointed by Pharaoh's slave drivers were beaten and were asked, 'Why haven't you met your quota of bricks yesterday or today as before?' "*** ( )

5:18 ***'Get to work. You will not be given any straw, yet you must produce your full quota of bricks."*** ( )

5:21 ***"The Israelites said to Moses and Aaron, 'May the Lord look on you and judge you! You have made us a stench to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us.' "*** ( )

6:6 ***"Say to the Israelites: `I am the Lord and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them and will redeem you with an outstretched arm and mighty acts of judgment.' "*** ( )

6:8 ***"I will bring you to the land and …. I will give it to you as a possession."*** ( )

6:9 ***"Moses reported this to the Israelites, but they did not believe him because of their discouragement and cruel bondage."*** ( )

8:25-26 ***"Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, 'Go, sacrifice to your God here in the land.' But Moses said, 'That would not be right. The sacrifices we offer to the Lord our God would be detestable to the Egyptians. If we offer sacrifices that are detestable in their eyes, will they not stone us?' "*** ( )

14:10 ***"As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up and there were the Egyptians marching after them."*** ( )

14:12 ***"Didn't we say to you in Egypt, `Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians?' It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!"*** ( )

Of the four barriers to liberation in the poor themselves and mentioned in this section, which do you think is the most difficult to change?

Which would you try and change first?

What other costs for the poor might be involved in your development project?

2.5.3 The Cost to Pharaoh and the Egyptian People.

In the prolonged liberation struggle, Pharaoh and the ordinary Egyptian people paid a high cost. Losing their slaves meant:

- Losing cheap labour
- Losing power
- Losing money
- Losing large numbers of Egyptian lives

Pharaoh was a dictatorial ruler. He only made the decision to release the People of God unconditionally when he had no other choice. The cost of keeping them had become far too great.
He was forced to let them go. There were 10 plagues. Pharaoh's replies after each plague show he was gradually facing the inevitable – he was going to lose his slaves.

	The Plague	**Pharaoh's Response**
1.	Blood	He took no notice. (7:22)
2.	Frogs	Pharaoh: ***stop the plague "Tomorrow."*** (8:10)
3.	Gnats	He did not listen. (8:19)
4.	Flies	He would not let the people go. (8:33)
5.	Livestock	His heart is unyielding. (9:7)
6.	Boils	He would not listen to Moses. (9:12)
7.	Hail	***"This time I have sinned. I will let you go."*** (9:27- 28)
8.	Locusts	***"Go and worship the Lord your God, but only the men."*** (10:8, 11)
9.	Darkness	Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and said, ***"Go and worship the Lord. Even your women and children may go with you; only leave your flocks and herds behind."*** (10:24)
10.	Oldest Sons	***"Up! Leave my people…Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go."*** (12:31, 32)

Pharaoh only released the people after a life in every Egyptian family had been lost and incredible damage had been done to the agricultural economy of Egypt.

Do oppressors ever give up power and control voluntarily?

Is the use of violence a Christian option?

Who has the right to kill – the oppressor only, the oppressed, both or only God? Choose and state your reasons.

2.6 The Option of Violence

The hard question this model of development work poses concerns the use of violence. What about our relations with bad governments and the structures of sin and oppression in society? Liberation Theology arose in South America, based on this model, in the context of dictatorships and drug barons.

3. TRANSFORMATION : THE STRUCTURAL/LEGAL MODEL

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3.2 The Setting for Biblical Law-Giving

3.2.1 God's Covenant

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3.4.3 Law is a body of obligations regarded as a right by one party and as a duty by the other.

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3.5 The Purpose of Laws in the Old Testament

3.5.1 To restrain evil and protect the innocent

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3. TRANSFORMATION : THE STRUCTURAL/LEGAL MODEL

3.1 Introduction

The framework within which a community lives determines the rules that guide and control the lives of that community. It is important that we understand these rules or we will unconsciously violate them and offend the community. Law is found in all cultures and communities. There are other rules like taboos etc. The central issue in law is the authority behind it. This authority must be established and recognised by all. The unique fact about Old Testament Law was that it was **God-given**. God and His Word were authoritative. Muslims believe the same to be true in Islamic Law – Sharia.

In development work a number of issues arise relating to law and custom. Sometimes the development worker has to work inside the legal framework. At other times the rules have to be challenged, but on what basis? This study is designed to help in this area.

We will look at the setting of the giving of the Law, the various types of law, definitions of law and the purpose of Old Testament laws.

3.2 The setting for Biblical law-giving

The heart of Old Testament Law is found in the Ten Commandments (Ex. 20 and Deut. 5). The time frame when this revelation was given to Moses was after the People of God had left Egypt and before entry into the Promised Land. The law was given in the context of several events.

3.2.1 God's Covenant

This is a key Biblical concept. It is only marginally referred to in the Qur'an. In terms of the Exodus period, the first reference to God's intention to rescue the Hebrews from Egypt states that ***"God heard their groaning and He remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob."*** (Ex. 2:24) Again, ***"So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them."*** (Ex. 2:25) The whole context of Biblical law-giving is **not** arbitrary with unfair laws imposed by an unfeeling, uncaring God. It is one where God is being true to His covenant promise. His laws came as a result of His great love and care for His people.

The laws were given to help define clearly the obligations required of man to fulfil his side of the Old Covenant. They were designed to help him to be **faithful to God** and **supportive of his fellow man**. These laws were to remind the People of God how blessed they were.

Write out Deut. 4:8

And also Deut. 7:7-9

So the law was given in the context of the goodness and faithfulness of a covenant-making and a covenant-keeping God.

3.2.2 The Exodus

In Egypt there were either two sets of laws (one for Egyptians and one for Hebrews) or, more likely, the laws simply did not apply to the Hebrew slaves. They had no rights but many obligations. Under Sharia, there are laws for Muslims and there are laws for 'dhimmi' (Christians, Jews etc.) who have far fewer rights than Muslims.

In all societies there are laws relating to persons and laws relating to property. Slavery and other forms of oppression occur when people are devalued to the level of property or even less. God acted to rescue the Hebrew people from such a situation. In Egypt their lives were considered expendable. Their babies could be killed at birth and they could suffer a slow agonising death through hard labour and brutal beatings. There was a clear contrast between the laws of God and the ethics of Egypt!

In your society, who enjoys most protection and most benefits from the law? Who enjoys the least and why?

3.2.3 Mount Sinai

Mount Horeb in Sinai was the setting for:

- **The call of Moses to return to Egypt and lead his people out of slavery**
- **The revelation of the law to Moses to ensure a just society**

The circumstances were similar. In both cases fire burned but failed to consume. Moses' attention was drawn to the bush that was engulfed in flames but remained unharmed. When Moses climbed the mountain to receive the law, fire and cloud shrouded the mountain.
(Deut. 4:32-40; 5:23-27)

The second similarity was that God spoke directly to Moses. This was a cause for amazement. On the first occasion Moses had to remove his shoes because he was standing on holy ground in God's presence. On the second occasion Moses' face shone with the divine presence. There was no doubt in the people's minds about **the origin** of the law. They saw the fire. They heard the voice. They recognised that Moses had been with God.

3.2.4 The Promised Land

The law that was given in the desert looked forward to a time when the People of God would be in a setting where they could be secure from exploitation and the threats of others. At such a time, the laws God had given them would help them not to harm each other, but to create a strong, mutually supportive community. The purpose of the law was to create and sustain a just society.

3.2.5 The Commitment to Obey

When the laws were first being given, the people said to Moses, ***"Tell us whatever the Lord our God tells you. We will listen and obey."*** (Deut. 5:27) They repeated this promise many times. In fact, God

had to say to them***, "You rebelled against the command of the Lord your God. You did not trust Him or obey Him."*** (Deut. 9:23) At the end of the book of Judges we read, ***"Everyone did as he saw fit."*** (Judges 21:25)

In the desert and in the Promised Land the people constantly fluctuated between the ideal of devotion to God with a commitment to maintain a just community and their own individual selfish desires.

What historical circumstances helped to shape the laws in the country where you are doing development work? In what ways have religious beliefs influenced the law and people's attitude to it?

3.3 Types of Old Testament Laws

The Mosaic Laws can be divided into four broad categories

- Spiritual laws
- Social laws
- Health laws
- Ceremonial laws

3.3.1 Spiritual Laws

In the summary of the commandments the first instruction is to ***"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength."*** (Deut. 6:5)

In the Ten Commandments of Exodus 20, the first four have this focus. God is unchanging in His nature and man faces the same temptations and problems today that were faced by the People of God in the Old Testament. This means that these laws are still relevant for us today. God still wants us to know Him and to do His will. So the commands about our relationship to God tell us how we can do this today.

They state:

- **God's supremacy** – no other god's before Me
- **God's spiritual nature** – no idolatry
- **God's authority** – reverence for His name everywhere
- **God's pattern** – weekly rest and worship

In return for obedience to these laws – God uses certain wonderful terms that are rich in meaning to describe His commitment to us.

chesed – steadfast love

rahmin – mercy

mishpat – justice

eminah – faithfulness

Look up these terms in a Bible Dictionary. How does God express these qualities to us?

3.3.2 Social Laws

These laws speak of how we should act towards others in our society. They are summarised by, ***"You shall love your neighbour as yourself."*** (Lev. 18:19) The last six commandments of the ten explain what this meant. Again, they are relevant today in all cultures. They deal with:

- **obligations to parents** – honour your father and mother
- **sanctity of life** – no murder
- **sanctity of marriage** – no adultery
- **rights of private property** – no stealing
- **justice and truth** – no false testimony, no lying
- **effects of undisciplined desire –** no coveting

In the New Testament both categories of law are quoted together in Lk. 10 where Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan. In that story half the basic laws about obligation to a neighbour were broken.

We are called to treat others exactly as God has treated us:

- With justice and mercy
- With steadfast love and faithfulness

3.3.3 Health Laws

The Biblical laws speak about basic conditions to maintain health in society. There are laws regarding food to be eaten, clothing to be worn and cleanliness around their houses. The theme and purpose of these laws was to maintain the physical health of the community. Basic sanitation (Deut. 23:12-13) and the control of infectious diseases are commanded. (Lev. 13 &14) The principles behind these laws were unknown then. Still today, development workers often find themselves teaching these same principles!

3.3.4 The Ceremonial Laws

These laws related primarily to the priests and the Levites, but they were to guide the People of God as to how they should worship God. God gave instructions for the building and use of the tabernacle, and later for the temple. (Ex. 35-40; 1 Kings 5-8; Ezek. 40-43 and Ezra 3 – the second temple)

Of all the laws of the Old Testament these are the least applicable to us today. This is because **Jesus fulfilled them on the Cross**. He completed all the requirements and ended the sacrificial system. Still much of the symbolism of the rituals and regulations of the Old Covenant demonstrates the awesome nature of God, His loving character and His terrifying holiness! They show His commitment to help His people approach Him and relate to Him in such an enriching way that they can experience His forgiveness, receive His guidance and avoid His discipline and judgement.

Ritual and ceremony always play an important part in every culture in significant community events. Study these in your culture. Don Richardson in **Eternity in Their Hearts** maintains that in some of these rituals and ceremonies there are "redemption analogies". See also his book **Peace Child**.

Have you seen any "redemption analogies" in your culture? _____

_____

_____

_____

Into which category would you put each of the following laws?

- Instructions regarding the cleansing of lepers _____

  _____
- Instructions for the high priest on the day of atonement _____

  _____
- The rights of slaves _____
- Prohibition of inter-marriage with other nations because of their idolatry

  _____
- Cover all sacred objects before moving them _____

  _____
- Instructions to free all slaves every seven years _____
- Laws about what to bring and how to present thank offerings _____

  _____
- Prohibition on eating sea food where the animal had no fins and scales

  _____

3.4 Law and Development – some definitions

There are a variety of definitions of what law is. Here are four major definitions.

3.4.1 Law is the command of the Sovereign

In dictatorships or absolute monarchies, where power is concentrated in the hands of one person, what that person says assumes great authority. The word of such a ruler is absolute. In Catholicism, when the Pope speaks "ex cathedra", (i.e. from the throne) he speaks with binding authority. His words are law.

There are many contemporary examples – martial law, presidential rule, a state of emergency where normal laws are suspended and special conditions are imposed – such as curfew, arrest without warrant and imprisonment without charge or trial.

The laws of the Bible are another example – they are the commands of the Sovereign Lord.
Note below the strengths and weaknesses of this type of law.

Strengths: Weaknesses:

3.4.2 Law is a prediction of what a court will enforce

In a democracy where power is not concentrated in hands of one person, but dispersed among many, parliament (or a similar body) passes acts which become laws. These laws can then be challenged by any citizen. The court then decides whether the law is consistent and just or whether it is contradicted by some other law. The courts are graded in their authority from a Magistrates Court to a Supreme Court to some sort of Appellate Court (in the UK the House of Lords). A higher court may overthrow a decision of a lower court.

This system provides many safeguards against the arbitrary imposition of the will of any one person over another. It also has its weaknesses. For example, it tends not to protect the minority against the will of the majority.

Strengths: Weaknesses:

3.4.3 Law is a body of obligations regarded as a right by one party and as a duty by the other.

This is very typical of laws in rural communities. Different people in the community have “rights” and “duties”. Master to servant/servant to master obligations and rights fall into this category of law. Relationships such as parent/children, husband/wife, rich/poor, priest/people, employer/employee etc. all fall into this understanding of the law.

Problems arise when one group makes laws without reference to others or in opposition to their desires. Such “laws” or “customs” are very hard to change. They are authoritative because they are often very old. Usually there is no mechanism to challenge these laws.

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

3.4.4 The Law helps people reconcile their actual behaviour with the ideal principles that are accepted by all.

Often laws are a compromise between actual behaviour and an ideal. Alcohol consumption is harmful to health and smoking kills people. Does this mean they should both be outlawed? In most societies many people, if not most people, drink alcohol and smoke. So they will not vote for a government that will introduce laws banning alcohol and tobacco. The result of this behavioural discrepancy is that only extreme abuse is penalised. You are not charged with drinking, but with being drunk or driving a car after drinking enough to impair your judgement. We see this aspect of "law" in such things as abortion and legalised prostitution as well as in warnings about the dangers of smoking.

In the community where you are working, what are some of the "laws" that fit into this category?

3.5 The Purpose of Laws in the Old Testament

Looking at the Old Testament, several purposes for the law emerge. Three are especially obvious.

3.5.1 To restrain evil and protect the innocent

The laws of Moses were quite clearly revolutionary in their time. Their wisdom and enduring value are proved by the fact that they are still the basis of the legal systems and national constitutions in many countries. At the time they were given, they contrasted with the autocratic disregard for human life in Egypt where life was deliberately destroyed. They were also a stark contrast to the constant rivalry, raiding and warfare of the petty city states in Canaan and the tribal raiding in the desert. In these communities, the death of one person in the tribe or community incited the revenge of **the whole tribe** on the perpetrator. In such a setting, ***"an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth"*** represented a very significant limitation on the practice of personal revenge and honour killings.

The cities of refugee for innocent offenders (Deut. 4:41-43) were strategically placed so everyone had a chance to reach safety. Another example would be the penalty for careless owners of a dangerous animal. All these are merciful provisions for the safety of both individuals and the community.

List some of your local laws that:

(a) Restrain evil and protect the innocent

(b) Abuse the above principles

3.5.2 To allow good to flourish

While the Ten Commandments are stated in the negative form – as prohibitions, some laws are stated in the positive.

- ***"You shall have just balances and weights"*** (Lev. 26:2)
- ***"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart…"*** (Deut. 6:5)

Jesus dramatically changed the negative into the positive in the Sermon on the Mount. He quotes the Old Testament and then says:

"But I say to you…be reconciled to your brother

…make friends with your accuser

…treat women honourably

…be faithful to your wives

…speak simply and honestly

…love your enemies

…accept persecution" (Mt. 5:21-48)

The restraint of evil and protection of the innocent is intended to encourage good to flourish.
The purpose is to help good to triumph in the struggle with evil.

Why are the laws in the negative in the Old Testament?

Can good be commanded?

Why did Jesus put them in the positive form?

3.5.3 To Provide a Model

Laws are to provide a behaviour code. Judaism, Islam and Christianity are not just belief systems. They also give a pattern for life. This code, expressed in law, becomes the model of what society should look like. So Orthodox Jews in Israel are trying to shape the State of Israel to look like their idealised model. Radical Muslims hope the imposition of Sharia will result in an idealised Muslim society.

In "Christian" societies in the West – the "Christian" element in the law has been seriously weakened by the influence of secularism, other philosophies and an over-emphasis on the freedom of the individual at the expense of the community. Hedonism (the pursuit of pleasure) and materialism (preoccupation with wealth and things) are major contributory factors. In spite of this, the Christian basis of law and Christian ideals have spread throughout the world. They have become the model for courts and constitutions on all continents.

The preamble to the Indian constitution is profoundly Christian in character, promising justice, liberty and equality. It also promotes fraternity and good neighbourliness to all people in that vast land. The BJP (a Hindu party) wants to change the constitution of India precisely because of its "Christian" nature.

3.6 Law and Justice

Law and Justice are not always the same thing. In India, Ghandi declared, **"untouchability is a sin against God and society"**. But no one in the history of India has ever been prosecuted for committing this crime!!

There are many justice issues that the law does not address. In other cases the law is there, but it is not invoked. Honour killing of women in Muslim countries is an example of this.

Give some examples where there is a difference between law and justice in your community.

Are we supposed to obey the law in all cases? If a government bans the production or distribution of Scripture, must we not respect such laws? If a country does not issue missionary visas, it reflects the government's desire to keep missionaries out. Should we not respect such wishes? If the government denies Christians the right to assemble themselves together to worship, is it not a believer's duty to submit to the law? Would you show a neighbour a video of the Jesus film knowing it was illegal to show the film publicly?

Below are some key New Testament passages on civil law and government. Fill in the chart.

Scripture	**What is the function of government?**	**What is the responsibility of government?**
Rom. 13:1-7		
1 Tim. 2:1-4		
Titus 3:1		
1 Pet. 2:13-17		

Bonhoeffer, in his **Ethics**, points out that the Reformation view of civil government and law was based on The Fall.

"It was sin that made necessary the divine institution of government. The sword that God has given to government is to be used by it, in order to protect men against the chaos which is caused by sin. Government is to punish the criminal and to safeguard life."

In Rom. 13:3-4 and 1 Pet. 2:14 how should the law respond to those who are doing good?

How should it respond to those doing evil?

Do you think the description of law in these passages in the New Testament indicates how God **intends** law and government to function properly or is it an assertion that every law and all government action follows this pattern?

Can we distinguish between divinely ordered government and the faithful and unfaithful execution of justice?

In Rom. 13:3-4 and 1 Peter 2:13-14 mark the words **evil**, **good** and **right**. Biblically, would you describe the preaching of the Gospel as evil or good?

What would you say of a government that punishes people who promote Christ's teachings and praises those who oppose believers in the Lord Jesus?

Bonhoeffer again – from **Ethics**

"The much discussed question of what constitutes this goodness or outward justice which the government is charged with promoting, is easily resolved if one keeps in view the derivation of government from Jesus Christ. Good consists in allowance being made in every action of government for the ultimate purpose – namely the service of Christ. What is intended here is not a "Christian" action, but an action which does not exclude Christ."

4. TRANSFORMATION : THE EQUALITY MODEL OF THE PROMISED LAND

4.1 The Setting of the Promised Land

4.2 The Pattern already Established

4.2.1 The Manna and the Quails

4.2.2 The Distribution of the Land

4.3 The Purpose for the Laws

4.4 Law 1: One-third tithe to the poor

4.5 Law 2: Leave the edges of the crops for the poor to glean

4.6 Law 3: Charge no interest to the poor

4.7 Law 4: Cancel all debts every seven years

4.8 Law 5: Give back the land every 50 years

4.9 Review

Conclusion

TRANSFORMATION : THE EQUALITY MODEL OF THE PROMISED LAND

4.1 The Setting of the Promised Land

There are some specific laws relating to Promised Land that God gave to His people in the desert. They describe the type of society God wanted to create. This society of God's people in the Promised Land was to be a stark contrast to the class-consciousness and oppression of Egypt as well as to the superstition, degradation and fragmentation of Canaanite society.

The People of God were called to be ***a light to the nations" in*** the way they lived. So the laws were designed to enable them to create and sustain a just and equitable society. Disparity between rich and poor was to be resisted because all belonged to the one community. All bore the image of God and all were valued by Him. The concentration of wealth and power in the hands of one person or a group posed a dual danger. Firstly, that person might think they were of more value than others and secondly, they might misuse the power that money gave them. So wealth among God's people was to be a sign of the inter-dependence, sharing, caring and mutual support of all the tribes and family groups for each other.

From your knowledge of Egyptian and Canaanite society around 1250 B.C. choose adjectives that you think might apply to:

Egyptian society:

Canaanite society:

(discriminatory, decentralised, disorganised, wealthy, oppressive, warlike, urbanised, feudal, rural, dictatorial)

What should be some of the characteristics of a society that was to be a "light" to these nations?

4.2 The Pattern already Established

The equality of the new society of the People of God was demonstrated, while still in the desert, by two events – the giving of the manna and the quails and the distribution of the land.

4.2.1 The Manna and the Quails

God's provision for the People of God (about 2 million of them) in the desert was the greatest feeding programme ever conducted! It was the greatest **in length** – far surpassing the 7-year period of drought managed by Joseph! It lasted forty years! A whole generation were fed every day **with great consistency**. There were no failures of supplies or logistics. There was no manipulation of ration cards and no sales on the black market! It was the greatest feeding programme in terms of **nutritional balance!** Every morning there was carbohydrate and every evening there was protein. It was also the greatest in the **justice** of its distribution:

"He who gathered much did not have much left over. He who gathered little, did not have too little. Everyone gathered as much as he needed." (Ex. 16:17-18)

God disciplined His people not to be greedy by making any extra, hoarded manna go rotten! They had to exercise faith rather than demand security. Every night they went to bed with no guarantee that God would meet their needs in the morning – but He always did!

4.2.2 The Distribution of the Land

God said, ***"To a larger group give a larger inheritance, and to a smaller group a smaller one; each is to receive its inheritance according to the number of those listed."*** (Num. 26:54)

This is exactly the same pattern as the gathering of the manna. So the People of God spent one generation in the desert. This was not just as a punishment; rather it was a re-training of their cultural attitudes after the exploitation they had suffered in Egypt.

They learned their lesson. When the 2½ tribes chose to stay on the East Bank, in fact they all crossed over Jordan and only later returned to claim their inheritance. They said***, "We will not return to our homes until every Israelite has received his inheritance."*** (Num. 32:18)

In the country where you are working, research and report back to the team the land–owning patterns.

4.3 The Purpose for the Laws

The aim of the laws is very specifically stated, ***"There ought not to be any poor among you in the land the LORD your God is giving you to possess as your inheritance, if you fully obey the Lord your God."*** (Deut. 15:4)

But the same passage later notes, ***"There will always be poor people in the land."*** (Deut. 15:11) The Lord Jesus made the same observation over a millennium later. Poverty was not meant to be a permanent condition in the new society. When it did occur, specific steps were to be taken to redistribute wealth in the society because they had once suffered as outsiders in Egypt. This is why wealth was not only to be distributed to poor among the People of God, but also to others (aliens) in the land.

Different societies have tried to use different methods to uplift the poor. India tried to raise dalits by:

- Reservations for a certain quota in educational institutions
- Development programmes in rural and urban areas particularly focussed on them
- Huge loan parties
- Reservations of government jobs
- Food for work programmes.

What methods are used to help raise the quality of living among the poor? Rate these according to their long-term effectiveness.

Why are they ineffective or effective?

Is poverty worse in the city or in rural areas?

Where is wealth more evenly distributed?

4.4 Law 1: One-third tithe to the poor

In Deut. 26:12-15 God gives the command that the tithe, which was usually given to the Levites because they had no land and in recognition of their religious service to the whole community, was to be distributed to a wider group every three years.

The target groups for **this** tithe were:

- ♦
- ♦
- ♦
- ♦

The common feature among these four groups is that they are usually the poorest of the poor in society. This was a major provision to alleviate their poverty and the hunger that always accompanies poverty. The reason given as to why tithes should be shared in this way was, ***"So that they may eat in your towns and be satisfied."*** (Deut. 26:12) Does this imply that the rural poor drift to the towns, live in abject poverty and tend to cause a rise in petty crime? If so, the same process is going on 3,250 years later!

There were other provisions in the law to alleviate the problems of the rural poor.

- ♦ Levirate marriage – the responsibility of the nearest male relative to care for his brother's widow and even raise children for his brother with her.
- ♦ Commands to always treat the aliens in the land as equal members in the community.

The command about the distribution of the tithe to the poor follows immediately after the section on offering the 'first fruits' to God in recognition of His goodness. (Deut. 26:1-11) The principle of putting God first was built into many of the ceremonial laws. This was to make sure God was not forgotten.

This isn't a very radical command. Jesus went much further as He instructed the rich young ruler to sell his assets and give to the poor. (Mt. 19:31) The early church went much further than the Old Testament command. Rich Christians sold assets to give to the poor. (Acts 4:32)

This law relates to the distribution of their surplus – the use of the "Lord's tithe". The sad fact about the world wide church is that, for the most part, tithing doesn't happen. So there is no surplus to distribute. In most development agencies we have money largely because of other people's tithe, just as the Levites did. We would do well to follow the example of the Levites in their radical sharing with the needy.

How widely should we apply these laws? The options are:

- They **only** applied to the Old Testament People of God.
- They still apply to us the New Testament People of God.
- They only work well in community living – like some Mennonite communities.
- They should be applied on a national scale today.

Which option would you support and why?

4.5 Law 2: Leave the edges of the crops for the poor to glean.

Lev. 19:9- 10, ***"When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God."***

The statement, ***"I am the Lord your God"*** occurs many times in this chapter (verses 3, 4, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32, 34, 36, 37). This seems to suggest two things:

- It is like a stamp of authority – affirming the authority of the command – it comes from God Himself.
- It reflects the character of God. How would God act if He were living among His people? He would do these things! The speech begins with, ***"The Lord said to Moses, 'Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: Be holy because I, the LORD your God, am holy.' "*** (Lev. 19:2)

Which do you think is the dominant of the two options and why?

Genesis declares that man bears God's image. This is our heritage. But we only reflect that image when we act as God would act, when we do what God would do. This Law forcefully reminds us that God would care for the poor.

Interestingly, the Qur'an and the Sharia advocate this same law of gleaning. In Bangladesh, during harvest, you can see orphans and widows in scant clothing and tattered saris following the reapers and gathering in what is left behind. They know this is the one time in the year when they won't go to bed feeling the pangs of hunger.

Read the story of Ruth – especially ch. 2. Which statements are true (T) and which are false? (F) Write down the verse that supports your choice.

		Verse
♦	Ruth was rich	□ _____
♦	Ruth was a widow	□ _____
♦	She collected rice	□ _____
♦	She was in her home country	□ _____
♦	The reapers never left anything	□ _____
♦	Poor female gleaners were sometimes molested	□ _____
♦	The landowner objected to her gleaning	□ _____
♦	Ruth gleaned throughout the harvest season	□ _____
♦	Farmers regularly allowed the poor to glean	□ _____

Commands about gleaning also come in Deut. 24:19:22. There are 3 types of crops mentioned and 3 groups of people who should gain by gleaning.

Crops	Gainers
_____	
_____	
_____	

In v. 22 an additional reason is given for keeping this command. It is:

4.6 Law 3: Charge No Interest to the Poor

First note the Biblical references. Write them out.

Ex. 22:25

Deut. 23:19

Lev. 25:35-37

The command applies to:

- members of your own community with whom you share faith
- the poor and the needy

The command does not apply to _____

_____ (see Deut. 23:20)

It probably didn't apply to commercial transactions. Do you agree? Discuss with your team.

The Qur'an repeats this injunction so that a key element in Islamic banking is interest free credit. Ask local people or ask in an Islamic bank near you who this applies to and under what conditions.

The reality in most Muslim communities is that the money lender is the most wealthy and powerful member of the community. He is usually the worst exploiter of the poor in rural communities. Rates of 10% per month interest are not unusual. Sometimes part of the crop is taken as well as the capital. Where the farmer in a rural community is illiterate, exploitation is easy and common. Many marginal farmers lose their land in a bad year.

The New Testament equivalent to the moneylender was the tax collector. Notice the parallels:

- They often collected 3 or 4 times as much as they should (Lk. 19:8)
- They tended to imprison their debtors (Mt. 18:28-30)
- They were usually very rich (Lk. 19:2)
- They oppressed their own people (Mt. 9:9)
- They collaborated with the politically powerful oppressive forces – often colonial

Yet Jesus was a friend to tax collector! (Mt. 9:10-13, Lk. 18:8-14; 19:1-10)

Other groups Jesus opposed:

- The rich (Mt. 19:22-24, Lk. 12:16-24)
- The money changers (Mt. 21:12)

Jesus endorsed the payment of taxes. (Mt. 17:24, Lk. 20:22-26) He chose a tax collector to be one of His disciples. Another, Zacchaeus, found salvation. His grateful response was to sell his many possessions and give half the proceeds to the poor and with the other half repay four times those he had robbed.

Write a short profile of the moneylender in your society.

Banks, micro-financing projects, offering low interest rates or special loans (no interest) to the poor, can be an instrument of justice and equality in society.

In your experience do they work?

4.7 Law 4: Cancel all debts every seven years

Read Deut. 15:1-11

Analyse the passage under the following headings

The command (v. 1)

_____

The beneficiaries (v. 2-7) _____

The attitude (v. 8-10)

_____

The context (v. 11) _____

The exemptions (v. 13)

_____

The results (v. 4-6) _____

The caution (v. 9) _____

The aim (v. 4) _____

This theme is reaffirmed in the New Testament by Jesus – Luke 6:34 and 38, ***"And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even `sinners' lend to `sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full." "Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."***

The command to cancel monetary debts is linked to freeing human servants from obligations and dependency. See Deut. 15:12-15 and Ex. 21:2-6. This command is also set in the context of a celebration of God's goodness to us. Deut. 31:10, ***"At the end of every seven years, in the year for cancelling debts, during the Feast of Tabernacles, … Assemble all the people and read this law."*** This was a policy of the People of God to be passed on to all generations.

The parallel is with God's action in Creation where six days of work were followed by a day of rest. (Lev. 25:1-7) The contrast is with Pharaoh who refused to release the Hebrew slaves even after several generations of hard labour.

In all descriptions of the poverty cycle indebtedness is **always** a feature.

In the society where you work, what are the things for which the poor incur most debts?

Compare your lists with those of others on your team and note the amounts of money involved.

What about beggars? We often meet the very poor and needy in the form of beggars.
They come to our door. They stop us in the streets. Does this command relate to them?

Note that the cancelling of debts is a **structural solution** to a huge problem in society. On the other hand, giving to beggars is a temporary welfare response.

In the spectrum of approaches to the needs of the poor: welfare – development – transformation. Welfare is at the beginning, while we are aiming at the end! Cancelling debts every seven years is much more likely to lead to transformation than giving to beggars. One way endorses dependency. The other way ends it!

4.8 Law 5: Give back land every 50 years

The Feast of Tabernacles was a time of remembering, learning and **acting** on the command to cancel debts every seven years. The Day of Atonement, the holiest and most special day in the year to the Old Covenant People of God, was the occasion for giving back the land to its original owners every fifty years. **Worship and justice are inseparable in the Bible.**

Read Lev. 25:8-55. It contains the following statements about the Year of Jubilee.

- God owns the land.
- The 50th year was a time of celebration.
- The land was to be allowed to produce crops naturally.
- Everyone was to celebrate with his own extended family.
- All were to return to their own original land.
- The crop bearing capacity determined the land price.
- This was a constant anti-inflationary measure.
- The people would not starve.
- Relatives should help their extended family to reoccupy the land.
- Rural land and village homes could not be sold permanently.
- Urban property would be sold permanently.
- The property of priests could not be sold.
- Fellow members of the People of God could not be owned as slaves.
- All slaves were to be released at the Jubilee.

Dr. Ron Sider, in **Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger**, comments on the Jubilee Principle:

"The Jubilee Principle (Lev. 25) **is one of the most radical texts in all Scripture. At least it seems that way for people born in countries committed to laissez-faire economics. Every fifty years, God said, all land was to return to the original owners without compensation! Physical handicaps, the death of a breadwinner or lack of natural ability, may lead some people to become poorer than others. But God does not want such disadvantages to lead to greater and greater divergence of wealth and poverty. God therefore gave His people a law that would equalize land ownership every fifty years.**

The year of Jubilee envisages an institutionalised structure that affects everyone automatically. It is to be a poor person's right to receive back his inheritance at the time of Jubilee. Returning the land is not a charitable courtesy that the wealthy may extend if they please.

The Jubilee Principle also provides for self-help and self-development. With his land returned, the poor person could again earn his own living. The Biblical concept of Jubilee underlines the importance of institutionalised mechanisms and structures that promote justice. Because He disapproves of extremes of wealth among His people, God ordains equalising mechanisms like the year of Jubilee."

Along with the maintenance of equality and the eradication of poverty, which were the main purpose of the Jubilee, there was an accompanying concern that the land could not be inherited out of the tribe. So even in the wider community the equality between tribes was maintained.

There is an interesting test case in Num. 27:1-11 and 36:1-9. The case was about Zelophehad's daughters. Women could inherit land and marry anyone they wanted, but they must inherit within the tribe. This means that, at the time of Jubilee, the land would remain within that tribe. So the year of Jubilee had a very wide-ranging stabilising effect in the People of God.

4.9 Review

Note the five laws specially designed to create and maintain equality within the Promised Land.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Discuss on your team how widely we could apply these today. Suggest 21st century equivalents for your development project.

Law 1:

Law 2:

Law 3:

Law 4:

Law 5:

Conclusion:

Everyone agrees that equality is an ideal – the Marxists, socialists, the welfare state, the French revolutionists etc. But most think it is an **unrealistic dream**!

In any society all are not equal – intellectually, socially and physically. What God wants is not absolute sameness, but a **sharing of resources** and the **structuring of new beginnings**, so that everyone may equally enjoy the heritage God has prepared for them.

If they had followed these laws, the People of God would have been a tremendous **"light to the nations"** and a good model for others to follow. There would have been dignity and justice for all. Following these laws would have dramatically improved any society of the time, both individually and collectively.

God says ***"I broke the bars of your yoke and enabled you to walk with heads held high."*** (Lev. 26:13)

"Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the Lord your God is giving you." (Deut. 16:20)

5. TRANSFORMATION : PRINCIPLES FROM OLD TESTAMENT WISDOM LITERATURE

5.1 The context of the Wisdom Literature

5.2 The contribution of Wisdom Literature to Development Work

5.3 Job – the rich man who became poor

5.4 David – the poor man who became rich

5.4.1 God is just

5.4.2 Justice is the basis of a strong society

5.4.3 God acts to bring justice in human society

5.4.4 Human society is marred with injustice

5.4.5 God will judge all with justice

5.5 Solomon – the rich man who became richer

Conclusion

5. TRANSFORMATION : PRINCIPLES FROM OLD TESTAMENT WISDOM LITERATURE

5.1 The context of the Wisdom Literature

This consists of

- Job
- Psalms
- Proverbs
- Ecclesiastes
- Song of Solomon

The main authors of this literature are Job, David and Solomon. In addition, there were other 'wise men' – similar to the schools of the prophets – who preserved the sayings of Job, David and Solomon, recorded them and probably 'shaped' them. Wisdom is certainly not the exclusive characteristic of a few. At least among Christians it should be a feature of most.

For this to be true we must:

I. Recognise the importance of wisdom – Acts 6

II. Prioritize the gift of wisdom – 1 Kings 3

III. Exercise the gift of wisdom – 1 Cor. 12:8

5.2 The Contribution of the Wisdom literature to Development Work

The Wisdom Literature in the Bible has a different approach to issues than the law and the prophets or the history sections. The law defines what is right and wrong and attaches penalties to illegal actions. The prophets combine the call to spiritual renewal with the demand for ethical behaviour. Much of the wisdom literature looks at life and interprets it pragmatically – what works and what lasts. In the opening chapters of Proverbs the two aims of wisdom are:

- The knowledge of God
- Justice in society

The means of achieving wisdom are discipline and sharing. (Prov. 1:7; 9:10; 8:20; 1:3; 2:9; 1:2; 6:23; 3:27; 28)

In contrast, the foolish person is greedy, selfish and does not seek God. So wisdom has both a religious **and** an ethical dimension. This Bible study will emphasise the ethical dimension. Usually we study Job to understand the nature of suffering and we read the Psalms for their wonderful devotional impact and inspiration. But both emphasize the ethical requirements of a just God.

We will look at:

1. **Job** – the rich man who became poor
2. **David** – the poor man who became rich
3. **Solomon** – the rich man who became richer

5.3 Job – the rich man who became poor

In the opening two chapters of the book, Satan is allowed to control Job's circumstances. He reduces him from being the richest man in the East to being the poorest. Job responds to this with some very remarkable statements of faith:

In 1:21 he says: ***"Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised."***

In response to his wife's advice to ***"Curse God and die"***, he says: ***"Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?'*** The verdict was, ***"Job did not sin in what he said"***. (2:10)

The second level on which Job's life was judged was **by his behaviour**. His friends (comforters) **begin** by recognizing that he has not lived for himself alone:

"Think how you have instructed many, how you have strengthened feeble hands. Your words have supported those who stumbled; you have strengthened faltering knees." (4:3-4)

But later his friends accuse him of the opposite! (See 22:6-11) But Job has passed the behaviour test, just as he passed the belief test.

We read in 23:10, ***"But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold."***

Job's final appeal before God and man is made in chapters 27-31. As he sums up his life and defends his actions, he makes 3 personal and 10 social statements.

Personal

I have been correct in my beliefs. 27:5; 31:5-6

I have been correct in my behaviour. 31:7-12

I have not any hidden sins to confess. 31:33

Social

I have treated my servants justly. 31:13

I have been generous to the poor. 31:16

I have cared for the orphans. 31:17

I have clothed the naked. 31:19

I have not exploited the weak. 31:19

I have not boasted about my wealth. 31:24-25

I haven't rejoiced at my enemies' misfortune. 31:29

I have fed and housed travellers. 31:31-32

I have cared for my land. 31:38

I have rewarded my tenant farmers. 31:39

Read Job's defence in Chapters 27-31 – especially 29:12-17

What conclusion do you draw from the evidence that Job presents in his defence?

When God gives His judgement on our lives will it be on the basis: (choose one)

(a) of what we have believed?

(b) of what we have done?

(c) equally on what we have believed and done?

What is the reference in the Gospel where Jesus asks this same question?

Is the basis of judgement the same for the rich as for the poor? Is it the same for those who are ignorant as for those who have received much light and knowledge or are there differences?

5.4 David – The poor man who became rich

When David was a young teenager and the youngest in his family, he was not always invited to important family events, but was left tending the sheep. This was certainly the situation that Samuel found when he went to anoint one of Jesse's sons as Israel's second king. Yet God chose David. From his lowly beginnings he became the most powerful man in the land.

He became strong:

I. **Spiritually**: ***"From that day the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power."*** (1 Sam. 16:13)

II. **Militarily**: ***"David triumphed over Goliath with a sling and a stone."*** (1 Sam. 17:50)
"They sang: `Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands.' " **(**1 Sam. 29:5)

III. **Politically**: ***"David grew stronger and stronger, while the house of Saul grew weaker and weaker."*** (2 Sam. 3:1)
"Everything David did pleased the people." (2 Sam. 3:36)

IV. **Economically**: ***"Now Hiram King of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David."*** (2 Sam. 5:11)

V. **Socially**: ***"I will make your name great, like the names of the greatest men in the earth."*** (2 Sam. 7:9)

David's kingship is summed up in Scripture in the words, ***"David reigned over all Israel, doing what was just and right for all his people."*** (2 Sam. 8:15)

In the Psalms, writing of his thoughts and prayers, David often focuses on 2 major themes – **worship and justice**. David links these two themes. We will just focus on the theme of justice in the Psalms.

5.4.1 God is just

Ps. 7:11 ***"God is a righteous judge."***

Ps. 9:16 ***"The Lord is known by His justice."***

Ps. 11:7 ***"The LORD is righteous, He loves justice."***

Ps. 33:5 ***"The Lord loves righteousness and justice."***

Ps. 45:6 ***"Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; a scepter of justice will be the scepter of Your Kingdom."***

Fill in the following texts:

Ps. 67:6

Ps. 69:33

Ps. 89:14

5.4.2 Justice is the basis of a strong society

Ps. 37:28 ***"The Lord loves the just."***

Ps. 41:1 ***"Blessed is he who has regard for the weak."***

Ps. 82:3-4 ***"Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked."***

Fill in the following texts:

Ps. 106:3

Ps. 112:9

Ps. 119:121

5.4.3 God acts to bring justice in human society

Fill the blanks where they occur.

Ps. 10:17 ***"You hear, O Lord, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry."***

Ps. 35:10 "***Who is like you, O Lord? You rescue the poor from those ... who rob them."***

Ps. 37:6 ***"He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun."***

Ps. 68:5

Ps. 72:4 ***"He will defend the afflicted among the people and save the children of the needy. He will crush the oppressors."***

Ps. 103:6 ***"The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed."***

Ps. 113:7 ***"He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap."***

Ps. 140:12

5.4.4 Human society is marred with injustice:

Ps. 14:3 ***"All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt."***

Ps. 53:3 ***"There is no one who does good, not even one."***

Ps. 58:2

Ps. 94:5, 6 ***"They crush your people, O Lord; they oppress your inheritance. They slay the widow and the alien; they murder the fatherless."***

Ps. 109:16 ***"The evil man hounds to death the poor and the needy and they are broken hearted."***

5.4.5 God will judge all with justice.

Ps. 9:8 ***"He will judge the world in righteousness; He will govern the peoples with justice."***

Ps. 96:13 ***"He comes to judge the world in righteousness and all the peoples in His truth."***

Ps. 98:9

Ps. 99:1 ***"The Lord reigns let the nations tremble."***

Ps. 99:4 ***"The King is mighty, he loves justice; in Jacob you have done what is just and right."***

Ps. 102:17 ***"He will respond to the prayer of the destitute. He will not despise their plea."***

Read Psalm 15 and note all the requirements to dwell with God.
Why do you think worship and justice are linked together by David in the Psalms?
Quote some of the teaching of Jesus that makes the same link.

Of course, David wasn't perfect! He did some things that were blatantly unjust. The most graphic example is his killing of Uriah to cover up his adultery with Uriah's wife Bathsheba. The consequence of this injustice was that the illegitimate child died and David was severely rebuked by the prophet Nathan. David had the grace to repent before the Lord of his actions.

5.5 Solomon – The rich man who became richer!

In contrast to Job and David, Solomon never experienced poverty. He grew up in a palace. He later built an even grander palace and entertained kings, queens and wise men from all over the Middle East. (1 Kings 4:29-34)

He became the richest man in the world. (1 Kings 10) Among his possessions were 12,000 horses, 14,000 chariots, a fleet of ships, the most beautiful and expensive throne in the world and an annual

income of approximately 1000 talents or about 30 metric tons of gold – that would be ~US$ 14 million at today's prices.

At the beginning of his reign, God appeared to Solomon and offered him anything he wanted. He asked for wisdom to be able to govern his people effectively and justly. (1 Kings 3:7-12) The first evidence of this ability was in the judgement *(without the possibility of DNA testing!)* about which of two prostitutes was the mother of a live child. (1 Kings 3:18-28) It was also demonstrated in the 3,000 proverbs he spoke and the 1,005 songs he wrote. He was an early student of both botany and zoology. (1 Kings 4:29-34). His other wise actions included the building of a temple to God **before** building a palace for himself. He brought peace and prosperity to his country by sound economic policies and skilful diplomacy. He improved the working conditions for the labourers on his building projects – two months at home with their families for every month away at work. (1 Kings 5:14)

From Solomon we learn that wisdom is **a gift** – God gave it to him. It is also **an ability** – he used and developed his gift. Wisdom is also **a service**. Solomon used his wisdom to help his people. Finally, wisdom is **a heritage.** He recorded his insights for the benefit of all.

Solomon's insights on poverty and justice are given below. Fill in the text of the verses that are missing.

Prov. 2:6-8 ***"For the LORD gives wisdom….. victory to the upright…. He shields the blameless….He guides the just and protects the faithful."***

Prov. 6:16-19 ***"There are six things the LORD hates,… haughty eyes, a lying tongue, a hand that sheds innocent blood, a wicked heart, false witnesses and quarrellers."***

Prov. 8:20 ***"I walk in the way of righteousness, along the paths of justice."***

Prov. 10:4 ***"Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth."***

Prov. 11:1

Prov. 11: 24-25 ***"One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper."***

Prov. 11:25

Prov. 12:5 ***"The plans of the righteous are just."***

Prov. 13:11 ***"Dishonest money dwindles away, but he who gathers money little by little makes it grow."***

Prov. 13:23 ***"A poor man's field may produce abundant food, but injustice sweeps it away."***

Prov. 14:20

Prov. 14:23 ***"All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty."***

Prov. 14:31

Prov. 16:8 ***"Better a little with righteousness than much gain with injustice."***

Prov. 16:11 ***"Honest scales and balances are from the Lord."***

Prov. 16:19 ***"Better to be lowly in spirit and among the oppressed than to share plunder with the proud."***

Prov. 17:23

Prov. 18:5 ***"It is not good to be partial to the wicked or to deprive the innocent of justice."***

Prov. 18:9 ***"One who is slack in his work is brother to one who destroys."***

Prov. 19:1 ***"Better a poor man whose walk is blameless than a fool whose lips are perverse."***

Prov. 19:17

Prov. 20:10

Prov. 20:13 ***"Do not love sleep or you will grow poor."***

Prov. 20:17 ***"Food gained by fraud tastes sweet to a man, but he ends up with a mouth full of gravel."***

Prov. 20:23

Prov. 21:3 ***"To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice."***

Prov. 21:5

Prov. 21:13

Prov. 21:15 ***"When justice is done, it brings joy to the righteous but terror to evildoers."***

Prov. 21:17 ***"He who loves pleasure will become poor; whoever loves wine and oil will never be rich."***

Prov. 21:21

Prov. 21:26 ***"The righteous give without sparing."***

Prov. 22:2

Prov. 22:7 ***"The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender."***

Prov. 22:9 ***"A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor."***

Prov. 22.16

Prov. 22:22-23 ***"Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and do not crush the needy in court, for the Lord will take up their case and will plunder those who plunder them."***

Prov. 24:28 ***"Do not testify against your neighbour without cause."***

Prov. 25:21 ***"If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink."***

Prov. 28:5

Prov. 28:5 ***"Evil men do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it fully."***

Prov. 28:6 ***"Better a poor man whose walk is blameless than a rich man whose ways are perverse."***

Prov. 28:8

Prov. 28:19 ***"He who works his land will have abundant food, but the one who chases fantasies will have his fill of poverty."***

Prov. 28:25

Prov. 29:2 ***"When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan."***

Prov. 29:4 ***"By justice a king gives a country stability, but one who is greedy for bribes tears it down."***

Prov. 29:7

Prov. 29:14 ***"If a king judges the poor with fairness, his throne will always be secure."***

Prov. 30:8-9 ***"Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown You and say, `Who is the Lord? ' or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonour the name of God."***

Prov. 30:14 ***"There are those who devour the poor from the earth and the needy from mankind."***

Prov. 31:5 ***"Kings must not deprive all the oppressed of their rights."***

Prov. 31:8

Prov. 31:9 ***"Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."***

Summarise the causes of poverty in Proverbs

Summarise the types of injustice mentioned in Proverbs.

Do you think it significant that the writer (Solomon), who seems to blame the poor for their poverty (laziness etc.), never himself **experienced** poverty, malnutrition etc.?

Conclusion

The wisdom literature has a great deal to say about poverty and justice. It is full of timeless insights and a good deal of pragmatic advice. The problem with pragmatism in that it judges according to what succeeds in society. It is an ethic based not on any moral absolutes but on expediency.

6. TRANSFORMATION : THE TOP-DOWN MODEL

6.1 Top-down or bottom-up

6.2 Some patterns of national leadership in the Old Testament

6.2.1 The patriarchal system

6.2.2 The divinely appointed leader

6.2.3 Decentralised local “judges”

6.2.4 The kings

6.2.5 The Messiah

6.3 Power relationships in the ‘Absolute Monarch Period’

6.4 In an absolute monarchy how can the people participate?

- A theological question
- A political question

6.5 The flow of resources and aid

6.6 How much aid reaches the poor?

Summary

6. TRANSFORMATION : THE TOP-DOWN MODEL

(Kings – Tyrants or Benefactors?)

6.1 Top-Down or Bottom-up?

The Debate in development often centres on **how** you can most effectively bring about change (or a new sense of direction) in a community. The two polar extremes are:

- **The Top-Down Model**
- **The Bottom-up Model**

These models describe opposite starting points in trying to bring about change. Ideally, the goal is the same for them both – the development of the whole community.

In studying the kings of Israel (the Northern Kingdom) and Judah (the Southern Kingdom) we will look at the top-down approach. We will see if and how leaders (in this case absolute monarchs) become facilitators of development for the ordinary people or whether their actions tend to concentrate power and bring benefits to only to an elite sub-group.

The prediction and warning by God was that having a king (an absolute ruler) would not benefit the common people, but would lead to the takeover of their rights and resources by an uncaring elite.

Read 1 Sam. 8 and note all the potential disadvantages of the "absolute monarch" type of government.

Do these disadvantages equally apply to other "absolute" systems of leadership, e.g. military junta, communist politburo etc?

What advantages did the people anticipate?

6.2 Some Patterns of National leadership in the Old Testament

There had been other styles of leadership before the absolute monarch pattern was established.

6.2.1 The patriarchal system

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were the founders of the nation. But at the time that they lived, the "nation" was very small – only a clan not much larger than a family. Abraham had 8 sons – all but one, Isaac, were sent away. (Gen. 25:1-6) Jacob had a large family with 12 sons. While their immediate families may have been small, they were all wealthy nomadic farmers with many flocks that were cared for by many shepherds. The family patriarch took responsibility for all these people. You find similar patterns of leadership among nomadic peoples today.

6.2.2 The divinely appointed leader

Details have been lost of the 400 years the People of God spent in Egypt. Jacob and his clan settled in Goshen (Eastern Delta region). They became slaves of the Egyptians. When and how this happened we are not told. The life story of Moses is the record of God intervening to rescue the People of God from slavery through the mediation of Moses – God's appointed leader. Moses was prepared by God for this task in two stages:

Stage I – living as an Egyptian prince for 40 years

Stage II – living as a shepherd in the Sinai for 40 years

Later Moses' leadership was challenged by the people and even by his own family, (Ex. 4:29; Num. 16:1) but he was the ultimate and absolute authority under God.

He shared this leadership in two ways:

- Aaron, his brother, became the leader of religious ritual (i.e. high priest) and the founder of the permanent priesthood.
- Under the advice of his father-in-law, **Jethro**, he appointed a hierarchical system of leaders over thousands, over hundreds, over fifties and over tens. These leaders were there to help in decision-making and in settling disputes (Ex. 17).

Joshua, also appointed by God, continued this pattern of non-hereditary leaders appointed by God. After a lapse of about 200 years Samuel also fulfilled this role of combining administrative and prophetic leadership. This is probably the preferred model of leadership in the Old Testament.

6.2.3 Decentralised local "judges"

For 200 years after Joshua, local leaders led the People of God in each community. Except when needed to combat attacks from outside peoples, there was no strong centralized leadership, nor any particular urban centre recognized as an administrative or political capital. The only central function was the worship of God around the Tabernacle.

Sometimes, usually in an emergency, a local judge was given national responsibilities. The election system was varied – but rarely sought. When any tribe was attacked, messages soon brought men from other tribes to their aid. After the battle they returned to their homes and occupations. One of these judges was a woman – Deborah.

By the end of the period of the Judges, the unity of the People of God, so strong in Joshua's day, was weak to the point of very little co-operation. Many had adopted local customs and Canaanite religious beliefs, ***"Everyone did what was right in their own eyes"*** (Judges 21:25)

6.2.4 The Kings

As a response to the weakness and chaos of decentralization, the people decided they wanted a king. There were only three kings before a measure of decentralization began – before the Northern and Southern kingdoms divided.

Saul: the first king – chosen for his physical attributes

David: the second king – chosen for his spiritual qualities

Solomon: the third king – chosen for his intellectual abilities and wisdom

They were very different from each other! From the time of Rehoboam and Jeroboam onwards, most of the kings were considered failures by the chroniclers of the nation.

The criteria of judgment were moral and spiritual. David was taken as a good model. Most kings worshipped idols and failed to set a high ethical example for the people. The Bible doesn't grade these kings according to administrative abilities, military prowess, or political astuteness. Other nations refer to the Northern Kingdom as the land of Omri. Omri ruled 40 years. He is described in just a few verses. What is the verdict on him? ***"He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord."*** (1 Kings 16:24) He was a bad king and so not important in the history of God's dealings with His people.

6.2.5 The Messiah

During this period of bad kings, the Old Testament vision of a Messiah began to emerge through the prophetic ministry of Hosea, Amos and especially Isaiah. The Messiah was the ideal king who would reign in justice and peace. He would sit on the throne of David and rule from Jerusalem. The nation would prosper and become famous so that all nations would come to Jerusalem to worship. Power and authority would be concentrated in the hands of this one person (the Messiah) and he would rule to benefit all people. We will look more closely at this model in Study 10.

By the first century A.D. the Jews had very set views as to what the Messiah should do. Jesus contradicted these expectations by:

- Not living in a palace
- Staying in rural Galilee and only visiting Jerusalem on a few occasions
- Being a poor commoner rather than a rich king
- Dealing with personal issues rather than national issues.

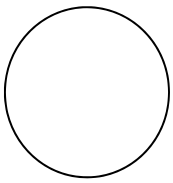
6.3 Power Relationships in "the Absolute Monarch" Period

There were four main groups influencing decision-making in the two kingdoms.

- The king and his court of nobles.
- The priests – especially the high priest
- The prophets
- The people

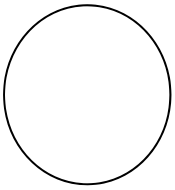
Each group had different interests and different methods of exerting influence. The king was meant to be the major controlling factor, but sometimes the real authority lay with the prophets or the people.

Draw a pie chart of the % of the population you think were in each of the four groups.



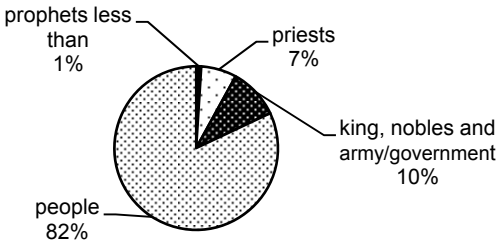
Were the four groups always separate? If not, what alliances were formed and why?

Draw another pie chart representing the size of the influence of each of the four groups.



6.4 In an absolute monarchy how can the people participate?

The ordinary, poor people form the majority in the nation. My pie-chart would be something like:



In an agricultural society with only simple technology most of the time of ordinary people was spent surviving. Water and food must be collected, prepared, and cooked. Fields must be ploughed with the help of oxen and a simple plough. If the plot was too small for ploughing, it was dug by hand. Cows, sheep and goats needed constant tending. There was very little time left for leisure, sports (unless it was developing a skill in time of war – archery for example), politics, philosophy and discussion of world events.

But primitive agriculture, especially in areas outside regular irrigation or regular rainfall (neither of which is true for the Mediterranean basin in the 8th century B.C.), is a **seasonal** activity. Planting and harvesting are very busy times. At other times marginal or landless farmers looked for off-season employment in urban areas – as unskilled labour. The whole of their day was then spent trying to earn enough to live and a little to save. For the poor, life was a struggle. Because the poor had little education and few marketable skills, they were usually eliminated from any decision-making. Others controlled their lives.

This raises two questions:

- **A theological question**: How can the image of God be reflected in people who have been reduced to pawns or automatons?
- **A political question**: How can poor people be involved in shaping their own lives and destinies?

Various attempts have been made to include the poor in the decision making process, including:

- Votes for all adults in the society to elect local and national leaders (universal suffrage in a democracy)
- Creation of village councils/small town councils and the decentralization of power to local groups

- Reserving positions on decision-making bodies for the poor (positive discrimination)
- Insistence that membership on public sector committees should represent the proportions in the local population
- Election of local people only for public office in local government

Assess the extent to which these and other measures involve the poor in the decision-making processes in the community where you are working on your development project.

6.5 The Flow of Resources and Aid.

There are three main channels by which aid flows from rich to poor nations/communities

- Government to government assistance and aid (A)
- NGO involvement (Development Agencies) (B)
- Commercial investment (C)

Each of these has advantages and disadvantages.

From the characteristics listed below state which type of aid the above methods mainly apply to:
Countrywide schemes ☐
Rapid transfer of funds ☐
Support for industry ☐
Cost effectiveness ☐
Benefits to the elite ☐
Help to the poor ☐
Emergency relief ☐
Holistic approach to development ☐
Decisions in sending countries ☐
Decisions by local beneficiaries ☐
Creating small scale employment ☐
Give an example and share the reason for your choice with your team.

6.6 How much aid reaches the poor?

The percentage of rural poor in 9th – 6th century B.C. Palestine (80%) is paralleled in many countries in the 3rd World today. Both urban and rural poor are equally marginalized. Sadly, many of the aid projects designed to benefit the poor, do not do so to any significant extent. So a key question donors need to ask is:

How much of my donation is actually going to reach the poor and help them?

For example, in a recent calculation for a **Christian** aid agency, it was estimated that for every dollar given, only about 15% was actually received by the intended beneficiaries. What happened to the rest?

47% was spent in the sending country – this covered expenses such as salaries, travel to see the project, advertising, office expenses, taxes, insurance etc.

38% was spent in the receiving country – this covered expenses such as salaries, travel, logistic support, duties, taxes, communication, office expenses etc.

15% to the poor!

In other Christian agencies 40% – 50% is actually going to the poor.

What is the percentage going to the intended recipients on your project? Include all your support money since we do not get salaries.

A second question to ask is: **Who gets the 15% and how is it used?** (the % that the poor receive from the dollar given)

There is often a tendency for family members of the contact person the aid agency knows in the community to be the primary beneficiaries of the aid!! Often the recipients of overseas funds are paternalistic in their distribution and family members get help first. Sadly, money encourages corruption!

A third question to ask is: **Are the poor people active in the planning and design of the development projects which are to help them or are they merely passive recipients?**

If the poor are only **consumers of aid** and not **stewards of the resources**, they are not fulfilling God's creation mandate and we are encouraging dependency. Vinay Samuel of India says;

"We are to be stewards first and then consumers. The problem with many development agencies is that we have made people consumers."

Discuss this statement as a team. Is this true of your project?

Summary:

The problem with the top-down approach, either by government aid or by paternalistic NGO's, is that **very little trickles down**! The top-down approach encourages:

- Grandiose schemes dreamed up that enhance the power and reputation of "the top'
- An increase in executive positions that are well-paid
- Duplication
- Factionalism as people fight to get their hands on the money

This presents a grim picture – but we must ask these hard questions. Many an organisation or project has inadequate or ineffectual procedures for dealing with these issues!

What is your opinion?

7. TRANSFORMATION : THE JUSTICE MODEL FROM THE PROPHETS

7.1 Development and a justice orientation

7.2 Justice issues raised by the prophets

7.3 The Poor in the Old Testament

7.4 The Prophets as spokesmen of the poor

7.5 Prophetic structures

7.6 Does God have a bias in favour of the poor?

7. TRANSFORMATION : THE JUSTICE MODEL FROM THE PROPHETS

7.1 Development and a justice orientation

A welfare orientation focuses on physical, social and emotional needs. A project orientation emphasizes programmes, goals, strategic plans and it has a time frame. Government plans seek statistical results, such as an increase in Gross National Product (GNP) or a reduction in infant mortality rates or the acceptance of family planning.

A justice orientation looks at **issues/relationships** between groups. It asks questions like:

- Why are things structured as they are?
- Why are some rich and others poor?
- What are the systems of exploitation?
- Who benefits from this development project?
- How much reaches the poor?
- In what proportions are the benefits shared?
- Are all given an equal chance?

What other questions are highlighted by looking at development through the lens of justice?

7.2 Justice issues raised by the Prophets

- **Bribery:** Ex. 23:1-9
- **Corruption:** 1 Sam. 8:3 (Eli's sons turned aside after dishonest gain. They accepted bribes and perverted justice.)
- **Exploitation:** 1 Sam. 12:4 (Samuel did not cheat the people.)
  Is. 1:23 (The leaders were exploiting the people.)
  Is. 3:14-15 (The powerful rob the poor.)
  Jer. 22:13 (Woe to exploiters!)
- **Oppression:** Judges 6:23 (The People of God had to flee to the mountains and watch as others reaped their crops. They asked if the Lord had forgotten them.)
  2 Sam. 12 (David is rebuked for causing the death of Uriah.)
  Is. 16:4-5 (God will end all oppression.)
  Jer. 7:5 (God will forgive them if they abandon oppression.)
- **Poverty:** Is. 58:6, 7 (Isaiah appeals for help for the hungry and helpless.)
- **Adultery:** Ezek. 22:10-12 (Several abuses are condemned.)

- **Lack of Justice:** 1 Sam. 12:3 (Samuel declares he was not bribed or biased in his judgments.)
  Is. 5:23 (The judges of the people are bribed to give false verdicts.)
  Is. 10:1-2 (The system of the law has become corrupt.)
  Jer. 5:28 (The poor and the orphans have rights in court.)
- **Violence:** 2 Kings 8:12 (Elisha foresees the brutality of Hazael and weeps.)
  Jer. 2:34 (The people of Jerusalem have killed the innocent poor.)
- **Dishonesty:** Is. 59:13-15 (God grieves over the absence of honesty and justice among His people.)
  Jer. 9:4 (Everyone cheats.)
  Ezek. 45:10 (An appeal for honest scales)
- **Greed:** Is. 61:8 (The Lord hates robbery.)
  Jer. 6:13, 8:10 (All are greedy.)
- **High Interest Rates:** Ezek. 18:14 (Charging high interest is the action of an evil man.)
- **Robbery:** Ezek. 18:18 (Robbers will be punished.)
  Ezek. 22:29 (Extortion is universal.)

There are many more references – especially in the Minor Prophets.

Beginning with Hosea – give at least five more examples where the prophet condemns injustice.

7.3 The Poor in the Old Testament

There are 5 Hebrew words that are usually translated "poor" in English.

- **Yarash**: has the sense of **dispossession**. In 2 Sam. 12:1-4, a rich man robs a poor man and is strongly rebuked. People can be dispossessed of land, possessions and of dignity. The cause is not frequently the injustice of the rich. See Prov. 13:23, 18:23, 22:7.

  The issue is: the lack of solidarity among the poor and lack of protection of the poor – so they can easily be picked off one by one.

- **Chaser**: has the sense of **lack** or **inadequacy**. Chaser refers especially to lack of food – hunger.

  Job 30:3: ***"Haggard from want and hunger, they roamed the parched land in desolate wastelands at night. In the brush they gathered salt herbs and their food was the root of the broom tree."***

  Deut. 28:56-57: What will happen in a siege, ***"The most gentle and sensitive woman among you…will begrudge the husband she loves and her own son or daughter the afterbirth from her womb…..for she intends to eat it secretly during the siege."***

Read also 2 Sam. 34:29 and Amos 4:6.

Lack is usually food but it also may also be shelter: Proverbs 6:32

Lack may also be lack of wisdom or lack of diligence. Prov. 21:5, Judges 19:19, 20

The issue here is: the giving of charity (food etc.) can only be an interim response. The poor must be supported until they are released from poverty.

- **Dal**: has the sense of **frailty** and **weakness**.

  Dal is used to describe their cows in Egypt (Gen. 41:9). Saul's house and Gideon's family/clan are described as being dal (weak).

  This frailty may be due to "disability" physically. It may also refer to the politically and socially weak. Those who are physically or mentally disabled are poor. They are looked down upon and easily crushed. They have no resources to recover from their calamity.

  The issue here is: the abuse of power.

- **Ebyon**: the sense here is having **no resources of their own** – i.e. dependency.

  Read: Amos 4:1, Job 5:15-16, Is. 14:30, Is. 25:4.

  The issue here is: Generosity <u>and</u> the structuring of justice in society are equally required in the Bible as a response to poverty.

- **Ani**: the sense here is **oppression**. This is a frequent Biblical perspective – an example would be the poverty/oppression of slavery in Egypt from which God liberated His people.

  God is seen as the refuge of the oppressed. Ps. 14:6; Is. 14:32.

  God opposes all those who oppress the poor. Is. 26:6; Amos 2:7

  The issue here is: when and how should we "fight" the oppressors?

Use in the Old Testament.

i	Yarash:	dispossession	31
ii	Chaser:	lack	36
iii	Dal:	frailty	57
iv	Ebyon:	dependency	61
v	Ani:	oppression	80

As a team discuss the issues raised by these five words.

7.4 The Prophets as spokesmen of the poor

The prophets came from the people. They understood them and were often their supporters. They spoke out loudly when injustice and oppression threatened to crush the poor.

Read the examples given below and summarise the message of these verses.

Amos 2:7

Amos 4:1

Amos 5:11

Amos 5:12

Amos 8:4-6

Joel 3:2

Is. 10: 1-2

Is. 1:23

Is. 41:17-20

Is. 58:6-10

Jer. 5:28

Ez. 22:29

Micah 2:2
Micah 3:11
Micah 6:10-11
Micah 7:3
Zeph. 3:1
Zeph. 3:4

It is interesting to reflect on the power alignments in the Northern and Southern Kingdoms.

In Transformation 6 we noted that there were 4 power groups:

- **King, nobles and army**
- **Priests**
- **Prophets**
- **People**

The usual links were king and nobles together with the priests against the prophets and the people:

Kings, nobles and army + Priests	Prophets + People

At times there were "false prophets" who aligned themselves to the court and said only what the king wanted to hear!

Rarely – as under King Josiah – were all the people together: prophets, priests and king together with the people.

In the community in which you are working how do the power structures align themselves? Are you (i.e. your team) one of these power structures?

7.5 Prophetic Structures

For the poor to have a voice in society and the ability to influence decision-making significantly, charity is not enough. **Society itself must be changed** to enable all, including "the poor" (who would no longer be poor) to live in dignity and in hope. For this to happen, human selfishness must be constrained by the knowledge of the just requirements of God and by an awareness that **He** will judge all oppression.

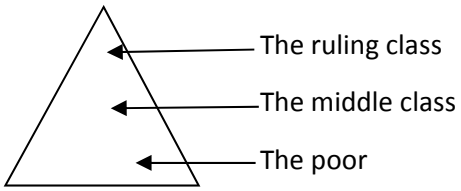
Both the Old Testament prophets and Jesus challenged the fairness of a society that gave power, prestige and wealth to a few and made the rest dependent on them. From the very beginning until the end, the Bible criticises the tendency of human societies to form power hierarchies.

Some illustrations of this are:

- Genesis 3 Male dominance is part of the result and the pattern of human sin.
- Genesis 11 The Tower of Babel is destroyed by God and the ability of the people to rule and dominate is diminished by the creation of many languages.
- Exodus 4:11 Egyptian power over the People of God was terminated and the slave people were freed.
- Exodus 17 Moses was advised not to make all the decisions himself but empower many others among the people.
- Lev. 25 & Num. 26 The land was shared equally.
- Deut. 15 The aim of society should be helping one another so poverty is eradicated.
- Judges The people live in autonomous groups, combining only for military support when threatened.
- 1 Sam. 8 God warns His people that their kings will oppress them by taking their property and their wealth.
- Psalms There are many reminders that the land belongs to God and they are to be stewards and not exploiters of the earth.
- The Prophets There are numerous challenges to the injustice amongst God's People – injustice that robs and oppresses the poor.
- Jesus He rebukes the Pharisees and the rich and powerful who seek the best places at feasts and are constantly concerned about honour and status. Servanthood is proclaimed as the true way to live.
- Acts The early church breaks all barriers of race and class.
- The Epistles The master is told to forgive and encourage the slave. The husband is instructed to love his wife and treat her "as himself".
- Revelation Everyone will bow before God's throne and confess there is only one Lord – The Lord Jesus Christ!

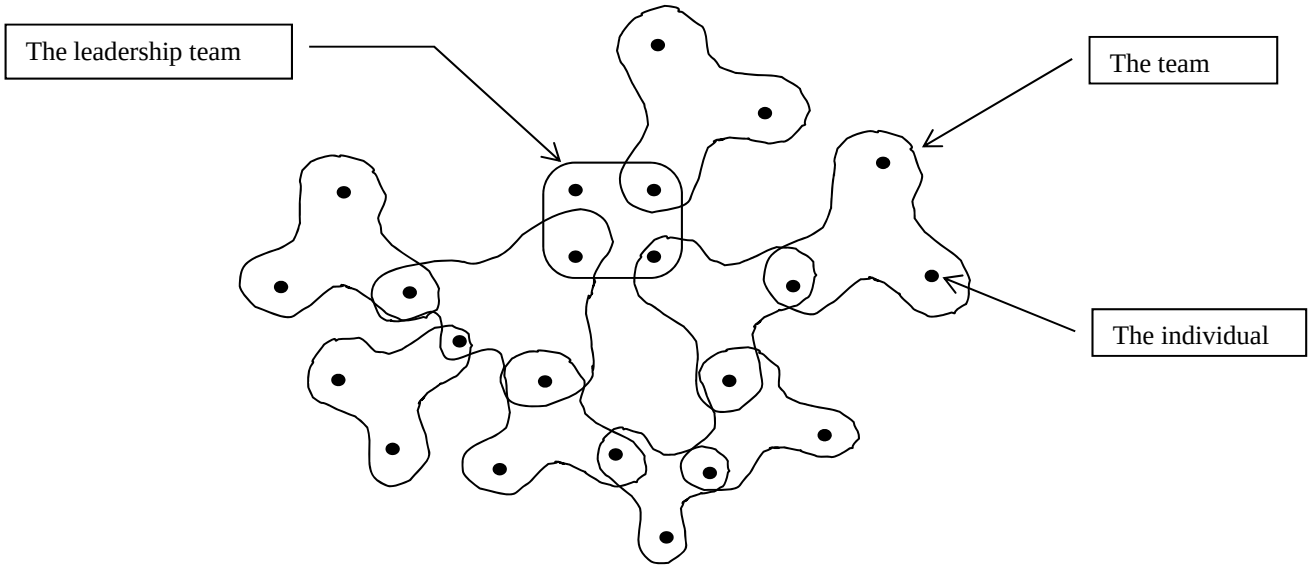
So this is a constant theme in Scripture. God wants to change society into a community where everyone shares and cares. Leadership is not abolished, rather everyone is encouraged to be proactive and to develop and exercise leadership. Leadership is to be shared and as many people as possible are to be empowered. In this way society is to change!

Most societies



Human society has a competition for power and control with a few dominating over the many.

What should a Christian community look like? Here controlling unjust practices and sharing resources evens out the differences.



Perhaps a Christian community begins to look like a multi-cellular organism – a body! The central circle is made up of a four-person leadership team. But each leader is part of a three or four person team. In fact the organism is a mass of cells (teams) interacting with each other. Who are the leaders? They are very difficult to see. There is no hierarchy.

7.6 Does God have a bias in favour of the poor?

Ronald Sider, in **Rich Christian in an Age of Hunger,** comes to the following conclusions:

- **God is not partial**

  He loves each person He has created – the weak and disadvantaged as well as the strong and the fortunate. Because God is impartial, His actions are a contrast with those of human societies that are sinful (and all are!). Sinfulness leads to lack of concern for the suffering of others. So, from a human perspective of sinfulness, God appears to be biased!

- **God is not neutral or passive**

  He is on the side of the poor because He opposes those who oppress and neglect the needy. He equally opposes extremes of wealth and poverty.

- **God opposes the rich**

  When the rich oppress others or fail to share with the poor, God opposes them. Salvation for the rich involves repentance for their economic selfishness so that they are no longer worshippers of things. This releases resources to lift up the poor in the community.

- **God identifies with the poor**

  This is seen supremely in Jesus. Jesus was the friend of the poor, He lived among them. He loved them, served them and shared their lifestyle. He never accumulated any possessions. He died for all people – including the poor.

- **God's mission is focused on the poor**

  At key points in salvation history, it is the poor who are the focus of God's concern.
  - The slaves in Egypt freed at the Exodus
  - The refugees in Babylon restored to Palestine
  - The rural poor in Galilee whom Jesus taught and healed

State at least **three specific actions** your team can take to demonstrate God's concern for the poor. Share with one another God's perspective and His concern for the poor.

8. TRANSFORMATION : THE CULTURE MODEL

8.1 Introduction

8.2 What is culture?

8.3 Learning about a culture

8.3.1 The history of the people

8.3.2 The festivals in their religion and social calendar

8.3.3 The rites of passage

8.4 Stories, songs, poetry and proverbs

8.4.1 The story of Ruth

8.4.2 The song of Miriam

8.4.3 Poems

8.4.4 Proverbs

8.5 Kinship and relations

8.6 Retaining as much culture as you can

8.6.1 They had the Scriptures

8.6.2 They had pride in their past and hope for the future

8.6.3 They celebrated many festivals

8.6.4 They had strong family structures

8.6.5 They had a high view of God

8.6.6 They placed value on cultural education

8.6.7 They had promises to look forward to

8.7 Factors that cause a culture to change

8.7.1 Changes in ecology / climate / geography

8.7.2 Contact with other societies and cultures

8.7.3 Evolutionary change within the culture of a community

8.7.4 Dramatic and traumatic events – like war

8.8 Contemporary issues in the study of cultures

8.8.1 Cultural diversity vs monocultural forms

8.8.2 The impact of migrations

8.8.3 Using culture as an entry point for the Gospel

8.8.4 Cultural sensitivity in our disciplining and church planting

8.9 Application

8. TRANSFORMATION : THE CULTURE MODEL

The People of God in Exile

8.1 Introduction

One of the remarkable features of the Jewish people is the extent to which they have been able to retain their cultural identity over the centuries even though they have been scattered throughout the world living in many cultures. From the call of Abraham until today is about 4000 years. For about 75% of this time they have been absent from Palestine.

In this study we will look at the time of the Exile and, in particular, at the cultural changes that took place then. The Northern Kingdom was conquered and its people taken captive in 722 B.C. The Babylonians overran the Southern Kingdom in 586 B.C. The people of both these kingdoms became involuntary refugees. A small remnant remained in the land, but they mixed with other peoples imported by the Assyrians and Babylonians. They became the Samaritans of the New Testament. It was the group who went into exile who maintained the faith and traditions laid down by God for His people.

Persian, Greek and Roman rule replaced Babylonian rule, so that at the time of Jesus the Jews in Palestine were under Roman rule. There had been brief periods of independence during the inter-testamental period under Judas Maccabeus in 156 B.C. There were a few months of independence under another Judas in A.D. 6. The Romans put down this independence ruthlessly. Jesus predicted the destruction of the temple and this happened in A.D. 70 when the city and the temple were turned into a desolate ruin.

So for more than 3000 years (out of 4000) the Jews were living (as exiles or captives) outside Palestine. Even today far more Jews live outside Israel than in it.

Suggest some of the reasons why they have been so successful in maintaining their faith.

8.2 What is Culture?

Look up a dictionary definition and list the main characteristics of culture.

Social anthropologists offer the following descriptions:

Taylor: **"Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, art, morals, law, customs and any other capabilities or habits acquired by people as a member of society."**

"Culture is a functioning and organizing system."

"Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour acquired and transmitted by symbols constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artefacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached ideas."

"Part of culture consists in norms for, or standards of, behaviour. Another part consists in ideologies justifying or rationalizing certain selected ways of behaviour. Finally, every culture includes broad general principles of selectivity and ordering."

"Culture is a way of life and the contents of relations between peoples. Culture emphasises the component of accumulated resources, immaterial as well as material, which the people inherit, employ, transmit, and add to."

There are two approaches to studying a culture:

- **The Process/Pattern method**
  This looks for common elements in a community's beliefs, customs and actions.
- **The Structural/Functional method**
  This emphasises social structures as indicators and expressions of culture.

(For more on this read **"Christianity in Culture"** by Charles Kraft, Orbis Books, Mary Knoll, NY. Ch. 4 pages 64-71)

Read the above definitions several times to grasp their meaning and then state in your own words (briefly) 5 points about culture.

Culture is:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

8.3 Learning about a Culture

The key ingredients in a culture can be discovered by studying carefully three areas:

- **The history of a people**
- **The festivals in their religion and social calendar**
- **The practices surrounding their rites of passage – the milestones in the life of the people in that culture**

We will look at these three areas in the context of the People of God during the Exile.

8.3.1 The history of the people

Communities/cultures express themselves in stories about their origins and about significant events in their past. The People of God in the Old Testament learned the importance of constantly referring back to past events and people. They spoke of God as, ***"The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."*** God encouraged them to ***"Remember you were once slaves in Egypt and the Lord your God delivered you from bondage with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm."*** They spoke of ***"Our Father David"*** and their kings were described as walking in the footsteps of David or straying from them.

The New Testament re-emphasises the importance of remembering history by regularly quoting from the Old Testament and referring to what had been prophesied in the Old Testament and become a reality in the New Testament. For example the Old Testament speaks of **a New Covenant** and **the first Adam**. The New Testament sees the fulfilment of the New Covenant by the Second Adam (Jesus) inaugurating a New People. The sermons in the Book of Acts and the exploits of the "faithful" (Heb. 11) make constant reference to the past history of the People of God. We read about their heroes and their prophets.

In their analysis of why the exile occurred, God's people came to the conclusion that the main reason was that they forgot! They forgot their history. They forgot the covenant. They forgot their laws and they forgot their God! This forgetfulness was a major cause of failure. They understood that, in the future, learning to remember their history was very important.

8.3.2 The festivals in their religion and social calendar

- **The Passover** initiated in Ex. 12 was the most important annual festival. It was to remind them of their deliverance from bondage by the blood of a lamb.
- **The Feast of Unleavened Bread**: this was immediately before the Passover. Lev. 23:4-8
- **The Festival of the First Fruits**: this celebrated God's provision of the land for them. Lev. 23:9-14
- **The Feast of Tabernacles**: this recalled their time in the desert. Lev. 23:23-25
- **The Feast of Trumpets**: this helped them remember the circumstances of the conquest of Jericho and their entry into the land. Lev. 23:23-25
- **The Day of Atonement**: on this day sacrifices were offered up for the sons of the people. Lev. 23:26-32

In addition to these annual festivals, there was the weekly **Sabbath Day**. This was a day of rest when they remembered the Creation. It was also a day of worship. Lev. 23:3

Also **every seven years** – there was a ceremony of **freeing slaves and bonded servants**. And the **50th year** was the **Year of Jubilee**. In this year there was no work (!) It was a time of cancelling all debts and returning all land. (Lev. 25; Deut. 15)

Note again that all these festivals focused on the need for **remembrance.** The focus was on **their history and their God**!

8.3.3 The Rites of Passage

The rites of passage are the practices surrounding the milestones of life: birth, puberty, adulthood, marriage and death.

In the Old Testament, some of the rites of passage included:

- Circumcision of boys. This took place on the 8th day – Gen. 21:4; Ex. 12:48-49.
- At 12 years of age both boys and girls could go to the tabernacle/temple. The boys could participate. See Lk. 2:42.
- On reaching 30 years of age a man from a priestly family could become a priest and take up his duties.
- At death, people were wrapped in a cloth and buried in family burial grounds. Often these were in caves in hillsides.

Comment on the number and form of the rites of passage ceremonies in the culture where you are working.

What are their meanings? What can you learn about the culture from them?

Select a people/community you are familiar with and write a paragraph or two about their history and their festivals.

Compare the people group you have chosen (probably the people you work among) and the culture/nation you come from, with the Old Testament People of God in the following cultural graph.

Cultural Characteristic	**Chosen Community**	**Own Culture**	**O.T. People of God**
Belief in the origin of the world			Created by God in six stages from nothing. Human beings made in the image of God.
Origin of the community			The call of Abraham and the covenant passed on to Isaac and Jacob etc.
Heroes of history			Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Elijah, Elisha, Esther, Daniel.
Major historical events			Call of Abraham ~2000 B.C. Exodus 1290 B.C. David's reign 960 B.C. N. Kingdom destroyed 721 B.C. S. Kingdom destroyed 586 B.C. Return from Exile 440 B.C. Jesus 4 B.C.-29 A.D. Jerusalem destroyed 70 A.D.
Current social and political leaders			Netanyahu – Prime Minister and Foreign Minister
Contemporary event shaping culture			Memories of the Holocaust Conflict with Arab neighbours
The nature of any future hope			Coming of the Messiah?

Cultural Characteristic	Chosen Community	Own Culture	O.T. People of God
Festivals What – When – Where			Passover – recalls the Exodus event Everywhere Just before Easter First Fruits – usually around June Remember God gave them a land flowing with milk and honey
Rites of Passage Birth			Males circumcised on the 8th day
Puberty			Today the Bar Mitzvah ceremony
Marriage			
Death			Belief in the resurrection of the body Bodies buried Soul departs from the body

8.4 Stories, songs, poetry and proverbs

Another area to explore in discovering the nuances of a culture is to learn their stories, songs, poems and proverbs. Some of the Old Testament stories are given here:

8.4.1 The Story of Ruth

This is a marvellous short story told with great skill. It is full of vividness, warmth, beauty and dramatic effects. Ruth is a young, foreign, destitute widow. Boaz is evidently a middle aged, wealthy, highly respected Hebrew. Ruth becomes the great-grandmother of David, an ancestor of Jesus.
The story illustrates the self-giving love and kindness that fulfils God's law. (Lev. 19:18) By God's grace

such lives are blessed and are made a blessing to others. Ruth demonstrates the truth that participation in God's Kingdom isn't by genetics but by conformity of one's life to the will of God: "the obedience of faith" (Rom. 1:5)

8.4.2 **The Song of Miriam** (Moses' sister)

This begins: ***"I will sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted. The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea…"*** Ex. 15:1

There are many other songs in Scripture:

Deborah's song	Judges 5
David's songs	Psalms
Solomon's song	The Song of Songs
Mary's song	Luke 2
Zechariah's song	Luke 2

8.4.3 Poems

These include Job, Psalms, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations and many of the prophetic writings.

"I rescued the poor who cried for help and the fatherless who had none to assist him. The man who was dying blessed me; I made the widow's heart sing. I put on righteousness as my clothing; justice was my robe and my turban." Job 29:12-14

Most of the parables that Jesus told were told in the highly memorable poetic style of an "inverted parabolic poem".

8.4.4 Proverbs

Most Biblical proverbs are contained in the Book of Proverbs – a collection of wise sayings gathered by Solomon. They include:

"Honour the LORD with your wealth…then your barns will be filled to overflowing." Prov. 3:9-0

"Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise!" Prov. 6:6

"Men do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy his hunger when he is starving." Prov. 6:30

"A poor man's field may produce abundant food, but injustice sweeps it away." Prov. 13:23

"Dishonest money dwindles away, but he who gathers money little by little makes it grow." Prov. 13:11

"An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips." Prov. 24:26

"Finish your outdoor work and get your fields ready; after that, build your house." Prov. 24:27

As a team, gather and record as many **local** stories (told by the local people), songs, poems and proverbs as you can. Write them down and share together what they tell you about the values of the local culture.

Many proverbs have a similar meaning to proverbs from your own culture. Collect local proverbs and write out the equivalent proverb from your own culture.

Some Arab / English equivalents are:

Birds alight among their like.	Birds of a feather flock together.
He made a dome from a seed.	To make a mountain out of a molehill
The camel limped from its split lip.	A bad workman blames his tools.
Choose the neighbour before the house	We can live without friends, but not without neighbours.
He who chooses too large a stone cannot strike with it.	Do not bite off more than you can chew.
My brother and I against my cousin My cousin and I against a stranger.	Blood is thicker than water.
A man is human by his manners not by his clothes.	Fine feathers do not make fine birds.

8.5 Kinship and Relations

In most cultures there is a tight network of relationships built around kinship. Kinship usually supersedes any other factors that govern social interaction within a community. This is particularly true in rural communities.

The basic kinship distinctions are according to sex and generation. Usually the language contains a large number of terms describing kingship relationships. There are the usual ones such as father, mother, son, daughter, grandfather, grandmother, granddaughter and grandson. There also more remote relatives – aunts, uncles, cousins (first cousins, second and third cousins and cousins who are

"removed" i.e. "my second cousin – once removed". In many communities the family trees are well-known and draw together several hundred people into the relationship of an extended family. Relatives may also be distinguished by age. Usually older brothers are given the greatest responsibilities and privileges.

In modern urban societies with high degrees of specialization and complex technology, the kinship network is weakened to the nuclear family. Relationships are built around peer friendships and professional associations and these become more significant than blood ties.

Study kinship in your community. Describe the obligations of kinship to a relative of another generation and a different sex.

As the Gospel spreads in your community, is it following kinship lines or other lines?

8.6 Retaining as much culture as you can

Let us return to the story of the People of God in the Old Testament. While they were in Exile let us try to discover how they managed to retain much of what was best in their culture – even while they were scattered and persecuted.

Some of the key elements seem to be…

- They had the Scriptures.
- They had pride in their past and hope for the future.
- They celebrated many festivals.
- They had strong family structures.
- They had a high view of God.
- They placed value on cultural education.
- They had promises to look forward to.

Let us look at each of these briefly:

8.6.1 They had the Scriptures.

When Muhammad observed the Jews and the Christians, he concluded they were strong, united and progressive because they were "People of the Book." He decided the Arabs also needed "a book".

The rediscovery of the Book of the Covenant in the reign of Josiah (2 Kings 22 and 23) led to one of Israel's greatest reforms. Out of the Exile came the dedication of a section of the community to reading, understanding and interpreting the law. These people were the Levites and, in the time of Jesus, the Scribes. This meant that the Old Testament Scriptures were preserved, studied and preached.

8.6.2 They had pride in their past and hope for the future.

The People of God in the Old Testament had very humble beginnings. ***"My father was a wandering Aramean"*** (Deut. 26:5). ***"You were aliens in Egypt."*** (Ex. 23:9). Although they were small and weak, they had a God who did awesome deeds. ***"The Lord brought you out of Egypt by His presence and His great strength, to drive out before you nations greater and stronger than you and to bring you into their land to give it to you for your inheritance."*** (Deut. 4:37-38). So they were proud of God's saving power in their history. See Deut. 3:24, 4:6-8; 33-40.

The knowledge of God's help and blessing in the past was a constant encouragement to believe that He would deliver them in the future. In exile, prophets and people (like Daniel) remembered God's promise to restore His people to Jerusalem after seventy years. Jeremiah had prophesied this. As Jerusalem was being destroyed, in order to emphasize this prophecy, Jeremiah purchased land there. So the landless and leaderless People of God clung to the promise of **the return**, which was to be followed by the messianic vision of Isaiah and others depicting the future golden age of peace and prosperity. (See Study 10)

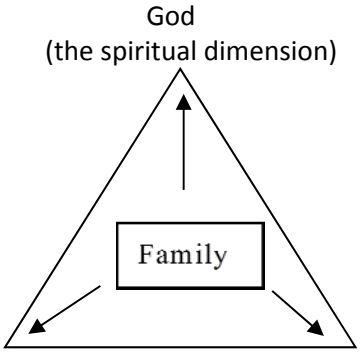
8.6.3 They celebrated many festivals.

Culture is not just a set of beliefs and values. These beliefs and values find expression in cultural and religion festivals. The Old Testament defines not only the occasion and nature of these festivals, but goes into great detail describing the finer points of the rituals of sacrifice and celebration that should take place.

For New Testament People of God, reading these details is a bit tedious. For Old Testament believers this was foundational to their religious and cultural distinctiveness. In evangelical Christianity we have probably reduced festivals to too few. Harvest festivals are now largely meaningless, since only about 5% of the people in England work as farmers and we buy our food from around the world.

8.6.4 They had strong family structures.

You will recall the triangle of relationship between God and people, and people and the land.



The family is at the centre of the triangle. The core of the family is the grandparents, parents and their children, but it also included servants, orphaned relatives, widowed relatives, guests and even foreign

visitors – i.e. a household. The strength of the extended family was that it was a network of nuclear families. These family networks survived the Exile because **whole families** were taken to Babylon.

8.6.5 They had a high view of God.

Before the Exile the People of God were always tempted to syncretise their worship of the One True God with the worship of the surrounding pagan deities of the land. The Exile broke this tendency. Daniel, Shadrack, Meshack and Abednego in Babylon, Esther in Persia and thousands of others remembered and maintained their allegiance to the Most High God – no longer the tribal God of Israel, but **the God of the whole world**. No longer did they worship a God who imitated the seasons and weather, but they worshipped a moral, personal Being.

8.6.6 They placed value on cultural education.

When the law was given to Moses, he said to the people:

"These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates." (Deut. 6:6-9; 11:18-20)

From the time of the Exile, parents took seriously their commission to be the teachers of the core values of the People of God to their children.

8.6.7 They had promises to look forward to.

To those in exile, this was partly the return to the land of Palestine, but much more than that, it was the promise of the great messianic hope. In Ps. 137:1, 4 their initial reaction was:

"By the rivers of Babylon, we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

But then there was a growing realisation that God had not abandoned them.

"When I was among the exiles by the Kebar river, the heavens opened and I saw visions of God". (Ezek. 1:1)

There was a growing realization that God could be worshipped everywhere, not just in the temple in Jerusalem. It was the Exiles who created the synagogue. So, although they held on to the promise made by God through Jeremiah, that they would return to the land after 70 years, ultimately they grew in their understanding of the universal nature of the purposes of God. They began to focus on God's promises for eternal realities rather than temporal realities.

Take these headings – or others that are more appropriate – and apply them to the people group or community where you are working. Write a similar description of their cultural strengths that have enabled them to retain their identity through time.

8.7 Factors that cause a culture to change

Social anthropologists identify the following factors as the primary causes of changes in a culture:

- Changes in ecology / climate / geography
- Contact with other societies and cultures
- Evolutionary change within the culture of a community
- Dramatic and traumatic events – like war

Let us look at these in a little more detail:

8.7.1 Changes in ecology / climate / geography

A culture is an adaptation to and interaction with an environment. When the environment changes or where the people move to a new environment, cultural expressions and beliefs are also likely to change.

8.7.2 Contact with other societies and cultures

The impact of alternative beliefs, values, habits etc. can change cultures. There may be massive withdrawal symptoms if that culture feels threatened – especially where the most private and deeply held convictions are threatened.

8.7.3 Evolutionary change within the culture of a community

While culture is a heritage from the past, we receive it rather than invent it. It changes almost like a living thing. It is not static. It usually changes slowly as new issues and new conditions modify it.

8.7.4 Dramatic and traumatic events – like war

Cultural beliefs and practices can change rapidly in times of extreme trauma – war, civil war, earthquake etc. Nazism grew rapidly in Germany as a result of the trauma of events during and after the First World War. In the twenty years – 1918 to 1938 – it completely changed the culture, mindset and worldview of the majority of Germans.

It was probably this factor that so profoundly and irreversibly changed the People of God in the Old Testament at the time of Exile.

On a scale of 1 -10, rate how strongly the above factors shaped the culture of the Jewish people in the 5th century. Do the same for your own people/nation and the people of the community that you have come from.			
	O.T. People of God	**Your nation**	**The "focus" people-group**
Change in ecology			
Contact with other societies			
Evolutionary change within society			
Dramatic change due to major trauma			

8.8 Contemporary issues in the study of cultures

Thinking about the People of God during the exile in terms of the changes in their culture, raises several issues:

- Cultural diversity vs. monocultural forms
- The impact of migrations
- Using culture as an entry point for the Gospel.
- Cultural sensitivity in our discipling and church planting

We will look at these in turn:

8.8.1 Cultural diversity vs. monocultural forms

The story of the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11) suggests that cultural diversity has a God-given origin and is preferable to oppressive uniformity. Certainly the formation of different peoples (Gen. 10) was in the purpose and mind of God. At the end of history, some from all the nations will come before God's throne presenting the gifts of their distinctive cultures to God. Apparently cultural distinctives are retained in heaven.

The issue Christian development workers wrestle with is, 'How much should we change the culture we are working in? If we are to change it, in which direction should we take it?

Does Christianity have a distinctive cultural form?

Islamists are trying to islamise societies. They want them to conform to a universal culture under Sharia. What are the issues that confront them?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of diversity in Western cultures and conformity in most Asian cultures?

8.8.2 The impact of migrations

Modern migrations take several forms:

- **Tourism:**

  This causes the movement of millions of people around the world every year. Tourists often bring significant changes to the culture of the people they visit. Many governments strongly encourage tourism as a major foreign currency earner. Some countries, while promoting tourism, completely isolate tourists from the local population. An example of this would the Maldives.

- **Refugees**

  Many factors produce refugees – wars, famine, ideological conflict and even massive population explosion in a country that cannot sustain growth. Large groups of refugees are forced to be on the move and they find sanctuary in other lands where they may be assimilated or where they may exist as dependants in camps e.g. the Palestinians in the surrounding Arab nations.

- **Resettlement**

  To even out population density some governments have tried to relocate large groups of peoples from areas of high density to areas of low density e.g. From Java in Indonesia to the island of Borneo-Kalimantan. However, this has brought about deep resentment.

- **Urbanisation**

  The most constant movement in most developing countries is from the rural areas to the cities. This does not necessarily mean that their rural culture is weakened. Often they move into the same areas of the city as others from their village. In effect the city is made up of a large conglomerate of "villages" closely packed together.

- **Migrant labour**

  Large numbers of people want to migrate to oil rich states that have low population density (such as the Gulf States) or to Europe or North America. Legal migrants are employed on work contracts, but there are usually many illegal migrant workers who are often poorly treated.

Have some of the migratory patterns mentioned above had an impact on the culture of the people you are working with? What have been the main positive and negative effects of this impact in terms of the change of culture?

8.8.3 Using culture as an entry point for the Gospel

In a paper "People Groups and Strategies for Mission", Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, stressed the need to discover and understand the worldview of a people group as an absolute pre-requisite for effective ministry among them. In Papua New Guinea, Don Richardson found that the Gospel was entirely unintelligible to the people he was trying to share with because they had a very warped value system – the betrayal of a friend was the highest virtue. For them Judas Iscariot was the hero for

befriending Jesus and then betraying him! In the end Don found a "redemption analogy" in their concept of a "Peace Child". They finally understood the Gospel in terms of Jesus being a Peace Child bringing reconciliation. With this "redemption analogy" many of the people became Christians. Don Richardson in **Eternity in Their Hearts** suggests that God has placed redemption analogies in every culture. Our task is to find and use them.

What events in the history and the experience of the people you work with enable you to build bridges to them over which the Gospel may go?

Have you discovered any redemption analogies in the culture of your people?

You can have three different attitudes towards different aspects of the culture of the people you work with. Some beliefs and practices should be condemned. Others are neutral and can be tolerated. Still others should be endorsed and encouraged.

In your opinion, what falls in each category from the culture of your people group?

8.8.4 Cultural sensitivity in our discipling and church planting

Missionaries in the 19th and early 20th centuries were often branded as culture-smashers. They saw all existing cultures not as something neutral or something to be observed and preserved. No, all cultures except "Western/Christian" were evil and needed to be destroyed and replaced by "Christian" culture. Social anthropologists have vilified Christianity for this.

This tendency is still common today in 21st century Christian work!

But accommodating to the culture raises enormous and not easily resolved issues, such as:

- In India, should there be a renunciation of caste before baptism or is it a Mt.er to be dealt with in the discipleship of the new believer?
- In Africa, when should polygamy be renounced? At conversion? Ever? Is it only Christian leaders in the church who should be monogamous?
- To what extent can a BMB remain within his culture? Can he fast during Ramadan? Can he attend prayers in the mosque?

This is the issue of contextualisation. We will look at this again.

To what extent are non-Christian cultures inspired and controlled by the "principalities and powers and forces of wickedness"? How can you tell?

What qualities are needed for effective cross-cultural discipleship?

8.9 Application

From this study we can see the importance of an understanding of culture. This sets three vital tasks for us?

1. The task of deeply grasping the key features of the Biblical worldview.

2. The agenda of structuring our priorities, lives and teams so that Biblical values are passed on to our children and to local disciples. This should be done by modelling these values as well as by teaching them.

3. The goal is **not** to become culture-smashers or to be culturally insensitive when ministering cross-culturally. We are not anthropologists with a detached observer stance who see cultures as neutral or who opt for cultural relativity. **We want to apply Biblical values in culturally acceptable forms that both communicate the Gospel and enrich the culture of the people!**

9. TRANSFORMATION : THE RECONSRUCTION MODEL

Emergency Relief Model

9.1 The Disaster

9.2 The Reason

9.3 The Results of the Disaster

9.4 The Reconstruction of Jerusalem

9.4.1 Zerubbabel's Building Project

9.4.2 Nehemiah's Reconstruction Project

9.5 Planning a Development Project

9.6 Applications to Disaster Emergency Relief

9.7 An Emergency Relief Case Study

9.8 Overcoming local opposition to our projects

9.8.1 Preventative measures

9.8.2 Corrective measures

9.9 Partners in Community Development Projects

9.10 The place of worship in development work

9. TRANSFORMATION : THE RECONSTRUCTION MODEL
Emergency Relief Model – Rebuilding Jerusalem in the Post-Exilic Period

9.1 The Disaster

The story of the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians is told in 2 Kings 25, 2 Chron. 36:15-20, Jer. 39-41 and 52 and in Lamentations. The city was completely destroyed and its people totally deserted it. The Babylonians followed this strategy:

- They surrounded the city and attacked it daily.
- They cut off all access so the inhabitants slowly starved to death.
- When the king in Jerusalem and his army broke through the cordon surrounding the city, they were chased and captured. The King's sons were killed before his eyes. He was then blinded and led in chains as a prisoner to Babylon.
- The Temple, the palace, the houses and all important buildings were burned to the ground.
- The walls of the city were pulled down.
- Nearly all the people were transported to Babylon. Only the poorest were left to farm.
- All the valuable temple treasures were taken to Babylon.
- The leaders of the community were executed.
- The Babylonians appointed a puppet king.
- When this puppet ruler was assassinated, all the people fled from Jerusalem and the surrounding area to avoid Babylonian revenge punishment.

9.2 The Reason

Jerusalem and the Southern Kingdom were not destroyed **just** because of the Babylonian Empire's expansionist policy. This was undoubtedly a factor, but Jeremiah gives additional reasons.

Read the following passages to discover why Jerusalem fell.

- Jer. 34:8-22

- Jer. 35:15

- Jer. 44:3-6

More passages to discover why Jerusalem fell:

- Jer. 36
- Jer. 37:1-2, 6-10

- Jer. 38:14-28
- Jer. 44:9-10

9.3 The Results of the Disaster

There were three results:

- **The economy was totally devastated.** ***"How deserted was the city, once full of people"*** (Lam. 1:11). All her wealth was taken away. (Lam. 1:10) All her buildings were destroyed. (Lam. 2:2-9).
- **De-population** – many people died! As well as the leaders who were killed by the Babylonians, hundreds in Jerusalem died of famine during the siege. (Lam. 4:9) Not even the children were special! Some were eaten by their own mothers. (Lam. 4:10)
- **The survivors despaired** (Lam. 5). There was no joy left in their hearts, no hope in their minds, no strength in their bodies and no faith in their spirits. They felt that God had completely abandoned them.

But Jeremiah, speaking on God's behalf, says there are two other results:

i **The Lord in His justice will judge Babylon** and all who helped her and Babylon will be destroyed so she becomes a haunt for jackals – more desolate then Jerusalem, beyond repair. (Jer. 46-51) It is interesting to note that, before the Gulf War, President Sadaam Hussein of Iraq tried to restore Babylon. It was the Gulf War that stopped him!

ii **The promise of the restoration of Jerusalem** – see Jer. 33; 50:19; 2 Chron. 36:21-23

9.4 The Reconstruction of Jerusalem

As Jeremiah had promised, seventy years passed and then came the plan for the reconstruction of Jerusalem. This brought a restoration of the temple worship and a return of the people so that once again Jerusalem would be the focus of the worship of the Old Testament People of God as well as their economic and political centre.

The rebuilding was done in two stages:

i The temple was built and temple worship was restored under Zerubbabel. (Ezra 1-4)

ii The walls of Jerusalem were rebuilt according to a plan conceived and completed by Nehemiah. (Neh. 1-6) While this was happening, Ezra the priest and the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, inspired the people in their work and led them in their worship.

The purpose of this study is to examine the philosophy, ethos and strategy motivating each of these relief and development projects, and to relate them to the project you are involved with.

9.4.1 Zerubbabel's Building Project

The key features of his project were as follows:

- It was a government scheme sanctioned by the Persian king himself. (Ezra 1:2-7)
- It was a community project. (Ezra 1:3-6; 2:68-69)
- It involved about 50,000 people! (Ezra 2:64-65)
- It was well planned. (Ezra 3:2)
- It was carried out with courage and joy. (Ezra 3: 3-6, 10-11)
- It had a 'food for work' component. (Ezra 3:7)
- The project met with much opposition. (Ezra 4:1-5)
- The project stopped because of local official disapproval. (Ezra 4:42)

- Eventually it was officially approved again – work started again. (Ezra 5:6-8)
- It took many years to finish. (Ezra 5:13-16)
- Wages were paid by a secular source – the government. (Ezra 6:8-10)
- Local leadership and management were used. (Ezra 6:25)
- Good records and strong accountability were maintained. (Ezra 8:20-24)

9.4.2 Nehemiah's Reconstruction Project

Note the following

- It began with research. (Neh. 1:2-3; 2:12-15)
- It was motivated by compassion. (Neh. 1:4)
- It was surrounded by prayer. (Neh. 1:4-11; 2:4)
- It had a sound plan. (Neh. 2:5-9; 4: 13-23)
- It faced opposition from local officials. (Neh. 2:10-19; 4:1-11; 6:1-14, 17-19)
- The whole community was involved. (Neh. 2:17-18)
- The work was shared out. (Neh. 3: 4-15)
- Some of the elite (nobles) wouldn't do manual work. (Neh. 3:5)
- Most people worked enthusiastically. (Neh. 4:6)
- It was motivated by a concern for social justice. (Neh. 5:1-13; 8:10)
- Nehemiah demonstrated servant–leadership. (Neh. 5:14-19)
- The project was carried through with courage and persistence. (Neh. 6:3-10)
- It was blessed by God. (Neh. 6:15-16)
- Leaders of integrity were appointed. (Neh. 7:1-2)
- The work was dedicated to God. (Neh. 12:27-43)
- The purpose of the work was hindered by self-interest. (Neh. 12:4-11)

9.5 Planning a Development Project

Community Development requires a plan. This plan must be:

- Adoptable
- Acceptable
- Accessible
- Adjustable
- Accountable
- Appropriate

In the plan for the projects of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah, note which parts met these criteria.

- Adoptable
- Acceptable
- Accessible
- Adjustable
- Accountable
- Appropriate

A Community Development Project requires a plan. This plan needs to be part of **a process**. The process involves **at least** the following steps:

- Know the area or the community well.
- Understand your own NGO's objectives and limitations.
- Identify **with** the community and the problems and needs related to that community.
- Ask members of the community for suggestions of solutions to those problems.
- Set priorities.
- **Plan** with the community.
- Implement the plan **with** the community.
- Evaluate the project and the plan.
- Reconsider the objectives and actions of the plan.

Did Zerubbabel and Nehemiah follow all these steps? Discuss this as a team.

9.6 Applications to Disaster Emergency Relief

We have analysed and evaluated the rebuilding of the temple and the reconstruction of the walls of Jerusalem in terms of community development planning. Are there also helpful lessons from these two Biblical projects that we can apply to emergency relief situations?

The procedural steps for emergency relief – due to war, earthquake, flood etc. are:

(1) Estimate the need through an on the spot investigation by a competent observer.

(2) Consult with all other parties – the community, the government, other NGO's and especially other Christian NGO's.

(3) Define the target group.

(4) Identify clearly the input of your organization/ NGO.

(5) Co-ordinate resource supplies.

(6) Mobilise **local** Christian volunteers if possible. If this is not possible, set up a screening process for appropriate international Christian volunteers.

(7) Involve the community as volunteers.

(8) Set time schedules and objectives.

(9) Ensure good accountability for money and goods.

(10) Evaluate the emergency relief programme.

(11) Withdraw the NGO and hand over to the community.

(12) If necessary move from an 'emergency relief' to a 'community development' approach.

Mark any of the above steps that were followed by Zerubbabel and Nehemiah.
Are there things they did that are not mentioned on the list above (like prayer)?

Do you think their experience in the 5th century B.C. can help us in the 21st century A.D.?

9.7 An Emergency Relief Case Study

In recent years we have witnessed a number of situations of Emergency Relief (in Northern Iraq, in Turkey, in India). These emergencies have had different causes – flooding in Orissa – an earthquake in Gujarat etc. The following is a summary of helpful procedures that have emerged from these situations:

(1) Usually we hear of an emergency situation through TV/radio/newspapers. Sometimes an individual living in the area may contact an agency if the situation is not big enough to reach the media. As in the case of Iran, the government may invite international NGO's to respond.

(2) One person or a small team goes with money to help about 200/300 families with immediate relief. An assessment of the situation is made as in 9.6.1.

(3) The government is contacted.

(4) The top priority area is identified and other agencies involved.

(5) The small team chooses an 'unserved area' that will help the most neglected. *(In the Kurdish crisis of '92 this was digging latrines – and working on waste management!)*

(6) We get authorization **in writing** from the Government, UNHCR or another formal body.

(7) We research the nearest Christian churches that speak the same language and have the same culture as the local people in the disaster zone.

(8) We develop a plan and state what we plan to do and how.

(9) We commit to immediate relief for a selected area.

(10) Finances are raised and transferred to the area of the disaster to buy food, clothes, kitchen utensils, blankets, tents, water or whatever is needed for immediate relief. If such items cannot be bought locally – as in Afghanistan – they will have to be brought in from the outside. It is important to make sure that we take **good quality** goods to the people.

(11) We mobilise volunteers – priority is usually:

Local believers
International believers who know the language/culture
Other local people
Other international believers
These people need to be brought to the area, "housed", fed and equipped.

(12) We maintain good contact with the government and show them what we are doing. We get them to accompany us during the distribution.

(13) If the project is taking place over a wide area, a good radio communications net needs to be set up very early in the project. Communication is essential in an emergency situation.

While all this is happening, information and pictures should flow to international donors and prayer partners. This enables them to share in a partnership response of Christian care.

- Critique this procedure!
- Share your experiences of disaster relief.
- What follow-on work could have been done and by whom?

9.8 Overcoming local opposition to our projects.

In development work, opposition to what we are doing should not take us by surprise. It is to be expected. What can we learn from the experience of Zerubbabel and Nehemiah? There seems to be two strategies in the way they dealt with opposition:

9.8.1 Preventative Measures

Your community development team is probably made up of outsiders to the local community. To achieve anything the team will need to:

- **Attend to the 3R's**
  - **Relationship** – your team must build good relationships with many in the community
  - **Rapport** – the team must win the confidence of the community
  - **Recognition** – there must be a clear understanding of the team role and how it interacts with the role of the community

  Good attention to the 3R's will help the team to avoid much misunderstanding and conflict.

- **Contact the existing local leaders and build relationships with them.**

  There are three types of leaders in every community:
  - **Formal leaders** – people holding official positions
  - **Informal leaders** – people with recognized leadership status who don't hold office
  - **Opinion leaders** – people turn to these leaders for their advice and opinions

- **Know the history of the people in the community.**

  Informed judgments can only be made when the context is understood. The story of the community involves:
  - Events that have shaped their lives
  - People (heroes) who have shaped the beliefs and values of the community
  - The environment with which the community has interacted

- **Understand their Worldview.**

  "A Worldview is a set of presuppositions or assumptions that we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the make-up of our world." James Sire.

  "Culture patterns are the perceptions of reality – conceptualizations of what reality can or should be, what is to be regarded as actual, probable, possible or impossible.

  These conceptualizations form what is termed the "worldview" of our culture. The Worldview is the central systemization of concepts of reality to which the members of a culture assent (largely unconsciously) and from which stems their value system. The Worldview lies at the very heart of the culture, touching, interacting with and strongly influencing every aspect of the culture." Charles Kraft.

  Understanding the worldview of your people, will help you to predict, with some accuracy, possible outcomes to suggestions received. It will also help you to act appropriately and acceptably.

- Your suggestions!

9.8.2 Corrective measures to lessen opposition

When on a project, we all hope that our contribution to the welfare of the people will be appreciated. We hope the project will proceed smoothly and everyone will be agreed on the objectives, priorities and plans. Our goal is that the desired results will be evident quickly and that everyone will co-operate throughout the project. In the real world this very rarely happens!

Opposition comes even to excellent plans and great actions.

(see Mt. 9:32-34; 12:9-14; Acts 4:5-7; 8:1-3; 12:1-5; 13:50; 14:5; 16:19-24; 17:5-9; 13; 18:12-17; 19:9, 23-24; 20:22; 21:27-36; 22:22-24; 23:2, 12-15; 24:5-9; 25:2, 3, 7, 24; 26:9-11)

Suggestions what to do when there is opposition.

- **Seek agreement with people of differing opinions.**

  Disagreement very rarely goes away without extensive dialogue. To sort out problems someone has to take the initiative so that time is set aside for unrushed dialogue. The team leader of the development project can/should do this. The consensus approach often achieves much more than a conflict approach, but it takes time to build.

- **Modify the plan**

  Not all disagreements arise from individual selfishness and pride. Community development is not an area where there are absolute rights and wrongs in the way that things are done. There are many possible approaches and many solutions to most problems. So **flexibility** is an asset. If the plans are modified they may accommodate differing viewpoints.

- **Ignore the opposition and carry on:**

  A problem-free project will never happen! But problems should not necessarily stop progress. See Nehemiah's attitude! If the goals of the project are just, if the complaint is trivial or if the complainant is being deliberately disruptive, the work should go on regardless.

- **Find out what the large majority opinion is**

  The majority may not always be right, but it is helpful to know what their opinion is and why they hold that opinion. It is important to have the support of the large majority. Patient explanation will usually help. Remember your project in community development is **"of the people, for the people, by the people."**

- **Gain the backing of the leaders**

  Leaders usually shape ideas and control resources. Do all you can to win over these people.

Your suggestions:

Which of the above actions did Zerubbabel and Nehemiah take?	
Zerubbabel	Nehemiah

9.9 Partners in Community Development Projects

In the rebuilding of the Temple and the walls of Jerusalem many people did the work. This example will help us think about who should be included as partners in development projects. The options are:

- Work with anyone at all levels
- Work only with Christians but serve everyone
- Work only with Christians and serve only Christians
- Work with anyone but serve only Christians
- Work with/serve only **some** Christians – e.g. evangelicals
- Co-operate **only** with other Christian agencies and foundations – i.e. raise funds only from Christian sources
- Cooperate with any humanitarian organisations
- Co-operate with government plans and work with various government officials

Note that:

- God used the Persian kings Cyrus and Darius – Daniel was a chief minister in their governments.
- The King provided the resources that Nehemiah needed.
- Local officials opposed the projects that central government had approved and were financing.
- Only Jews were allowed to work on the projects. One of the projects was the rebuilding of the Temple.
- Prayer and worship were part of the project.
- The context of all this was mixed races and many religions.

Who does the case study of these two development projects in Jerusalem suggest our partners in development should be?

What is the policy about partners in your project? In your NGO?

What should it be?

Identify your first choice (the ideal) and your second choice (that which is acceptable in the circumstances) in the list above.

As a team debate the advantages and disadvantages of each choice.

9.10 The place of worship in Development Work

In Transformation Study #15 we will look at the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility/action. Here we will look at the place **worship** has in our projects.

Nehemiah was a man of prayer:

1:4 ff He prayed a prayer of confession on hearing the condition of the people and the state of the walls of Jerusalem.

2:4	He prayed when the king asked him why he was sad.
3:1	He prayed as he began the work.
4:4, 5, 9; 6:14; 13:29	He prayed concerning those who opposed the work.
5:19	He prayed for the people and their needs.
13:14, 22, 31	He prayed for God's blessings on his life and work.
12:27-47	He praised and worshipped when the work was finished.

The people working on the project also prayed.

9: 1-3	They confessed their sins.
9:5-25	They praised and worshipped God.
9:36-37	They prayed to God.
10:28-39	They dedicated themselves to God.

The project began with prayer. Prayer sustained it and it was concluded with **praise**!

What place does prayer play in your project?

Note: Study the great celebration in Neh. 12 on the completion of the project. The two great choirs with an accompanying band went in opposite directions round the walls and finally met in the Temple.

Describe a ground-breaking ceremony or a dedication ceremony that began your project or that you hope will finish your project. What happened/will happen? Who participated? What was/will be the programme?

10. TRANSFORMATION : THE MODEL OF THE MESSIANIC AGE

10.1 The Holism of the Old Testament

10.2 A Vision for the Future

10.3 "The Day of the Lord"

10.4 God's Answers to Man's Problems

10.4.1 The problem of war

10.4.2 The problem of poverty

10.4.3 The problem of disease

10.4.4 The problem of injustice

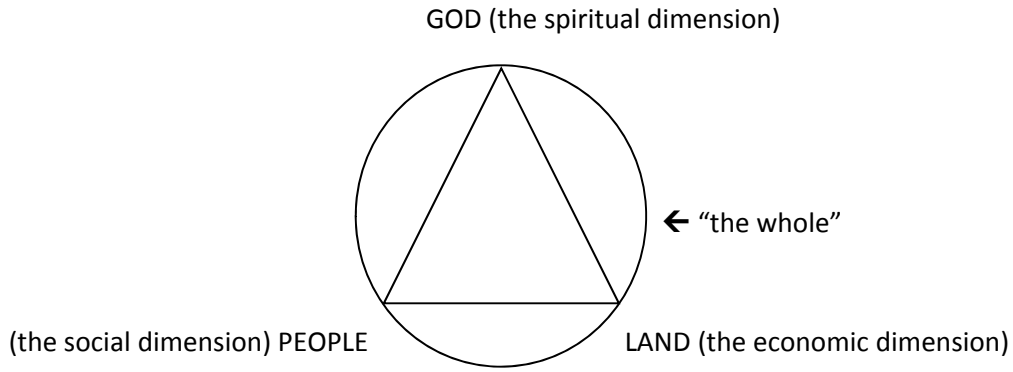
10.5 Realising the Vision

10.6 Final Questions

10. TRANSFORMATION : THE MODEL OF THE MESSIANIC AGE

10.1 The Holism of the Old Testament

We began our study of transformation models from the Old Testament by looking at the world as God made it and intended it to be. It was a picture of a harmonious relationship between God, man and the natural world. The framework of understanding of the Old Testament can be pictured as:



So the Old Testament is not just about man's relationship to God. Its concerns are not solely spiritual. They are social and economic as well. God is concerned about how people structure their society and how they relate to each other. The Old Testament describes God as One who has a determination to ensure justice, an equitable sharing of resources, the abolition of oppression and the eradication of prejudice so that the bounty of the good land can be enjoyed by all.

This breadth of concern by God is expressed throughout the history of God's People in the Old Testament. It is linked together with the strong affirmation of the value of human life and the necessity to ensure the health of human society. This makes the Old Testament unique among all the religious texts of the world.

Referring back to the Creation Model (Transformation #1) briefly describe the key points in
The relationship between Man and God

Man and Society:

Man and the Natural World:

10.2 A Vision for the Future

The People of God in the Old Testament experienced many leadership patterns during their history.

- At the beginning we see personal oversight by the patriarchs as the heads of their clans.
- Later we see the administrative ability and economic foresight of Joseph.
- Still later there was the strong leadership/management of Moses and Joshua.
- This was followed by the varied contributions of the judges during the time of a loose federation structure between the thirteen tribes.
- Perhaps their finest model of leadership was Samuel. He was a prophet (the emphasis on social relationships), a priest (the emphasis on spiritual relationships) and a judge (the emphasis on political and economic relationships).
- Then the People of God chose to have a king. As predicted by God the kings became exploiters and oppressors of the people.
- Over a couple of centuries these kings were deposed by external expansionist powers (Assyria, Babylon etc.) and the People of God were dragged into exile or left in the land resource-less with all the infrastructure destroyed.

Out of this experience of the failure of the kings to establish a just society following God's laws and having experienced the judgment of conquest, a new vision arose through the prophets from the 8th century B.C. onwards – a vision of a new age – an age of peace and prosperity, of a future and a hope.

These great Biblical prophets (and indeed all the world's great leaders) were those who had a clear vision of the future. This was coupled with a determination to share the vision and a conviction that it could become a reality.

Dr. Martin Luther King of the American Civil Rights movement in the 1960s articulated a modern (20th century) vision. His most famous speech began:

"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up, and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal…"

How would you describe this vision?

Below are the key passages of the Old Testament that describe **the prophetic vision of the future** that God intends for His people. Remember that what God intends **will** happen!

Isaiah 9:1-7; 11:1-16; 19:19-25; 29:18-21; 32:1-4; 35:1-10; 40:1-5; 42:1-7,16; 49:8-13; 51:4,5,11,14; 54:10-17; 55:12-13

Jeremiah 23:5-6; 30:8-9; 31:10-12

Ezekiel 28:25-26; 34:22-31

Daniel 12

Joel 2:28-31; 3:18

Amos 9:11-15

Zephaniah 1:14-18; 3:16-20

Micah 4

Zechariah 3:10-14

Malachi 4

Read carefully these passages and note points made about the relationship between:

- God and man:

- Man and society:

- Man and the natural world:

- Share your findings with your team:

10.3 "The Day of the Lord"

Many of these prophecies will come to their fruition in ***"the Day of the Lord"*** or in ***"the Day of God"***. This is not only true of the Old Testament for in 2 Peter 3:12 we are urged to ***"look for and speed up the coming of the Day of God."***

The characteristics of the Day of the Lord are listed in the following chart. Fill in the space on the right with a summary of the verses quoted or a key verse.

♦ **Peace:** Is. 9:6, 7; Ezek. 28:26; Ezek. 34:25; Micah 4:3	
♦ **Prosperity:** Is. 9:3; 27:3; 32:2 Is. 35: 1-2, 6-7; 49:9-10 Is. 65:21; Jer. 31:12 Ezek. 34:26, 27, 29; Joel 2:1-9 Joel 2:24-26; 3:18 Amos 9:13; Zeph. 3:30	

♦ **Judgment:** (true and just judgment is wonderful if you live in the midst of deep corruption and unjust courts) Is. 11:4; 24:1-3, 21-23 Is. 29: 20-21; Dan. 12:1-10; Joel 2:2-11; Zeph. 1: 14-18; Zech. 14:1-5, 12-15 Mal. 3:2, 5; 4:1	
♦ **Reconciliation with nature:** Is. 11:6-9; 35:9; 40:4 Joel 2:22	
♦ **Freedom from oppression:** Is. 9:4; 11:4; 44:26; 51:14; 65:22 Ezek. 34:27-28; Micah 4:4 Zeph. 3:19	
♦ **Freedom from foreign domination:** Is. 9:5; 11:4; 44:8-9; Jer. 30:8 Joel 2:20	
♦ **Joy and Worship:** Is. 9; 28:19; 51; 56:4-7 Jer. 30:9; Joel 2:28 Mal. 4:2	
♦ **Salvation:** Is. 9:2; 11:1-3; 11:11-12 16; 25:9; 35:4-10; 40:1-12 (for Egyptians) Is. 19:20-25; 51:4 Jer. 2:3-6; Dan. 12:10 Joel 2:32; Zeph. 3:17	

♦ **Reconciliation with people:** Is. 11:13; 19:23 Zech. 3:10; Mal. 4:6	
♦ **Universal recognition of the One True God (YHWH):** Is. 19:19; 40:5; 44:12-12; 26; Mich. 4:1-2; Zech. 14:9-16	
♦ **The Messiah's rule:** Is. 9:6-7; 28:16; 43:4 60:19-20; Jer. 23:5-6; Ezek. 34:23; Joel 2:23	
♦ **The healing of all diseases:** Is. 29-18; 32:3-5; 35:5-6 42:7-16; 61:1-3; 65:20	
♦ **Resurrection:** Dan. 12:2-13 Zech. 14:5	

10.4 God's Answer to Man's Problems

The vision of the Messianic Age arose out of the struggle of the People of God and out of their experience of divine punishment and human cruelty. They knew that while God might punish the children for the fathers' sins, it was a limited punishment – until the third and fourth generation. They knew that He also shows His love and grace to thousands of generations of those who love and obey Him. So in the midst of sorrow and suffering, they dreamed of a future of peace and prosperity. It was not a wistful, futile dream but a strong conviction. In this rich teaching of the Old Testament we begin to see God's answers to man's problems:

- **The problem of war**
- **The problem of poverty**
- **The problem of disease**
- **The problem of injustice – esp. to minorities**

We will look at each of these because they are so relevant to our development situations.

10.4.1 The problem of war

It is over 70 years since the end of World War II. During these 70 years there has been constant war. It has sometimes been a Cold War. Often wars have been very hot. Civil wars have rambled on for decades – as in Angola. Daily strife like that between Palestinians and Israelis has been constant.

Over all there is the constant threat of a nuclear holocaust that could destroy life on earth. Perhaps Zech. 14:12 describes the results of a nuclear bomb, ***"Their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets and their tongues will rot in their mouths."***

God's plan is for "***The nations to beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks."*** When the Prince of Peace reigns, "***Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore."*** (Micah 4:3)

The swords (guns, tanks, rockets, bombers) are not just to be melted down. They are to be recycled and made into tools of production for the benefit of all people. So the Biblical mandate on the Messiah's agenda is the reduction of armaments and the increase of development!

What steps can we take to accomplish a reduction of armaments?

How can we develop reconciliation between peoples – a non-militaristic attitude towards others?

Is peace just the absence of war or is it something more?

What is the meaning of Is. 54:16? Is God the cause of war?

10.4.2 The problem of poverty

Huge numbers of people are starving. The number continues to grow! In many of the countries in Africa and Asia 50% of the people live below the poverty line. At the same time, due to the Common Agricultural Policy, farmers in Europe are being paid **not** to produce food. Millions of tons of food are destroyed annually in order to maintain prices.

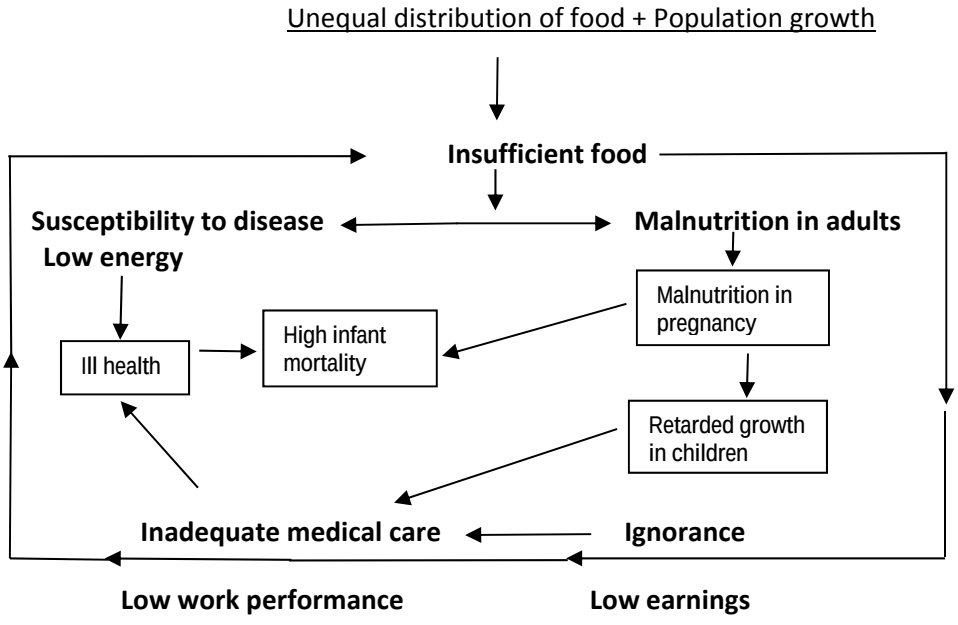
In the Messianic Age even the deserts will be productive (Is. 35: 6-7) and everyone will have enough to eat. (Amos 9:13) Malnutrition (the most common result of poverty), injustice and oppression will come to an end.

The constant presence of the poor (Deut. 15; Lk. 16:19-21; Jn. 12:8; Mt. 25:31-46) is a continuous challenge to serious action by the church. Our mandate is to bring in the age of prosperity for all. Where God's will is done, poverty is eradicated. The initiative for this must always come from two directions – **generosity and sharing** – sharing by those who have a surplus and generosity in the structures and organisation of the world community.

Do you think this vision of the coming Messianic Age provides us **now** – in the interim period between the first and second coming of the Messiah – with a mandate for development? How much of the Messianic Age can we have now? From your reading of the Messianic passages, do you think conditions in the world will get worse and worse until the Messiah suddenly comes or will they gradually improve?

10.4.3 The problem of disease

In a poverty cycle one of the major results of poverty is disease and poor health.



There are many other factors that could go into the diagram – such as malnutrition in infants lowering IQ – this means limited education or no formal education at all – this leads to ignorance and the probability of exploitation and oppression. Can you add others?

Is the provision of hospitals a good point of intervention in trying to deal with the poverty cycle? Yes/No? Why/why not?

What sorts of diseases in your area contribute to poverty?

Read the Isaiah passages that describe the eradication of disease in the Messianic Age and list the disabilities mentioned.

The vision was of people, who had permanent physical disabilities and whose problems were beyond the skill of the medical profession, being restored physically so they could fully participate in the life of the community. God's concern is for the total physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being of all the people in the community. It is not just a concern to see the absence of disease.

10.4.4 The problem of injustice – especially to minorities

The history of the People of God in the Old Testament is largely the story of a small people who were constantly threatened, harassed and dominated by neighbouring nations who were more powerful. God constantly challenged them to treat the foreigners living among them in just and compassionate ways and to include them fully in the life of their community. (Lev. 19:33-34) In the same way, any who were disadvantaged or disabled from among the People of God were to be a special target of caring and sharing. (Deut. 15:7-8; 24:12-15; Ex. 22:22-24)

In comparison with the oppression they had suffered in Egypt, the brutality they had experienced from the Assyrians, the massive dislocation of people into exile, which was the official policy in Babylon, and the harshness of Roman rule, the People of God had an extremely enlightened policy of dealing humanely with minorities – whether foreigners or the disabled.

The vision of the Messianic Age extended this just and benevolent policy. Every group and individual was to have a home where they would be secure. Domination by others would be replaced by self-government. Any oppression within the community would be abolished so that truth and justice would become the recognized values of that society. The Old Testament prophets recognized this to be the intention, purpose and plan of God.

When Jesus came, it was clear He had a special compassion for the marginalized groups in society.

- The poor
- The lepers – the socially alienated
- Women
- Children
- Tax collectors
- Rural people
- "Sinners"
- The disabled – the blind, the lame, deaf etc.

Research how many minority groups live in your area.

Find out what ministries/churches are involved among these marginalized minorities.

Below is a story – discuss on your team, in the light of this story, how schooling in your region is affected by inbuilt injustice and unconscious prejudice.

Oppressed Penguins by Chris Gaine: Multicultural Teaching

How schools are biased against minorities

Imagine a country inhabited by dogs with a small minority of penguins present because they were imported by a former colonial connection. Discrimination against penguins is illegal and most of the canine teachers in the school think of themselves as liberal in their views and above "speciesism". But take a closer look at one of the schools.

- All the teachers are dogs – no penguins seem to apply for unresearched reasons.
- Leather collars must be worn during exams.
- All images of Dog (god) are canine.
- Some of the penguin pupils are especially well liked. They can bark very well. They worship Dog and one even went out with a bitch for a while. They are really well integrated.
- The school is proud that some of its former penguin pupils (but only the very bright ones) have gone on to take Dog religion back to the benighted birds in Antarctica.
- The geography syllabus looks at the problem of the sea
    - It's over population in places
    - No proper kennels anywhere
    - No tinned food
    - How the sea is steadily eroding the land
- A teacher who likes swimming has been asked to make sure there are some books about penguins in the library.
- The games and sports taught are: running, catching the stick, catching a tennis ball in the mouth, running races and jumping over fences.
- None of the teachers dislike penguins personally. Some have even been to see the sea! A few refer to penguins as "squachers" but no insult in intended.

10.5 Realising the Vision

The questions that face us are:

- Is the vision of the Messianic Age utopian or realizable?
- How much of the vision can we have **now** and how much waits the consummation of all things at the return of Christ a second time?

To explore the answers, we must look at God's instructions for the functioning of society in the "Land of Promise", in the Messianic Age and the fulfilment in the ministry of Jesus.

Write out the whole verse where just the reference is given.		
The Land of Promise	**The Messianic Age**	**The Ministry of Jesus**
1. **Peace** Lev. 26:6 ***"I will grant peace in the land, and you will lie down and no one will make you afraid."***	1. **Peace** Micah 4:3 ***"They will beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore."***	1. **Peace** Mt. 26:52 ***"Put your sword back in its place,"*** Jesus said to him, ***"for all who draw the sword will die by the sword."***
2. **Truth** Deut. 19:15 ***One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."***	2. **Truth** Is. 11:2-3, 32:3-4 ***"The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him – the Spirit of wisdom and of under-standing, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD – and he will delight in the fear of the LORD."***	2. **Truth** Mt. 5:37 ***"Simply let your `Yes' be `Yes,' and your `No,' `No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one."*** Mt. 7:29 ***He taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law."*** Mt. 22:16 ***"We know you are a man of integrity and you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by men."***

3. **Prosperity** Lev. 26:10 ***"You will still be eating last year's harvest when you will have to move it out to make room for the new."*** Lev. 26:10; 25:4-5 Deut. 28:11-12, 11:14-15	3. **Prosperity** Is. 49:10; Jer. 31:12 Amos 9:13	3. **Prosperity** Mt. 6:33 ***"But seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."*** Luke 6:20 Looking at His disciples, He said: ***"Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God."***
4. **The Presence of God** Lev. 26:11,12 ***"I will put my dwelling place among you, and I will not abhor you. I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people."***	4. **The Presence of God** Is. 19:19 Zeph. 3:17 Zech. 14:9	4. **The Presence of God** Mt. 1:23
5. **Healing of disease** Deut. 7:15	5. **Healing of disease** Is. 29:18; 35:5-6 Is. 65:20	5. **Healing of disease** Mt. 4:23 ***"Jesus … healing every disease and sickness among the people."*** Mt. 11:5 ***The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised."***

6. **Equality** Deut. 12:19; 14:28, 29 Deut. 15:4, 12 Num. 3:9	6. **Equality** Micah 4:2-4	6. **Equality** Mt. 23:11, 12 ***The greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."*** Mt. 22:9-10 ***"Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find. So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests."*** Mt. 21:31 ***The tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the Kingdom of God ahead of you."***
7. **Justice** Deut. 16:20 ***"Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the Lord your God is giving you."***	7. **Justice** Is. 32:1, 16; 42:13-14 Is. 51: 4-5	7. **Justice** Mt. 7:12 ***"So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets."*** Mt. 12:20 ***"A bruised reed He will not break, and a smouldering wick He will not snuff out, till He leads justice to victory."***

8. **Compassion and Care** Deut. 15:11 ***"Be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the poor and needy in your land."***	8. **Compassion and Care** Is. 42:7	8. **Compassion and Care** Mt. 9:36 ***"When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."*** Mt. 25:35-36 ***"For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited Me in, I needed clothes and you clothed Me, I was sick and you looked after Me, I was in prison and you came to visit Me."***
9. **Honesty** Deut. 16:19 ***"Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous."*** Deut. 25:15 ***"You must have accurate and honest weights and measures, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you."***	9. **Honesty** Zeph. 3:13 Zech. 5:3	9. **Honesty** Mt. 22:21 ***"Caesar's," they replied. Then He said to them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's."***
10. **Harmony with nature** Deut. 11:11-12 ***"It is a land of mountains and valleys that drinks rain from heaven. It is a land the Lord your God cares for; the eyes of the Lord your God are continually on it from the beginning of the year to its end."***	10. **Harmony with nature** Is. 35:6-7; 55:13; 65:25	10. **Harmony with nature** Mt. 8:26 ***'He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the waves and it was completely calm.'***

11. **Reverence for life** Deut. 12:31 ***"You must not worship the Lord your God in their way, because in worshipping their gods, they do all kinds of detestable things the Lord hates. They even burn their sons and daughters in the fire as sacrifices to their gods."***	11. **Reverence for life** Micah 4:3	11. **Reverence for life** Mt. 6:26-28 ***"Look at the birds of the air…..your Heavenly Father feeds them. ….. See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labour or spin."*** Your Father clothes them.
12. **Reconciliation among people** Deut. 4:41-42 ***Then Moses set aside… cities… to which anyone who had killed his neighbour without malice aforethought could flee and save his life."*** Num. 22:18	12. **Reconciliation among people** Is. 55:4-5 Zech. 3:19 Mal. 4:6	12. **Reconciliation among people** Mt. 22:39 ***"Love your neighbour as yourself."*** Mt. 5:23-24 ***"If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift."***
13. **Forgiveness** Num. 35:6,13-15	13. **Forgiveness** Is. 51:1	13. **Forgiveness** Mt. 1:21 ***"Give him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins."*** Mt. 9:6 ***"The Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...."***
14. **Generosity** Deut. 15:8, 18	14. **Generosity** Is. 32:26 Joel 2:28, 29	14. **Generosity** Mt. 10:8 ***"Freely you have received, freely give."***

15. **Worship** Deut. 5:33 ***"Walk in all the way that the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess."***	15. **Worship** Is. 35:10	15. **Worship** Mt. 1:22 ***"Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews? We saw his star in the East and have come to worship Him."*** Luke 7:16
16. **Peace of Mind** Deut. 7:21 ***"Do not be terrified by them, for the LORD your God, who is among you, is a great and awesome God."***	16. **Peace of Mind** Is. 32:2-17; 35:10	16. **Peace of Mind** Mt. 11:28 ***"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."*** Mt. 6:31-34 ***"Do not worry, saying, `What shall we eat?' or `What shall we drink?' or `What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your Heavenly Father knows that you need them."***
17. **Defeat of Evil** Num. 35:34 ***"Do not defile the land where you live and where I dwell, for I, the LORD, dwell among (you)."***	17. **Defeat of Evil** Ezek. 34:28	17. **Defeat of Evil** Mt. 12:28 ***"But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you."***
18. **Resurrection** **?**	18. **Resurrection** Dan. 12:2-13 Zech. 14:5	18. **Resurrection** Mt. 9:25 ***"… He went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up."*** Mt. 10:8 ***"raise the dead…."*** Luke 7:15 ***"Young man, I say to you get up! The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother."*** Jn. 11:43-44 ***"Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out."*** Mt. 28:6 ***"He is not here; He has risen."***

What conclusions can we draw from these 18 comparisons?

Do you agree that?

1. The blessings of the Messianic Age were intended to be enjoyed by the People of God throughout time – i.e. in the Land of Promise, the Old Testament and the New Testament era?

2. The promises of the coming of God's reign among men were fulfilled in the coming of Jesus?

10.6 Final Questions

1. What is preventing the blessings of the Messiah's rule being experienced now?

2. Are development programmes, such as the one you are involved in, instruments of God's activity in the world?

3. Is the agenda of your programme consciously shaped by God's objectives?

4. How does our activity now relate to the second coming of the Messiah?

11. TRANSFORMATION : THE INCARNATIONAL MODEL OF JESUS

11.1 Introduction

11.2 Can believers copy Jesus?

11.3 In what sense did Jesus experience poverty?

11.4 Poverty today – is a volunteer development worker ever really poor?

11.5 What resources do development workers have to uplift the poor?

11.6 Foundational steps we must take to prepare for ministry among the poor

11.7 What does incarnation really mean?

11.8 What is the goal of incarnation?

11. TRANSFORMATION : THE INCARNATIONAL MODEL OF JESUS

11.1 Introduction

Incarnational ministry has been much written and spoken about. Throughout church history there have been people who have "forsaken all" and identified with the poor. Why? It was for the simple reason that we seek to be followers of the Lord Jesus who gave us the greatest example ever of selfless love and sacrificial service.

1. What did Jesus give up? The Biblical evidence:

- **At His Birth**

  "Though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor." 2 Cor. 8:9

  "So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the baby who was lying in the manger." Lk. 2:16

  "An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. 'Get up,' he said, 'take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.' So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod." Mt. 2:13-15

  "When he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee." Mt. 2:22

- **In His Ministry**

  "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head." Mt. 8:20; Lk. 9:58

  "They got up, drove Him out of the town, and took Him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw Him down the cliff." Lk. 4:29

  "He answered, 'The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man.'" Mt. 13:37

  "If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." Mt. 16:24; Mk. 8:34

- **At His death**

  "As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve disciples aside and said to them, 'We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn Him to death and will turn Him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified. On the third day He will be raised to life!' " Mt. 20:17-19

  "Then He said to them, 'My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with Me.' Going a little farther, He fell with His face to the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will.' " Mt. 26:38-39

  "Then they spit in His face and struck Him with their fists. Others slapped Him." Mt. 26:67

  "They stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on His head. They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of Him and mocked Him. "Hail, King of the Jews!" they said." Mt. 27:28-29

  "They came to a place called Golgotha (the place of the skull)." Mt. 27:33

11.2 Can believers copy Jesus?

Discuss this statement: "To help the poor we must become one with the poor."

11.3 In what sense did Jesus experience poverty?

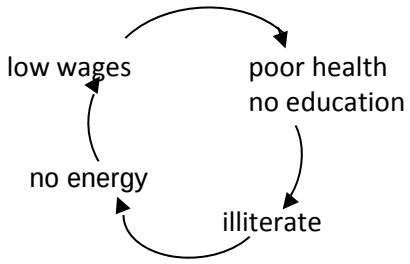
- Did He experience physical poverty? Yes/No
- Did He experience spiritual poverty? Yes/No
- Did He experience mental poverty? Yes/No
- Did He experience emotional poverty? Yes/No
- Did He experience social poverty? Yes/No

Jesus lived a very full, rich and abundant life. He gave up the glory of heaven and accepted the restrictions living in a rural district in a small undistinguished province of the Roman Empire. As a wandering teacher He forfeited His claim to the wealth and respectability of a family carpentry business. Jesus lived with the daily uncertainty of having neither a home nor any guarantee of a meal. Jesus also lived with the agony of an anticipated cruel death. **Without wealth, power or prestige; without security or comfort He thrived! He thrived spiritually, mentally, socially and emotionally.** He mixed freely with all sorts of people as He ministered and served. He taught very eloquently and authoritatively.

11.4 Poverty today – Is a development worker ever really poor?

The problem of poverty in the world today is that it is made up of so many components. The people who are poor are the same people who are also illiterate. Because of poor nutrition, they are usually sick and suffer an early death. They are also landless. They are constantly left behind in the competition for employment and resources. They have no options, no choices.

The Cycle of Poverty



To improve the quality of life for the poor, the cycle needs to be broken at several points.

We need to ask whether development workers are ever able to enter the cycle. The answer is, 'Not really'! We are literate, educated and we have vast choices. In general we are in good health and if we get chronically sick we go home. We can live among the poor, but we are never really poor spiritually, mentally, emotionally or socially.

Discuss why this is important in order to break the cycle of poverty for the poor.

11.5 What resources do development workers have to uplift the poor?

Using the dimensions of experience listed below state what development workers can offer the poor.

Physically:

Spiritually:

Mentally:

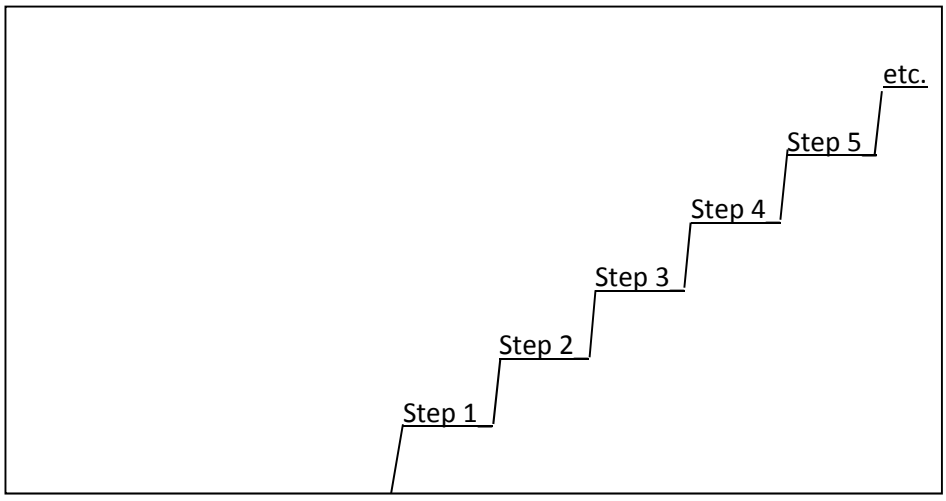
Emotionally:

Socially:

Economically:

11.6 Foundational steps we must take to prepare for a ministry among the poor

There is probably a stairway of steps necessary to develop an effective ministry among the poor.



Understand God is concerned about the poor.

Getting the first few foundational steps right is crucial. Assuming that Step 1 is coming to a Biblical understanding that God is really concerned about poverty and oppression, what are some other crucial steps? Write them on the step.

Questions that might help

- What essential quality was Paul referring to when he wrote: ***"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus"*** ? (Phil. 2:5)
- Does service among the poor need a special call of God or is it a general obligation on all believers?
- Knowing the various Biblical models, how does this help you to start?

11.7 What does incarnation really mean?

A dictionary definition – two applications are suggested:

- **The taking of a human form by a god or a spirit**
- **Any person or thing serving as the embodiment of a quality or concept**

The first definition describes Jesus. We can **never** be incarnate as He was. The second definition describes us. We cannot do what Jesus did in terms of incarnation. But we are to reflect **His attitudes** and **His priorities**.

For the Lord Jesus incarnation meant:

- Leaving heaven to come to earth with all the constraints this involved on His eternal, omnipresent nature
- Divesting Himself of all the glory of heaven
- Learning a humble, manual trade
- Living in a rural backward community
- Being constantly tempted
- Identifying with outcastes and sinners
- Having no income or family home during His years of ministry
- ***"Death, even death on a Cross"***

What will/does incarnation mean to you? (Make a list like the one above)

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

11.8 What is the goal of incarnation?

Why did Jesus choose to become incarnate? The disciple John expressed the reason in these words: ***"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."*** (Jn. 3:16)

The key words are **love** and **eternal life**. Love was the **motive** and eternal life was the **goal** and the **result**.

For workers in development ministry, love is also the **key to effective service**. Paul expressed this most clearly in 1 Cor. 13. A development ministry paraphrase could be:

Though I might have mastered the language and adapted to the culture of the poor, if I do not have a deep love for them, my words and actions will be mere play acting.

I may have insight into the causes of poverty and have analysed the structures of sin in their society. I may have a degree in development economics and faith and confidence that I can be a change agent, but if I do not have love in my heart for the people I serve I will be written off as just another "expert" who really knows nothing of the life of the poor.

I may live in a village or in an urban slum among the people and at their level. I may have none of my "goods" with me. I may even die there of diarrhoea or some parasitic infestation (!), but if I do not do it with a loving spirit, I might as well have stayed at home in my comfort zone.

When I see solutions to our development problems before anyone else, love helps me to be patient and wait until other people have spoken. Love helps me to listen to their suggestions carefully and appreciatively.

The person who truly loves is not concerned about his or her status or prestige or advancement or even about his/her fulfilment. His concern is about the welfare of others. His reward is seeing others prosper.

The truly loving person is a peacemaker. When arguments arise, personalities clash and team unity is threatened, love causes him/her to initiate reconciliation.

Love is the power and ability that keeps a person going when results are slow and opposition is strong. It helps him to keep trying when failure stares him in the face.

In the end, it is always love that counts most. It wins through where expertise, language fluency, eloquent speeches and intuitive insights produce only temporary solutions.

Love is the key! It changes mere development into transformation. It is our inspiration, our power and our goal. Whoever wants to be involved in development ministry and serve among the poor and oppressed must learn to love above everything else. When God's love is in them and flowing through them to those in need, faith in God and hope in the future will be reborn from the ashes of their despair.

Love heals, cares, conquers and lasts through life and for all eternity. It is the world's most precious gift. Give love.

12. TRANSFORMATION : THE KINGDOM MODEL

12.1 The Centrality of the Kingdom in the teaching of Jesus

12.2 Signs of the Kingdom

12.3 Images of the Kingdom

12.4 Stories as a medium for conveying truth

12.5 Values of the Kingdom

12.6 Kingdom priorities

12.7 Kingdom goals

12.8 Kingdom leadership

12.9 Final questions

12.10 Five learning styles

12.11 Constructing a Worldview.

12.12 Definitions

12.13 The segmenting effect of literacy in developing nations

12.14 Differences between oral and print communicators

12. TRANSFORMATION : THE KINGDOM MODEL

12.1 The Centrality of the Kingdom in the teaching of Jesus

"And Jesus went through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Good News of the Kingdom." (Mt. 9:35)

According to the synoptic gospels, "the Kingdom" was the major theme of all His sermons and parables.

12.2 Signs of the Kingdom

It has been suggested that there are 6 signs of the presence of the Kingdom.

1. Jesus in the midst of His people
2. The preaching of the Gospel
3. The deliverance of people who are in some way demonised
4. Miracles of healing and control over nature
5. The miracle of conversion and new birth
6. The "Fruit of the Spirit" in the lives of the believers

These features should be present in all development programmes and projects. We must seek to extend and demonstrate the **presence**, the **reality** and the **priority** of the Kingdom in the communities where we work.

In **your** project/programme, state how much these signs feature in your planning (Column 1) and in practice (Column 2). State your assessment as a percentage.

Sign	Planning	Practice
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

12.3 Images of the Kingdom

Commercial Images – useful in urban settings

- A hidden treasure — Mt. 13
- A valuable pearl — Mt. 13
- A catch of fish — Mt. 13
- A king settling accounts — Mt. 18
- A rich man challenged to share his wealth — Mt. 19; Mk. 10; Lk. 18
- House builders — Mt. 7
- A reward for faithfulness and productivity — Mt. 21
- Managers — Mt. 25; Lk. 19.

Agricultural Images – useful in rural settings.

- A farmer sowing seeds — Mt. 13; Mk. 4; Lk. 8
- A field of wheat and weeds — Mt. 13; Mk. 4
- Mustard seeds and shrubs — Mt. 4; Lk. 13
- Helpless sheep — Mt. 9
- An abundant harvest — Mt. 9
- Tenants of a vineyard — Mt. 21

Family Images

- A housewife preparing bread — Mt. 13; Lk. 13
- A child with implicit faith — Mt. 18; Mk. 9; Lk. 9
- Offering a cup of water to the helpless — Mt. 10:42; Mk. 9
- A marriage feast — Mt. 22; Lk. 14
- Guests at a wedding — Mt. 25; Lk. 12; Mk. 13.
- Providing food, shelter and clothing — Mt. 25; Lk. 12
- In a family there is no status — Mt. 20; Mk. 10

Exercise

Choose **one** image from each group and beginning with the words ***"The Kingdom of God is like…"*** rewrite the story Jesus told in your own words and in your own contemporary setting.

Repeat the exercise with another image not on the above list – i.e. your own story or parable.

12.4 Stories as a medium for conveying truth

We have recognised the centrality of the idea of the Kingdom in the teaching of Jesus and the range of images He used to describe the Kingdom. We will now look briefly at **the form** in which this teaching was given.

The characteristic way that Jesus began speaking about the Kingdom was: ***"The Kingdom of God is like…"***. This was the classic way to start a structural stylised story called a parable. Jesus was a master storyteller. He chose stories rather than allegories, philosophical propositions, legal prescriptions or poems to convey the most important spiritual truths about God's will for the world and its people.

The point is not just that He chose stories, but that these stories were filled with objects, places and events that people could easily understand. Everyone knew about weddings and wheat, sheep and stewardship, catching fish and building houses. These things appeared constantly in their own stories and in many of the stories from the Old Testament. A bridge of understanding can be built with any people group when the Gospel is illustrated with stories and images they are familiar with.

The classic example of this is the redemption analogy of "the peace child" – a child sacrifice used by a people in New Guinea to settle disputes. Because they understood 'the peace child', they could understand the death of the Lord Jesus on the Cross, so the Gospel came to that tribe as "Good News".

The collapse of multi-storey buildings in Turkey during the recent earthquakes provides us with a powerful illustration of greed and poor workmanship.

See the appendix to this model. There are **5 Learning styles**. Read the paper of these 5 classifications of people. Read over the **Constructing a Worldview Questionnaire**. As a team, answer this questionnaire. Read the sections on **definitions** and on **the segmenting effect of literacy in developing**

nations. Finally go through the **differences between oral and written communications** for the people you work among.

It is not a bad idea to collect stories as a team – redemption analogies, proverbs etc. Find points in these stories that can serve as links between your people and elements of the Gospel.

12.5 Values of the Kingdom

In the beatitudes the Lord Jesus calls "blessed"/ happy those who would normally be considered unfortunate and under the judgement of God for their sin:

- The poor
- Those who suffer death in their families
- The meek (the powerless?)
- Those who long for justice
- The merciful
- The pure in heart
- The peacemakers
- Those who suffer persecution for "apostasy"

These people are blessed because their circumstances of life help them to know and come into a living relationship with Jesus Christ. In the Mt. 5 passage – there follows a series of **woes**:

- On the rich
- On the hypocritical
- And later on the Pharisees, whose legalism blinds them to the **spirit** of the law on which they profess to be experts.

Riches, hypocrisy and legalism blind us from recognising the love of God for all who suffer. They act as barriers to belonging to the Kingdom.

> **Exercise**
> How can your development team promote Kingdom values and combat worldly values?
>
> Would you be more effective if you were **just** an evangelism team or **just** a church planting team?

12.6 Kingdom priorities

The Lord Jesus stressed that the Kingdom itself should be the top priority in life. ***"Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you."*** (Mt. 6:33; Lk. 12:31)

An investor sells everything he has to buy the great pearl and the treasure-bearing field. The shepherd leaves all to find the lost sheep. The Father gives all to celebrate the lost son's return and the housewife searches everywhere to find the misplaced coin. ***The Kingdom is a treasure and a discovery without equal*****.**

The first Kingdom priority is: the Kingdom itself and obedience to the King.

The second priority of the Kingdom is: service for others.

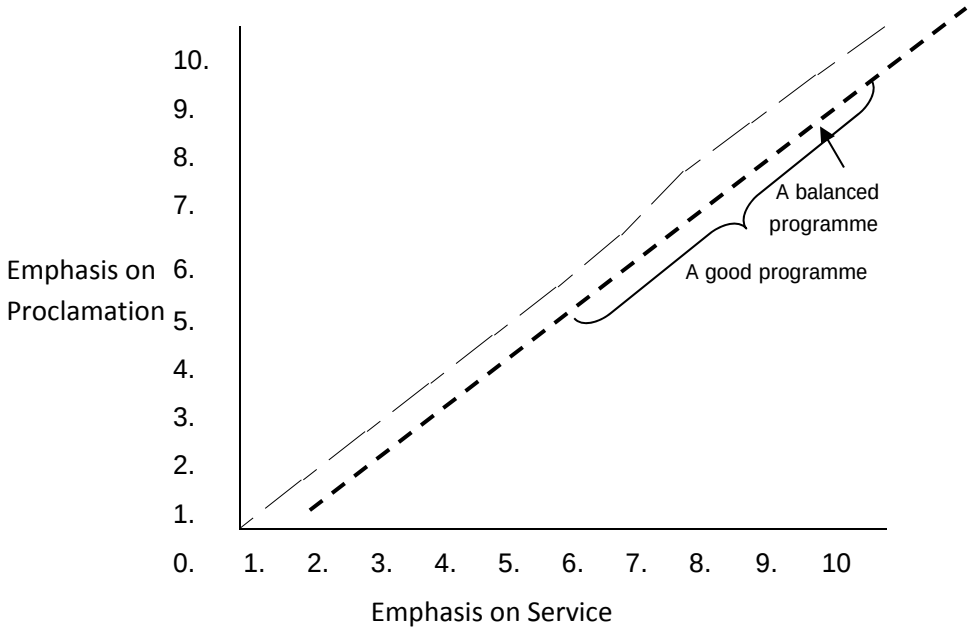
The rebuke the disciples received from Jesus, when they sought privileges in the Kingdom and showed a desire to sit in the important seats, makes the point very strongly.

There is a constant challenge to offer whatever we have even if it is very little – the smallest coin or a cup of water. In the last parable Jesus told there is a link between such actions, membership of the Kingdom and entry into the Kingdom.

Teaching about the Kingdom and service for the King are two sides of the same coin in the Gospel record. Jesus went about preaching and teaching **and** healing all kinds of diseases – acts of service.

True Kingdom development programmes combine proclamation **and** service. Estimate the extent to which this is true in your project.

On this Kingdom graph mark where your project fits. A score on the diagonal indicates a balanced programme. A high number suggests success and a low number failure.



Interpret your results.

12.7 Kingdom goals

A characteristic of the Kingdom parables Jesus taught us – especially the agricultural images – is the **emphasis on growth**. The Kingdom is a living, growing, responding, dynamic reality – or it should be (!) This is so because it is the Kingdom of a living creative God. So Kingdom **values** and **growth** should be spreading wherever the King's ambassadors are located. We ought to be expansionists.

Another characteristic of the Kingdom parables is their **invitational** aspect. People are encouraged, persuaded and even "compelled" to enter the Kingdom. And many do enter – mostly the poor and oppressed.

So the Kingdom attracts participation. This should be a goal – strategic objective – of all that we do.

The final characteristic we will note in the parables of the Kingdom is the **judgement aspect**. The very existence of the Kingdom brings about a division between those who belong to the Kingdom and those who do not. The Bible and Jesus are clear. **The consequences of not belonging to the Kingdom are final and absolutely catastrophic**. The goal of the King's servants is to ensure that all belong. This means that every action **must be consistent** with the ethics of the Kingdom.

So there ought to be three clearly stated goals in our development programmes.

- **Growth**: not in the size of the programme, but growth in the Kingdom. This needs regular evaluation.

- **The invitational aspect**: Are there regular opportunities for the people in your community to join the Kingdom?

- **The judgement aspect**: Are people being warned of the consequences of not joining. Do they understand that there is judgement to come? If not, why not?

12.8 Kingdom Leadership

- **"Jesus is Lord"**

Acknowledging the Lordship of Jesus was central to early Christian creeds. This was in the face of a growing number of "emperor cults" in the 1st century. It started off with Julius Caesar. Augustus Caesar built temples all over the Empire in order to make the "emperor cult" a unifying factor in the Roman Empire. Succeeding emperors kept promoting the cult. The height of the cult's progress was under Domitian, who made every adult member of the Roman Empire offer up a pinch of incense to an image of the emperor and say, "Caesar is Lord". Christians died in their thousands rather than say this. They could only say, '**Jesus is Lord'!** The hymn in Phil. 2:9-11 begins with the humility of Jesus and ends with this triumphant statement:

"Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

An acknowledgement of the supremacy and Lordship of Jesus Christ must be included in all our development projects. We **do not need to state overtly** that we are Christians in our documents. This often brings confusion. Perhaps frequent public prayer for God's help is the best way. Knees bowed **now** and tongues confessing **now** are the authentic signs of the reality of the Kingdom in our midst. They are the sign of the future that God intends.

- **Jesus modelled a new style of kingly leadership**

Jesus constantly challenged the Pharisees for making and interpreting laws in ways that bound the human spirit. Bondage to the law was the result. Jesus liberated people to become what God made them to be. To do this He didn't proclaim a set of laws or rules or even a policy manual! He didn't rule from afar from some large palace. He mixed with the people, ***"Preaching good news to the poor, liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind.***" He healed the broken-hearted and set the oppressed free. He announced, ***"The Kingdom has come."*** (Lk. 4)

Large offices or the numbers of personnel reporting to you are not synonymous with Kingdom leadership! In fact it has nothing to do with power and control. Kingdom leadership is being out among the people, meeting them where they are, hearing their concerns, helping them, meeting their needs with the resources at hand. It is especially seeing the power of God released through faith and prayer.

- **Kingdom leadership is selfless service**

Jesus challenged His disciples, ***"Don't be like the Pharisees who love to show their importance by their fine robes and pious prayers…."*** (Lk. 20:46 ff) ***"Whoever wants to be great among you must become the servant of all."*** (Mk. 10:44) ***"And He took a towel, wrapped it round Himself and washed the disciples' feet."*** (Jn. 13:5)

He himself was the greatest example of selfless service.

A modern, secular development worker has written:

"Go to the people. Live among them. Learn from them. Love them.
Start with what they know. Build on what they have and on the best leaders.
When the task is accomplished, the people will remark, 'We have done this ourselves'."

This wasn't written by a Christian but it expresses a genuinely Kingdom philosophy.

The three characteristics of Kingdom leadership and so of all our development workers are:

- **Acknowledging the King**
- **Going and living among the people**
- **Serving the poor**

> Discuss as a team how your development programme expresses and encourages this type of leadership. If it does not (!), how can you bring about change?

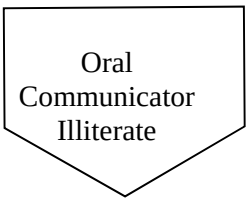
12.9 Final Questions

- Can Kingdom ethics be applied to society in general?
- How do the lifestyle and the imperatives of the Kingdom relate to the Creation Mandate of lesson one?
- How should we teach about the Kingdom of God in an age where kingship is not popular? What about the fact that where there are monarchs today, they are severely limited in their authority by constitutional means?

> **The sections 12:10 – 12:14 are from materials produced by: Jim Slack SB.C. FMB**
>
> **Evangelism and Church Growth Consultant/Analyst – 1998-99**

12.10 FIVE LEARNING STYLES

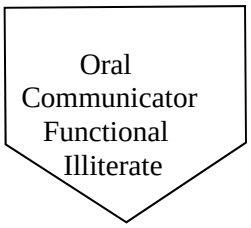
ILLITERATE:



- Cannot read or write
- Has never "seen" a word
- Words have no exact meaning
- Words are bits of sounds, pictures, not objects

- **Oral communicator**
  - **The story is their dominant communication style**

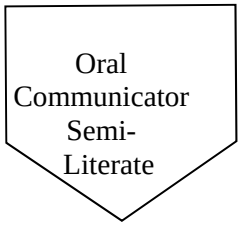
FUNCTIONAL ILLITERATE:



- Began to read, dropped out before 8th grade, stopped reading/writing
- 2 years later, may read simple materials but no longer receive, recall or reproduce concepts, precepts, or principles even if they did it originally
- Values are not transmitted through literate means
- Considered to be literate by every country

- **Oral communicator**
  - **The story is their dominant communication style**

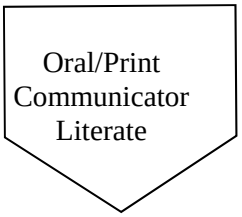
SEMI-LITERATE:



- Progressed at least to 10th grade, generally high school graduate
- Function in a grey transitional zone between orality and literacy
- May only use these marginal skills in one context (eg. work)
- Considered to be literate by every country and every school system
- **Prefers oral to literate communication**

- **Learns best and most comfortably through oral presentation style**

LITERATE (OR FUNCTIONAL LITERATE):

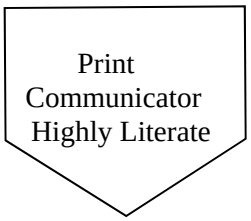


- Continued to use reading and writing beyond 10th grade
- Can summarize what they read or hear and can list important points
- Does not depend on number of years of schooling
- Comfortable with information presented in literate format
- **Learns and handles concepts, precepts, and principles presented in this manner**
- **Still retains appreciation for oral communication and responds to it with understanding**

THE PRICE FOR LITERACY:

- The person has given up many of his or her purely oral communication learning skills.
- Memory is less dependent on recalling oral material and more dependent on recorded notes, books and other print sources of information.

HIGHLY LITERATE:



- Spends much time daily developing and using reading/writing skills
- Has usually attended college
- Are often professionals in liberal arts fields

- Has surrendered oral communication skills
- **Thoroughly word-culture people, literate communicator**
- **Still retains appreciation for oral communication and responds to it with understanding**

Illiterates, functional illiterates, and semi-literates can learn as well as literate persons**…as long as the information is formatted correctly.** This means using vehicles such as **stories, parables, poems, ballads, and drama.** What they do not understand or recall is information formatted in lists, tables, outlines, diagrams, steps, or abstract principles.

12.11 CONSTRUCTING A WORLDVIEW

A Cultural-Social-Religious Profile of a Target People

A Supplement Instrument for Chronological Bible Storying

This instrument is a supplement to the larger worldview instrument and is not a substitute for that document. The larger document is needed during the storying planning process in identifying the barriers and bridges to the Gospel. The information coming from this documentation process is needed in determining story style and formats.

1. Literacy

1.1 What is the literacy level of the population?

1.2 How is 'literacy' defined by the government?

1.3 What is the illiteracy level of the population?

1.4 Functional illiteracy level of the population (percent of population that has not made it to or has not gone beyond the 6th grade level in school)

1.5 Percent of the total population classified as illiterate and functionally illiterate combined.

Combine the percentage figures of 1.3 and 1.4. This figure, or percentage figure, is the oral communication percent of the population. A combined percentage of 50% or more indicates that the target population is clearly an oral communication culture.

2. Heritage information

2.1 Do the people have a heritage that is passed on to successive generations?

2.2 Is the people's heritage passed on by members of society to today's generation of children?

2.3 What is the current status of the heritage information?

2.3.1 Was it originally orally communicated?

2.3.2 Has it been reduced to writing?

2.3.3 Has it been recorded in audio or video format?

2.3.4 Does the oral format also exist today?

2.3.5 In what language or languages does this information reside?

2.3.6 Is the heritage passed on privately or publicly?

2.3.7 Is the heritage passed on through ritualistic rites?

2.4 How have the people traditionally passed on their heritage to the next generation?

2.5 In what way is the heritage information passed on today?

2.6 Is there a fairy tale/folklore collection that is distinct from the heritage collection?

2.7 Do the people have totems?

2.8 Are characteristics and values assigned to certain animals for use in stories?

2.9 Is there a primary, well know and public heritage story of the people that has been produced in a textual format?

2.10 Do the people use storytelling as an art form to tell their heritage stories?

2.11 Do families perpetuate their heritage primarily by storytelling?

2.12 Is there a special time when the heritage stories are told?

2.13 Is there a specified place where heritage stories are told?

2.14 Are the heritage stories taught in the school system?

2.15 Are the heritage stories considered to be true, or are they understood to be mythological?

3. Storytelling

3.1 Is storytelling common among the people?

3.2 Are there special words in the language for storytelling? Are there words that set apart storytelling from any heritage rituals that are told? Do they share the same terms?

3.3 Are stories told among the people that are distinctly different from the heritage stories?

3.4 Is there formal and informal storytelling?

3.5 Who tells stories? Do men and women tell stories to the same audience? Do young and old tell stories before the same audience?

3.6 Are individuals designated formally or known informally as storytellers?

3.7 Is storytelling an art form among the people? What are the primary art forms of the people?

3.8 What is/are the dominant art form/s – Narrative/Drama/Chanting/Singing/Drums/Mixture?

3.9 Are the religion/s of the people perpetuated by storytelling or variations of that methodology?

3.10 How carefully do storytellers stick to the story? Are changes or variations acceptable?

3.11 Does the audience participate in the story and interact with the storyteller?

3.12 In cases when songs are used in conjunction with stories, is the vocabulary of the songs the same as the stories?

3.13 Are stories told competitively?

3.14 What mnemonic conventions are used in telling the stories which aid memory and capture the hearer's attention?

3.15 How are stories introduced? What are the introductory words and phrases that are used by storytellers? Do some of the phrases denote that a story is mythological and other phrases that the story is true - a historical event?

3.16 How is repetition achieved within the story? Is there repetition, and how often does it occur within a given story?

3.17 Are imitation and mimicry common parts of the storyteller's style?

3.18 Describe the use of tone by the storyteller.

3.19 Are the introductions and conclusions of the stories very similar? Are there stock phrases or certain formulae that are common to the introductions and conclusions of many of the stories?

3.20 How is the moral of the story revealed? Are individuals left to themselves to discover the moral of each of the stories? Are there language markers that identify the moral of the story? Is the moral positioned in a certain place so as to be identified?

3.21 How much exposition (explaining of the story) is done by the storyteller?

3.22 Is there some kind of discussion or application of the story that takes place after a story is told?

3.23 How is the change of time or a shift in movement/focus within the story conveyed to the audience? Is this done verbally, by songs, or by other means?

12.12 DEFINITIONS

- **Print communicators** are ones who depend on reading/writing for most of their communication. A culture characterised by such communications is called **a "print" culture**.

- **Oral communicators** are ones who depend mostly on verbal, non-print means to learn, to communicate with others, to express themselves and to enjoy a story. A culture in which oral communications are typical is called **an oral culture**.

- **Primary oral communicators** are ones who have not become literate or at least do not read. In primary oral cultures most people are illiterate. Examples include traditional peasant and nomad societies, as well as some poor urban communities. Maybe we need to think in terms of sub-cultures rather than entire cultures.

- **Residual oral communicators** are ones who may be able to read, but they do not depend on it much. In residual oral cultures, there are some, or many, who can read, but they retain the characteristics of an oral culture.

- **Secondary oral communicators** are ones who depend on electronic audio and visual communications. In a secondary oral culture, the elite are functionally literate and they enable the rest to acquire their information and entertainment from the electronic media. This may be characteristic of most communities today in the developing world, and **the developed world is increasingly becoming a secondary oral culture.**

The trend in history has been the progress **from primary orality to some literacy with residual orality** and from there, in some cases, **to a print-oriented culture.**

The modern trend is to move on to secondary orality, to a post-literate or multi-media culture – in many cases skipping the stage of print-orientation. The Arab world, for example, has basically become a multi-media culture. As Viggo Søgaard reminded a conference of the Forum of Bible Agencies,

"We are kidding ourselves when we say we are reaching the world <u>by providing printed Scripture only</u>, when less than half the world's people know how to read. It is important to choose your medium based on the needs of your audience."

- **Implication:** People learn best when information is packaged in a familiar format. To reach a generation of non-readers, we need to communicate in ways appropriate for oral communicators using non-print media.

Most of the Bible's narratives and prophecies were preserved orally for many years.

Homer was illiterate when he constructed **the Iliad** and **the Odyssey**. Illiterates who memorized them passed them on.

The Qur'an was transmitted orally and its written form has served mostly as an aid to its oral recitation and memorization. Traditional Islamic education of children has stressed memorisation of the Qur'an. **The Qur'an is most perceived as Scripture when it is being chanted.**

12.13 THE SEGMENTING EFFECT OF LITERACY IN DEVELOPING NATIONS

LITERATE AND HIGHLY LITERATE	SEMI-LITERATE	FUNCTIONALLY ILLITERATE	ILLITERATE
Print communicator, learns easily through formal logic and analysis	Print and oral communicator, must work hard to learn through formal logic and analysis	Oral communicator, learns through experience, narrative and traditional sayings	Oral communicator, learns through experience, narrative and traditional sayings

Professional	Works in a literate word culture (clerical, sales & services etc.)	Aware of and does business with literate, word-culture people	Functions in a world essentially devoid of writing
Western dress	Semi-Western dress	Usually traditionally dressed	Traditional dress
Western lifestyle	Semi-Western lifestyle	Occasionally adapts to urban or western styles	Traditional lifestyle
Affluent	Rising affluence	Minimum wage earners	Poor
Materialistic	Increasingly materialistic	Provides essentials	Essentials may be lacking
Urban	Urban	Urban or rural	Rural or recently urban
Lives and works in multiple, non-overlapping spheres	Work sphere may be segmented from other aspects of life	Increasingly holistic in lifestyle and outlook	Holistic in lifestyle and outlook
Culturally individualistic	Becoming culturally individualistic	Culturally relational	Culturally relational
De-tribalised	Becoming de-tribalised	Tribal in focus and orientation	Tribal in focus and orientation
Mobile	Mobile or semi-mobile	Mobile only in occupation	Mobile only if nomadic
Secular	Religious, nominally to rabidly	Traditional religious practice	Folk religion and superstition

12.14 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ORAL AND PRINT COMMUNICATORS

(Adapted from Rick Brown's summary of Walter J. Ong's **Orality & Literacy**)

Each pair of statements describes the two ends of 40 communication preference "poles". Circle the number that best represents your listener's position on the continuum of communication styles.

Basic learning preferences:		**My friend's name is:**
ORAL COMMUNICATORS	**score**	**PRINT COMMUNICATORS**
…learn by hearing (hearing-dominance).	0 1 2 3 4	…learn by seeing (sight-dominance).
… learn by observing and imitating, by listening and repeating, by memorising proverbs, traditional sayings, stories, songs, and expressions	0 1 2 3 4	…learn by reading non-fiction, by studying, examining, classifying, comparing, analysing.
… think and talk about events, not words. (Words function to paint action pictures.)	0 1 2 3 4	…think and talk about words, concepts and principles. (Words are perceived as representing objects more than actions.)
…use stories of human action to store, organise, and communicate much of what they know. Information is "embedded in the flow of time" usually on a "story line".	0 1 2 3 4	…manage knowledge "in elaborate, more or less scientifically abstract categories" and store it in print rather than in stories.
…value and learn information handed down from the past.	0 1 2 3 4	…seek to discover new information.
…value traditional solutions.	0 1 2 3 4	…value innovative solutions.
SUBTOTAL 1		

Importance of sound:

ORAL COMMUNICATORS	**score**	**PRINT COMMUNICATORS**
…are deeply affected by the sound of what they hear.	0 1 2 3 4	…are affected by the content of what they read.
…prize clarity and style of speech.	0 1 2 3 4	…prize clarity and validity of reasoning.
…view speech primarily as a way of relating to people or as a form of entertainment.	0 1 2 3 4	…view speech primarily as a means of conveying information.
…respond to a speaker while he is speaking and participate in the story telling.	0 1 2 3 4	…generally read or listen quietly.
…engage in verbal contests, trying to excel in praise, insults, riddles, jokes etc.	0 1 2 3 4	…engage in few verbal contests, but write letters to the editor, etc.
…believe that oral exchange should normally be formal and carefully articulated.	0 1 2 3 4	…believe that oral exchange should normally be informal, casual.

…can produce, in some cases, beautiful verbal art forms, such as poetry and ballads.	0 1 2 3 4	…can produce, in some cases, interesting literature, but generally not verbal art forms of a high quality.
…view a written text as a record of something spoken or an aid to memorization or recitation.	0 1 2 3 4	…view a written text as a vessel of information.
…prefer to read aloud or at least imagine the sounds of the words as they read.	0 1 2 3 4	…prefer to read alone, taking in the content of he words but not their sound.
SUBTOTAL 2		

Importance of real-life experience:

ORAL COMMUNICATORS	**score**	**PRINT COMMUNICATORS**
…learn and retain knowledge in relation to real or imagined events in human life.	0 1 2 3 4	…learn and retain knowledge as general principles, with events as examples.
…recite genealogies but make few lists.	0 1 2 3 4	…make lists but recite few genealogies.
…relate closely and personally to the people and events they know about.	0 1 2 3 4	…relate more objectively to what they know, because writing comes between them.
…think and talk mostly about events and people.	0 1 2 3 4	…think and write about their own feelings and thoughts as well.
…reason from experience and association.	0 1 2 3 4	…reason by means of “formal” logic, using analysis and explanation.
…organize non-narrative speeches (such as exhortations and sermons) largely by recounting events associated with the point being made or words being used.	0 1 2 3 4	…organise non-narrative speeches (such as exhortations and sermons) by laying out a logical progression of thoughts.
SUBTOTAL 3		

Style preference:

ORAL COMMUNICATORS	**score**	**PRINT COMMUNICATORS**
…communicate by joining sentences with conjunctions such as ‘and’, ‘then’.	0 1 2 3 4	…communicate by joining sentences with subjunctives such as ‘while’, ‘after’.
…can organize experiences and episodes.	0 1 2 3 4	…can organize long, logical arguments.
…construct longer narratives by stringing episodes together. Themes may be repeated in several episodes.	0 1 2 3 4	…construct narratives with chronologically linear plots that reach a climax and resolution; themes are validated by the outcome.
…use symbols and stories to carry the message.	0 1 2 3 4	…use charts, diagrams, and lists to explain to message.
…frequently use words in set phrases, i.e. sayings, proverbs, riddles, formulae, or just descriptions such as ‘brave soldier’.	0 1 2 3 4	…generally use words independently, with few set phrases.

…appreciate repetition, in case something was missed the first time.	0 1 2 3 4	…do not like repetition, since material missed can be read again.
…like verbosity (many words to say a little)	0 1 2 3 4	…like brevity (few words to say much)
SUBTOTAL 4		

Importance of dialogue:

ORAL COMMUNICATORS	**score**	**PRINT COMMUNICATORS**
…tend to communicate in groups.	0 1 2 3 4	…tend to communicate one-to-one.
…learn mostly in interaction with other people.	0 1 2 3 4	…learn mostly alone.
…cannot think about something very long without dialogue.	0 1 2 3 4	…can think about something for a long time while making notes about it, etc.
SUBTOTAL 5		

Importance of drama and melodrama:

ORAL COMMUNICATORS	**score**	**PRINT COMMUNICATORS**
…employ exaggerated praise and scorn.	0 1 2 3 4	intentionally moderate praise and scorn.
…drawn “heavy” characters in their stories.	0 1 2 3 4	…prefer realistic characters in stories.
…create art forms that emphasise struggle against an enemy.	0 1 2 3 4	…create art forms that emphasize struggle to reach a goal or overcome an obstacle.
…use their hands to help express themselves when they tell stories, through gestures or by playing musical instruments.	0 1 2 3 4	…use their hands little, since gestures are not written or read.
SUBTOTAL 6		

Importance of context:

ORAL COMMUNICATORS	**score**	**PRINT COMMUNICATORS**
…view matters in the totality of their context, including everyone involved (holistically)	0 1 2 3 4	…view matters abstractly and analytically (compartmentally).
…leave much of the message universalised, depending instead on shared situation, shared culture, intonation, facial gestures and hand gestures to help communicate the message.	0 1 2 3 4	…clarify the message by using words rather than context, gesture or intonation which cannot be conveyed in print.
…can be imprecise, and clarify as needed, based on the listener’s reaction.	0 1 2 3 4	…learn to avoid ambiguity because it cannot be clarified by an author at a distance.

…avoid asking or answering “direct” questions.	0 1 2 3 4	…ask and answer “direct” questions.
…are uninterested in definitions since the context renders them superfluous.	0 1 2 3 4	…appreciate definitions.
SUBTOTAL 7		

Add together the circled numbers in each set of choices. Write the subtotals below and add them together.

SUBTOTAL 1 _____

SUBTOTAL 2 _____

SUBTOTAL 3 _____

SUBTOTAL 4 _____

SUBTOTAL 5 _____

SUBTOTAL 6 _____

SUBTOTAL 7 _____

TOTAL _____

The lower the score, the higher the orality and so there is a need to present **all** teaching in an appropriate manner – including the Gospel.

13. TRANSFORMATION : THE DISCIPLESHIP MODEL

13.1 Becoming disciples

13.2 Making disciples

13.3 The training methods of Jesus

13.3.1 Limit the numbers

13.3.2 A long period

13.3.3 An action-reflection process

13.4 Paul's people-development programme

13.4.1 He chose to work in team

13.4.2 His frequent letters

13.4.3 Recognising the potential in people

13. TRANSFORMATION : THE DISCIPLESHIP MODEL
(The training methods of Jesus and Paul)

All development programmes have a training function. It is helpful therefore to study the training objectives and style of Jesus and Paul to see how their methods can help us in preparing not only our own development workers for effective service, but also how we should train the recipients of our development programmes.

13.1 Becoming disciples

- Of all the terms used in the New Testament for followers of Jesus, by far the most common is the term **"disciple"**. It appears more than 260 times. By contrast the most common word used today is "**Christian"**, it appears only 3 times. (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16)
- **Teaching by discipling** was the most common educational and leadership development pattern in the first century. It was also the most common in all other cultures until modern western educational methods came into existence with their highly cognitive emphasis.

  During the 1st century many other groups of 'disciples' existed:

  - John the Baptist: Mt. 9:14; Jn. 1:35; Acts 19:1-5
  - Pharisees: Mk. 2:8; Lk. 5:33
  - Moses: Jn. 9:28
  - Most Greek philosophers
- **The disciples of Jesus were ordinary men**.

  In an essay called ***The Twelve Men*** **by** G.K. Chesterton we read:

  "Whenever our civilisation wants a library to be catalogued or a solar system discovered or any other trifle of that kind (!), it uses up its specialists. But when it wishes anything done that is really serious (like discerning truth, executing justice etc.) it collects twelve of the ordinary people standing around. The same thing was done, if I remember right, by the founder of Christianity."

  Jesus indeed chose and trained twelve ordinary men.
- The choosing of **twelve** was **symbolic** and **insightful**. It was an acted parable in the tradition of the Old Testament prophets like Jeremiah. By His choice of twelve men (the symbolic number of the tribes of the Old Testament People of God) Jesus proclaimed His intention to create a new People of God. Whenever Jesus appeared with His twelve men, the symbolic number itself would say to all people of insight, **"This is the Messiah and these are the new People of God."**

  It was also insightful. A recent paper was presented on educational psychology research discussing the optimum number of people a person could train using a variety of techniques, but based around cognitive training and practical experience. The answer was not culture bound and it was between 11 and 13!

Homework:

1. Read one of the Gospels and note every occurrence of the word **disciple.**

   Book: _____ Verses: _____

   _____

   _____

2. How many disciples do you think John the Baptist, the Pharisees and Moses had?

3. List the known professions of the disciples.
   Example: Peter – fisherman

4. What other numbers of disciples are mentioned in the New Testament?

   Luke 10:1

   Acts 1:15

13.2 Making Disciples:

In Matthew's Gospel, the Great Commission is ***"to make disciples"***. This last command of Jesus compares with the first – to become disciples by "following Jesus". The word disciple literally means "one who learns". In Semitic thinking this is much closer to "apprentice" than our western concept of a student. Being a disciple of Jesus was much more than gaining a degree in theology. It was an apprenticeship to do the work of the Kingdom.

The method by which disciples would be made was by…

- Going
- Baptising
- Teaching

In Greek these three words are participles. The phrase **"make disciples"** is imperative. So "making disciples" is the **goal**. Going, baptising and teaching are the **means** of achieving it.

Homework:

Write out the five statements of the Great Commission in:

Mt. 28:18-20:

Mk. 16:15

Lk. 24:47, 49

Jn. 20:21

Acts 1:8

NOTE: **The scope** is to all nations (*ethne*) – ethnic groups, people groups.

The power is the Holy Spirit.

The starting point is where they are.

It is a continuation of the ministry of Jesus.

It will be by **proclamation and demonstration.**

Quote references for the above points. What other points should be made from these verses of the Great Commission?

13.3 The training methods of Jesus

Peter, the disciple of Jesus, said of Him, ***"He left us an example that we should follow in His steps."*** (1 Peter 2:21) This should apply not only to our personal faith and action, but also to the training methods in our development projects and in our church planting.

I want to focus on 3 key features of the training methods of Jesus.

13.3.1 Limit the numbers!

The teaching ministry of Jesus was offered at three levels:

- ***Individual enquirers***

  Jesus took time to discuss particular issues with individuals. Some of these were sympathetic and genuine. In Jn. 3 others were antagonistic and asking questions only to find fault with the teaching of Jesus. See Lk. 10:25; 11:1, 37, 45; 12:3; 13:23; 18:18.

- ***The disciples***

  As time went on, Jesus increasingly concentrated on explaining His ideas and actions to the twelve disciples. Luke 16:8, 9, 22; 17:9; 18:1.

- ***The crowds***

  People came from all the towns and villages to hear Jesus. In Jerusalem they lined the streets and hailed Him as the Messiah. The sick and their families sought Him out, to get His help. Luke 4:31; 6:17; 7:24; 8:1; 12:54; 15:1; 20:1, 9.

The most strategic of these groups was clearly the second. They were a small number of special learners who stayed with Him during His three years of ministry. These disciples, He re-designated apostles – "sent ones". (Lk. 6:13) He invested most of His time in them. Eleven out of twelve proved outstandingly successful.

Homework:

How many people does your training programme target? (Both development and church) List the programme and the numbers.

Programme	**Numbers**

What are the advantages of small groups over crowds and individuals?

Case study: Cell-Churches

Over the last ten years or so cell-churches have emerged as the most effective way to plant churches in Restricted Access Countries. Borrow from your leader one or two books on cell churches and discusses with him/her the advantages and disadvantages of this particular methodology of church planting and church growth. Write a small report on this. It will be especially valuable if you can study a local cell-church in action.

13.3.2 A long period

Jesus took 3 years of full time input to train His disciples. If the best teacher in the world needed that much time, how much more time do we need? Yet most training programmes in Christian development are much shorter!

List programmes you know and their length:

Course	**Length**

In our agency we run various leadership development courses and counselling courses.

You should be aware of the shortcomings of existing programmes. On the field we sometimes run seminars from one-day to five-days in length. At best these courses can only give a theoretical foundation. It takes time to integrate knowledge with experience. Our hope is that it will be **on your development teams** that this integration will take place. This is where the reflection and the skills development should take place.

Why do you think Jesus kept the disciples with Him for 3 years?

What implications does this have for the training programme you are in and the training programmes you are running?

13.3.3 An action – reflection process

The third feature to note in the training methods of Jesus is that it was certainly not a formal lecture room experience. The countryside was their classroom. Life experiences were the basis of their

curriculum. Demonstrations of signs and wonders were their object lessons and illustrations. Dialogue and teaching were their learning process. They went everywhere with Jesus. They saw what He did and listened to what He said. When they didn't understand they asked Him to explain the meaning to them.

After some time, they were sent out to do the same things – to preach and to heal. They came back to Jesus to discuss their successes and failures.

Educational theory suggests that we remember:

About 10% of what we hear

About 30% of what we see

About 90% of what we do

Most of us in Bible colleges, churches and mission agencies need to re-examine the teaching methods of Jesus. If we did this, we could probably **reduce** formal class room/sermon time and increase **supervised** field experience. It is in the field that values and beliefs are explored and explained in face–to-face contact with the community we are seeking to reach. For it is in this direct encounter with people and ideas that truly relevant learning is most likely to take place.

Do you agree? Is this true in all situations and with all sorts of knowledge? Why/why not?

The structure of John's Gospel demonstrates a close link between **an event** and **the explanation**. This structure suggests that an understanding of the deepest spiritual truths about Jesus arose out of the things that **He did**. Fill in the spaces below.

Ref. in John	**Event**	**Explanation**
Chapter 4	Meeting the woman at the well	Jesus the provider of living water
Chapter 6		
Chapter 8/9	Jesus heals the blind man	Jesus is the Light of the World.
Chapter 10		Jesus is the Good Shepherd
Chapter 11	Lazarus is raised from the dead	

Chapter 15	Cultivating a vineyard	Jesus is the _____.

What actions have you (your team or your programme) taken that have most effectively raised spiritual questions and created opportunities for explanation?

What issue-raising actions could you, your team etc. take?

13.4 Paul's people–development programme

We can learn a tremendous amount from Paul's approach to discipling people. Paul had a deep concern for people and their development. This can be demonstrated in three ways.

13.4.1 He chose to work in team

Paul was no lone-ranger. He refused to work alone. On his great missionary journeys he was always part of a team. His first team was made up of himself, the gentle Holy Spirit-filled Barnabas and John Mark. On his second team there was originally Silas and Luke. Timothy joined them when the team crossed to Europe. On other journeys people like Titus and others were on the team. In the introductions to his letters Paul identifies some of his team members.

Name Paul's team members! Who was with him when he wrote:

1 Cor. 1:1 _____

2 Cor. 12:2 _____

Gal. 6:21 _____

Phil. 1:1 _____

Col. 1:1 _____

1 & 2 Thess. 1:1 _____

2 Tim. 3:12 _____

Philemon 23, 24 _____

13.4.2 His frequent letters

Of all the New Testament writers Paul and Luke, his team member, were the most prolific. Luke wrote his history of Jesus and of the early church. Paul wrote his letters to churches and individuals. He was probably the writer of Hebrews. His writings form a major part of the New Testament. Next comes John with a Gospel, three short letters and his Vision. The remaining writers are Matthew and Mark, Peter, James and Jude.

Paul had a relatively short life. He was killed in his late 40s or early 50s in A.D. 63 or 64. He squeezed into his 20 to 25 years of Christian service extensive travelling, constant speaking and frequent letter writing. Most of his letters were written when he was in prison! Because of their deeply spiritual content, these letters were valued, kept and studied. When the early church fixed the Canon of New Testament Scripture ~ 150 A.D. Paul's letters, clearly authenticated by the Holy Spirit, were included.

Paul's deep concern for people and their development shows through every page in his letters. The one who defined the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) and wrote that sublime appeal for the supremacy of love in all human relationships, (1 Cor. 13) was not content to write just in general terms. All his letters are filled with personal references especially the endings.

Look up Rom. 16 and write down all the people mentioned.

v.1 _____ v.12 _____ and _____

v.3 _____ and _____ and _____

v.5 _____ v.13 _____ and _____

v.6 _____ v.14 _____ and _____

v.7 _____ and _____ _____ , _____

v.8 _____

v.9 _____ and _____ v.15 _____ , _____

v.10 _____ and _____ _____ , _____

v.11_____ and _____ _____ , _____

v.21_____, _____ ,_____ , _____

v.22_____

v.23 _____ , _____ and _____

The total number is _____. In addition he mentions several groups.

Now look at the conclusions of all Paul's other letters and note down his concern, love and care for individuals. Their needs continue to be his great concern.

13.5 Recognising the potential in people

Paul was a people–developer. He exercised a constant ministry of encouragement, affirmation, exhortation and admonishment.

To illustrate this we will look at 3 examples:

- **Mark**

Acts 15 describes the dispute between Paul and Barnabas over the failure of Mark and the discussion whether he should be included or expelled from the team. We may think that this passage suggests the opposite of encouragement. We could easily conclude that Paul was judgemental, rigid and unforgiving. The team split so there were now two teams. We don't hear of Barnabas again in Scripture, but we do hear of Mark. At the end of the letter to Philemon, we get a great surprise! Mark is back on Paul's team in Rome. In fact, two of the writers of the Gospels (Mark and Luke) are in Rome on Paul's team!

Probably neither had started to write his account of the life of Jesus at that time. I can speculate in my imagination about the encouragement Paul must have given Mark and Luke to write down these invaluable aids to our understanding of Jesus – one for Romans and one for Greeks – Gentiles to whom Paul was called to preach the Gospel. The Holy Spirit inspired the actual writing of the two Gospels.

So Paul obviously didn't think of Mark's early failure as final. He practised forgiveness and reconciliation as well as preaching them. Failure in this life is never final. There is the vital ministry of rehabilitation and the creating of new beginnings for people who have failed. Paul must have been so proud of Barnabas for the good job he had done with Mark.

Can you give examples or even your own experience of the ministry of rehabilitation for people who have failed?

- **Sosthenes**

In Acts 18 we have a description of one of the campaigns to silence and sentence Paul. These are common wherever the preaching of the Gospel is restricted. This campaign was led by Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue and by the whole Jewish community in Corinth. Sosthenes thought that the newly appointed governor, Gallio, who had a reputation for impartiality, would agree with the case against Paul brought by the Jews. He hoped Paul would be severely dealt with by the court. But Gallio dismissed the case. He considered it a small, religious dispute and not a judicial matter at all. To cap it all, when the disappointed Sosthenes came out of court, he was stoned for losing the case – probably by his fellow Jews! At this point Paul and Sosthenes were clearly enemies!

Some time later Paul writes to the Church in Corinth and he sends greetings from himself ***"and our brother Sosthenes"***. We can only speculate about what happened between these two events. Paul and Sosthenes had much in common. Both were leaders in the Jewish community. Both tried to stamp out Christianity and imprison or kill its leaders. Both had been stoned! It takes a special man to go and win such a man to Jesus Christ. [See 1 Cor. 1:1]

What attitudes would Paul and the believers in Corinth need to demonstrate if they were trying to share the Gospel with Sosthenes and see him come to faith in Jesus?

- **Onesimus**

The final example of people–development from Paul's life is even more dramatic! When Paul was in Rome, during his time in the city he lived under house arrest in an expatriate quarter of the city. People from all corners of the Empire congregated there hoping to find excitement, employment or anonymity in the crowded city. One such a person was the slave Onesimus. He had stolen money from his master and run away. In Rome he meets Paul. Paul tells him not only about the grace, forgiveness and dignity to be found through faith in Jesus, but also about his responsibility to return to his master, seek reconciliation and restoration and the resumption of his duties. To help him Paul writes a letter of commendation and offers to refund the money he has taken. Paul appeals to Philemon to treat Onesimus as his own brother in Christ. At that point the New Testament part of the story ends. But it is not the end of the story.

Many years later, Irenaeus wrote a history of the church in Ephesus (around 120 A.D.). In Irenaeus' day the church in Ephesus was the largest Christian church in the world. Paul had lived in Ephesus for two years helping to see the church established. Later the saintly apostle John settled there. This was a little while before the Fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. John helped to build up the church into a thriving and witnessing group. Then John was exiled to the island of Patmos and the church was leaderless. They apparently searched around for a suitable replacement and they chose – Onesimus! So the runaway slave became the leader of the largest church in the world. This is a truly remarkable testimony of the value–changing power of the Gospel. Paul had perceived that this young slave had potential. Paul won him to Christ and began the process of developing him.

From some of the previous models of transformation you have studied, identify the Biblical principles, which make such a change possible. What similarities do you note between the methods Jesus used to train His disciples and Paul's methods?

14. TRANSFORMATION : THE SHARING MODEL OF THE EARLY CHURCH

14.1 Sharing in the church

14.2 Christians have made a major contribution to the philosophy of development

14.3 The Well-Being Indicators

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14.6.1 What is a community?

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14. TRANSFORMATION : THE SHARING MODEL OF THE EARLY CHURCH

14.1 Sharing in the church

From Acts to Revelation there are New Testament verses that speak about sharing:

Acts 2:42-47	Eph. 6:5-9
Acts 4:32-37	Phil. 4:10-20
Acts 6:1-7	1 Thess. 2:9
Acts 11:29-30	1 Tim. 5:1-10, 16
Rom. 12:10	1 Tim. 6:6-10
Rom. 13:30	Philemon 15-18
Rom. 15:26-27	Heb. 10:34
1 Cor. 4:8-13	James 2:14-17
1 Cor. 9:4-14	James 5:1-6
1 Cor. 10:24-26	1 Peter 2:18-20
1 Cor. 16:1-4	1 Peter 5:2-4
2 Cor. 8:1-5	1 John 3:16-18
2 Cor. 9:9-10	1 John 4:19-21
Gal. 6:9-10	3 John 5-8

This is a long list! The concern of John, Peter, Paul and the early Christians was to demonstrate their faith in acts of sharing. This was not just peripheral to the main task of evangelism and training disciples. It was a vital part of it.

Read the above passages and put them in the column below which best represents their primary message.

1. Don't accumulate wealth.	2. Support yourself.
3. Care for the poor and hungry!	4. Collect money for poor Christians.
5. Humanise roles in society.	6. Sell and distribute your possessions.

Write out a key verse in each of the six categories.

14.2 Christians have made a major contribution to the philosophy of development.

Over the last 50 years of the Twentieth Century, Christians have made many contributions to the understanding of how development work is done.

Please note the progression.

1. Christians started to respond in the form of gifts of money, clothing, food and shelter to the poor and under-developed. Often this was in the face of major crises – war, flood, and earthquake etc. We now call this **emergency relief**.

2. Next there were self-help projects where the disadvantaged are taught some skill so they can earn and become self-sufficient. We now call this **micro-enterprise development.**

3. Then came **social justice projects**. These sought to distribute resources more fairly in the community. This was politically more risky.

4. Later a structural analysis was made identifying the **"structures of sin"** as well as sinful individuals: growing opium poppies, child prostitution, child labour etc.

5. The next task was to build up **pressure in government** and worldwide organisations to challenge oppressive power elite that maintain the "structures of sin".

6. **Transformation theology** came next. This recognises the falleness of all human institutions and seeks a total renewal of society through value change. Value change begins with the church. It is now clear that church planting and giving birth to an indigenous church planting movement, is an essential part of transformation.

This **transformational model** can be set along aside three other views of development work:

- **The technological model**: This uses economic analysis and aims at growth in economic productivity. The goal is an increase in the standard of living. It uses GDP as the key indicator.
- **The socialist/communist model**: This emphasizes equality, community, social justice and social well-being.
- **The western liberal model**: This emphasizes individualism, liberty, freedom and democracy.

Which of these models characterises your NGO? Which of these 3 models – technological / socialist / liberal is the **most** "Christian" and which is the **least** "Christian"?

14.3 The Well-Being Indicators

There are at least three well-being indicators currently being used:

- **The Human Development Index** (HDI): This is a weighted average of indices for life expectancy at birth, adult literacy, average years of schooling and purchasing power adjusted to real GDP per capita.
- **Physical Quality of Life Index** (PQLI): This is a weighted average of life expectancy aged one infant mortality and adult literacy. PQLI measures the fulfilment of basic needs.

- **Basic Well-Being Index:** This adds to the PQLI index secondary school enrolment of terms of overall %.

Below is a chart of some countries we work in and the difference in WBI from 1975-1992. This gives some gross idea of rates of development. Data from the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation are excluded because they are considered inaccurate (88, 90)

Africa

	COUNTRY	1975	1992			COUNTRY	1975	1992
1	Algeria	40	66		9	Mozambique	24	30
2	Angola	22	35		10	Niger	18	31
3	Chad	21	33		11	Senegal	25	41
4	Egypt	46	67		12	Somalia	20	31
5	Libya	51	73		13	Sudan	29	39
6	Mali	18	29		14	Tunisia	45	68
7	Mauritania	22	35		15	Zimbabwe	46	61
8	Morocco	37	56		16	South Africa	52	73
Asia								
1	Afghanistan	14	27		13	Nepal	27	43
2	Bangladesh	34	40		14	Pakistan	32	44
3	Burma	48	57		15	Philippines	68	79
4	Cambodia	13	42		16	Oman	28	65
5	India	39	56		17	Saudi Arabia	38	69
6	Indonesia	46	66		18	Singapore	73	85
7	Iran	50	68		19	Sri Lanka	69	83
8	Iraq	52	63		20	Syria	54	67
9	Jordan	61	73		21	Thailand	61	72
10	Laos	27	45		22	Turkey	51	71
11	Malaysia	64	77		23	Vietnam	50	68
12	Mongolia	76	78		24	Yemen	22	44

Europe and Others

	COUNTRY	1975	1992			COUNTRY	1975	1992
1	Albania	68	83		10	Finland	90	95
2	Bulgaria	88	84		11	France	89	95
3	Romania	80	86		12	Hungary	81	87
4	Yugoslavia	80	~85		13	Norway	91	96
5	USA	91	93		14	Spain	85	95
6	Canada	91	96		15	UK	89	92

7	Mexico	63	77		16	Australia	86	91
8	Brazil	58	67		17	New Zealand	88	93
9	Argentina	76	83		18	PNG	38	52

What are the historic and contemporary reasons for the 10/40 window having such a low GNP and WBI?

What other indicators of PQLI (Physical Quality of Life Indicator) could be added?

14.4 The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer"

Throughout the 20th century the poorer countries of the 10/40 window have experienced economic under-development and political subservience. At the same time North America and Western Europe have been able to expropriate any economic surplus and maintain and increase their economic and political ascendency.

As we enter the 21st century two international systems are at work and the disparities between them are growing.

There are about 1.5 billion illiterate people in the world, yet some parts of the world are in economic lift-off due to computers. It is a scandal that 70% of children in the 10/40 window are suffering from malnutrition. Yet "the West" spends more than 25 times the per capita resources of these "poor" countries. We have the sad situation where billions of people work from morning until dusk under a baking sun for miserable rewards and a premature death. They never even discover the reasons why!

So the **"rich world"** is literate and uses computers while the **"poor world"** is largely illiterate. The "rich world" is largely urban while the "poor world" is rural. The "rich world" is consumption-orientated. The "poor world" is struggling to survive. The rich are concerned about improving their quality of life. In the poor world life is precarious with the ever present threat of disease, hunger, malnutrition, flood, drought and civil war.

Descriptions of poverty on a global scale seem remote. To personalise the problem describe the group of people who are the **poorest people you know**. Why are they poor?

Now describe the group of people who are the **richest people you know**. Why are they rich?

14.5 No needy people!

Acts 2 and 4 describe the objectives of all our development work – that there should be ***"no needy person among us"***. The early church in Jerusalem actually achieved this!

- **Note the <u>context</u>** of this amazing achievement. They were together in:
  - **Learning** – ***"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching."*** (2:42)
  - **Experiencing God's Power** – ***"Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles."*** (2:43)
  - **Worship** – ***"Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people."*** (2:46-47)
  - **Every day** – Their togetherness was not a superficial meeting at church once a week or a casual greeting in the market. It was a daily deep commitment and relationship of shared faith, shared experience, shared concerns and shared joy.

  It is in this context of being together every day that sharing of economic goods took place.

- **Note the <u>concern</u> of the people in this amazing achievement.**

  They were concerned to:
  - **Grow in faith**
  - **Enjoy community** – "***All the believers were together and had everything in common."*** (2:44)
  - **Practice sharing – *"Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need."*** (2:45)

- **Note the <u>consequences</u>**
  - **There was learning** – ***"All the believers were one in heart and mind."*** (4:32)
  - **There was equality** – ***"No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had."*** (4:32)
  - **There was justice** – ***"From time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sale and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need."*** (4:34-35)

- **Note the <u>conclusion</u>**
  - **They grew!** ***"The Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."*** (2:47)
  - **They eliminated poverty!** ***"There were no needy persons among them."*** (4:34)
- **Note the <u>challenge</u>**

The Holy Spirit prompted this expression of faith for a purpose. It was Jubilee! **It was a sign of God's answer to the economic problems of the world.** It was to be **an evidence** of God's presence and power among them. It was to be a **proof** of changed beliefs and values.

What are the signs of Christian answers to poverty today?
What structures and actions have the potential to be signs of a new way of living?
Is the goal of ***"no needy person among us"*** a priority on your team? In your home church? In the church that you are trying to plant?
What proofs do your BMBs offer of changed beliefs and values?

14.6 The importance of community

14.6.1 What is a community?

A community has been defined in many ways:

- "A group of people who live in a geographical area and have an interest in each other for the purpose of making a living."
- "A form of social organization existing between the family and the nation state."

- "A locus for social systems of a particular kind composed of interactions and social institutions which meet basic human needs and through which people have developed a sense of belonging and a potential ability to act together as an entity."
- "Some of the important characterisers of communities are:
  - Communities are close–knit entities
  - Their customs are inter-related
  - There is a discernible leadership within the community."

14.6.2 Characteristics of community

For the purposes of Christian development, a community may be defined in terms of:

- Territory
- Common interests
- Common patterns of social and economic relations
- Deriving a common bond of solidarity from the conditions of its abode.
- Having a group of social institutions
- Being subject to some degree of group control
- Recognising common leadership

Does the community you work with have all of the above characteristics or just some of them?

14.6.3 Distinctives of Christian communities

Christian communities are not different from other communities **in kind**, but in the **quality of life** they experience together. Jesus came to give us ***"abundant life"***. God acted in human history to bring into being ***"a holy nation"*** (nation here is a people group). The Holy Spirit has gifted His church to create a community of conviction and caring, of love and of sharing and of joy and hope.

So a Christian community should be marked by:

- A great degree of common belief
- A high concern for the needs of all in the group
- A strong hope for the future

Estimate the strength of these qualities in the life of your Christian group – church plant – those you are working with:

	Very weak			**Very strong**	
Belief	1	2	3	4	5
Sharing	1	2	3	4	5
Hope	1	2	3	4	5

Share the reasons for your ratings.

14.7 Deacons and development workers

Acts 6:1-7 tells us about the appointment of the first deacons. Note that they were:

- **Democratically elected**. The whole group discussed the issue, prayed about the matter and chose the ***"ones who serve"***.
- **They were men full of wisdom and the Holy Spirit**. The same qualities were expected of those who served and of those called to preach.
- **They were from the disadvantaged minority group**! The Greek–speaking widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. When the believers, predominantly Judean Jews, responded to this situation, they elected seven Hellenised Jews to be supervisors of the programme.

How does your community make appointments?

How is a deacon / one who serves / a development worker viewed in your community?

Rank the following titles according to perceived status on a scale of 1-10 (with 1 as highest status):

Field Leader, Area Coordinator, change agent, catalyst, director, teacher, educator,

assistant, activist, motivator, servant, facilitator, office worker, evangelist, team leader

What is the trust level in your development agency?

14.8 Qualities of a development worker

Traits in the Worker		Observable variables
1	Visionary	Has high ideals and hopes for his people and believes they are attainable.
2	Committed	Strong commitment to the people's cause. Ready to face the demands of his involvement.
3	Human	Acknowledges his limitations to himself and to others and struggles to live up to his ideals and values.
4	Self-Worth	Believes in himself and in people – that they are worthwhile because God has redeemed them and potentially all have much to offer.
5	Analytical	Observant and takes note of facts. Seeks to find deeper realities behind the apparent.
6	Selfless	Able to rise above petty interests. In the team makes his own interests subsidiary.
7	Co-operative	Lends a helping hand to people when they are in need. No unwanted services offered.
8	A good team ~ worker	Approachable. Reassures people. People on the team feel at home with him/her. Receptive.
9	Skilful in relationships	Knows people well and is skilled in conflict resolution.
10	A good communicator	Gets people involved in what he is saying. Encourages them to respond and even to differ. Involves members in all activities. Spontaneous. Maintains enthusiasm.
11	High endurance	Not easily discouraged. Does not compromise or give up easily. Keeps struggling.
12	Creative	Resourceful and innovative. Finds new ideas for doing things. Entrepreneurial.
13	Questioning	Questions structures and systems. Not easily satisfied with traditional answers. Searches for viable alternatives.
14	Non-dogmatic	Resourceful and suggestive, but does not impose his own ideas. Does not argue all the time about what his point is. Listens to what others have to say.

Add any other qualities you believe a Christian development worker needs?

14.9 The role of a community organiser

UNHCR lists 78 functions for a community development worker! However they can be summarised in four main roles.

1. **Guide**
2. **Enabler**
3. **Expert**
4. **Social Therapist**

We will look at these in detail. Homework largely consists of establishing a Biblical basis for these categories.

14.9.1 The role of a guide

Usually this is the primary role of a Christian development worker. The guide helps the community to organise their problems and achieve their goals. The guide should try and be objective. He should not enforce his ideas, but should help people to understand, get involved and decide for themselves what they should do. The guide can do this by:

- Encouraging local initiative. He must not be passive, but must stimulate discontent with the status quo and generate hope for a better future.
- Maintaining objectivity to accept the community as it is.
- Identification with the community **as a whole** and not just with part of the community. Establishing good relations with the leaders of the community and promoting co-operative decision making.
- Acceptance of the role of a guide. If he/she feels incapable of guiding the community, it is better never to start.
- Interpretation of the role of **guide** to the community. He should constantly remind them he/she is not the leader.

14.9.2 The role of an enabler – empowerment

The enabler should facilitate the process of getting the community organised to start and maintain a project. He does this by focussing the discontent of the present status quo. This requires patience. He has to help the community **verbalise** their deep and hidden feelings of discontent. It takes time with individuals and with groups. The enabler should be able to differentiate between personal problems and social/community problems. The main problem of most communities is apathy and passivity.

The enabler must encourage the community to rise up and get organised to tackle the problem. This is often a slow and painful process because of the apathy of the people. It requires lots of communication. The community will only participate in a project when each person feels that he/she will gain a personal advantage from the project. To achieve this he has to become **a friend** to the community. He should be warm and sensitive to the feelings of people, constantly encouraging them to verbalise their needs.

14.9.3 The role of the expert

The community organiser ought to have at least some expertise in:

- Community diagnosis
- Research skills and conducting surveys
- Technical information
- Advice on methods
- Evaluation

An “expert” should be able to diagnose the problems of a community and help the people be aware of these problems. He should have basic research/survey skills that enable him to understand thoroughly

how his community works and interacts. This understanding can be matched with similar communities. He should be able to advise and educate the community leaders on various strategies to improve the situation. He should be up-to-date on various technical issues or at least know how to get the information quickly. At regular intervals he should see that there is evaluation of the project and constant improvement within the community.

14.9.4 A social therapist's role

This role implies the ability to diagnose problems and then treat the whole community. To some extent this will cover the whole range of **'pathology'** in the community:

- Medical and health needs
- Agricultural and animal husbandry
- Transport of food and preserving food supplies
- Water supply
- Sewerage etc.
- The psychological forces at work

The social therapist's diagnosis must provide the community with some understanding of its nature and character.

His treatment – therapy – must involve the whole community. It should result in self-understanding, released tension and the removal of other road blocks so the whole community is enabled to work co-operatively. The therapy probably starts with individuals and then moves to the whole community.

What roles does your development project play in the local community?

What role do you play?

14.10 The collection for the poor

We often think of Paul as a great missionary evangelist and church planter. We do not often think of Paul as a fundraiser and a community worker. Yet the most frequent texts in the New Testament about sharing, relate to his efforts to involve the Gentile churches in Greece and Turkey in providing for the needs of the poor Jewish church in Jerusalem.

Note the verses from the list of Scripture passages at the beginning of this study that make the points below.

The occasion was a famine _____

The example of Jesus who though rich became poor for our sakes _____

The gift though substantial was only expected to be temporary _____

The rationale was that in the Christian community the need of one group placed an obligation on other groups to help _____

The expectation was that help would be reciprocal _____

How would your church, either at home or where your project is, respond to Paul's appeal? (**√** your answer)

Possible responses		**My church HAS**	**My church COULD**
1	An extra collection for an emergency need		
2	Continuing support for a poorer church		
3	Appointment of a social worker		
4	Research into needs of people in your area		
5	Tithe the church budget and give to the poor		
6	Bring goods to the church and share them		

15. TRANSFORMATION : RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EVANGELISM AND SOCIAL ACTION

15.1 The understanding that salvation includes social action

15.2 Three kinds of relationship between evangelism and social action

15.2.1 Social activity as a consequence of evangelism

15.2.2 Social activity as a bridge to evangelism

15.2.3 Social activity that partners the Gospel

15.3 Which is more important – evangelism or social action?

15.4 A theological attempt to integrate evangelism and social action

15.5 What is the "Good News" in the Gospel?

15.6 Fully integrated mission

15.7 Rene Padilla in "The Mission of the Church in the Light of the Kingdom of God" (1984)

15.8 Ronald Sider's four conflicting viewpoints

15.9 Final questions

15. TRANSFORMATION : RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EVANGELISM AND SOCIAL ACTION (The New Testament "salvation" model)

We will begin this study with a number of statements that have been made bringing together evangelism and social action. We will begin with the paragraph in **Christian Social Responsibility** in the Lausanne Covenant (1974). Then we will look at how these relationships have been further developed by others. This will help us identify emerging convictions.

There is not much Bible Study in this section, but, if you have done the previous fourteen studies, I hope you will see what late 20th century missiologists have tried to describe as a Biblical synthesis of evangelism and social action.

15.1 The understanding that salvation includes social action

The Lausanne Covenant (1974) (largely written by John Stott)

Christian Social Responsibility

We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all men. We therefore should share His concern for both **justice** and **reconciliation** throughout human society and for the **liberation** of men from every kind of oppression. Because mankind is made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, colour, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity, because of which, he should be respected and served, not exploited. Here too we express penitence both for our neglect and for having sometimes regarded evangelism and **social** concern as mutually exclusive. Although reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and **socio-political** involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbour and our obedience to Jesus Christ. The message of salvation implies also a message of judgment upon every form of **alienation, oppression, and discrimination**. We should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist. When people receive Christ they are born again into His Kingdom and must seek not only to exhibit, but also to spread its **righteousness** in the midst of an unrighteous world. The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and **social responsibilities**. Faith without works is dead."

Note: there are many descriptions of social involvement in society – social concern, social responsibilities etc. Other social terms are used. Give a definition of:

Justice: _____

Reconciliation: _____

Liberation: _____

Alienation: _____

Oppression: _____

Discrimination: _____

Righteousness: _____

15.2 Three Kinds of Relationship between Evangelism and Social Action

Since Lausanne I in 1974, others have tried to define 3 different possible relationships between evangelism and social action:

i. **Social activity as a consequence of evangelism** (i.e. after)

ii. **Social activity as a bridge to evangelism** (i.e. before)

iii. **Social activity as a partner with evangelism** (i.e. during)

15.2.1 Social activity as a consequence of evangelism

Evangelism is the means by which God brings people to new birth and their new life begins to demonstrate itself in service to others. Paul wrote, "***Faith works through love."*** (Gal. 5:6) James wrote, ***"I will show you my faith by my works"*** (James 2:18), and John wrote that God's love within us will overflow in serving our needy brothers and sisters. (1 John 2:16-18)

Over a hundred years ago Robert E. Speer of the SUM wrote about the Gospel:

"Wherever it goes, it plants in the hearts of men forces that produce new lives; it plants in communities of men forces that create new social combinations."

This force is often called "**redemption lift**". It lifts individuals, and sometimes whole communities, out of degradation.

Often the problem is that the new believers are so poor that if help is not given **early**, redemption lift does not happen. The best way to help new believers is usually through micro-enterprise development along with teaching about the theology of work.

We can move beyond this statement that social action should be a consequence of evangelism. We can state that one of the principle aims of evangelism is redemption lift. Christ gave Himself for us, not only "***to redeem us from all iniquity"*** but also ***"to purify for Himself a people of His own who are zealous for good deeds."*** (Titus 2:14) Through the Gospel we are ***"created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them"*** (Eph. 2:10)

We are not claiming that compassionate service leading to "redemption lift" is an **automatic** consequence of conversion. Sadly it is not. The major Marxist criticism of religion is that historically it has not given a "redemption lift" to the masses. Why? A possible reason is that this has not been **taught** in the regular teaching ministry to new believers. Also the **Pharisee Factor** (the difference between what we teach and the way we actually live) has loomed large in evangelicalism.

15.2.2 Social activity as a bridge to evangelism

Social concern can break down prejudice and suspicion, open closed doors and gain a hearing for the Gospel. Jesus often performed a work of mercy (a miracle) **before** proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom. There is a huge amount of evidence in missions that this works.

Here is one example among thousands. The construction of a series of dams by Swiss Christian workers in Northern (Muslim) Ghana opened the way for the Gospel to spread in that area.

Medical, agricultural, nutritional, educational and vocational training has had a similar effect in many places.

Even in a poor inner city area in London, a local church set up a series of laundromats which it owns and runs 24 hours a day. Commercial laundromats have largely gone out of business due to vandalism and the cost of keeping staff on the premises all the time. So the church stepped in to provide a greatly needed social service. Two trained volunteer evangelists man each laundromat all the time in relays. The church reports that this has been one of its most successful "bridges" to evangelism.

Why is this so? By seeking to serve people, it is possible to move from their "felt needs" to their deeper need concerning their relationship with God. If we turn a blind eye to the suffering, the social

oppression, the alienation and the loneliness of people, we should not be surprised if they turn a deaf ear to our message of eternal salvation!

There is the danger of making "rice Christians" – that is obtaining apparent converts only because of the physical benefits we offer. But we have to take this risk. As long as we retain our own integrity and serve people out of genuine love and not with an ulterior motive, **then our actions will not be bribes but bridges!**

15.2.3 Social activity that partners the Gospel

Like the two blades of a pair of scissors or the two wings of a bird, social activity and the Gospel go together. One without the other just does not work. Both are indispensable.

This partnership is clearly seen in the public ministry of the Lord Jesus. He not only preached the Gospel, He fed the hungry and healed the sick. In His ministry, *kerygma* (proclamation) and *diakonia* (service) went together. His words explained His works and His works dramatized His words. His compassion for people was expressed both in words and works. Both words and works are rooted in the Lordship of Jesus. He sends us out into the world **to preach and to serve**. If we proclaim the Good News of God's love, we must demonstrate His love in caring for the needy. The two parts of the scissors are both essential. We must be involved in proclamation **and** service.

This is not to say that they are the same. Evangelism is **not** social activity and social activity is not evangelism, but both are needed. To proclaim that Jesus is both Lord and Saviour (evangelism) has enormous **social** implications. It summons people to repent not only from their personal sins, but from their social sins as well. It is a call to live a new life of righteousness and peace in a new community that will almost certainly challenge the old.

To give food to refugees or internally displaced people (social activity) has **evangelistic dimensions**, since good works of love done in the name of Jesus are a demonstration and a commendation of the Gospel. Evangelism, even when the primarily intention is not social, **does have a social dimension**. So evangelism and social action, while distinct from each other, are integrally related in our proclamation of and obedience to the Gospel. This partnership is, in reality, a marriage!

Give examples in your Field/ministry – if possible from your own experience – for these three types of relationship.

Consequence:

Bridge:

Partner:

15.3 Which is more important – Evangelism or Social Action?

The Lausanne Covenant (Paragraph 6) states, **"In the church's mission of sacrificial service, evangelism is primary".**

There are two reasons for this:

- **Evangelism relates to people's eternal destiny and in bringing people the Good News of salvation Christians are doing what nobody else can do!** Very rarely should we even be in a position where we have to choose between satisfying a physical hunger and a spiritual hunger or between healing bodies and saving souls. An authentic love for our neighbour will cause us to serve him or her as a whole person. If we do have to choose, then we must say that **the supreme and ultimate need of all people is the saving grace of Jesus Christ**. Therefore a person's external, spiritual salvation is of greater importance than his/her temporal and material well-being. (2 Cor. 4:16-18)

  A LCOWE Conference in Thailand on this issue said the following:

  > **"Of all the tragic needs of human beings none is greater than their alienation from their Creator and the terrible reality of eternal death for those who refuse to repent and believe."**

  Usually this choice is conceptual (often as a result of our dichotomistic western thinking) rather than real. It must not make us indifferent to the degradations of human poverty and oppression. As we see in the public ministry of Jesus, **the two are inseparable in practice** – at least in open societies. They do not compete with each other. They mutually support and strengthen each other in an upward spiral of increasing concern for both.

- **There is logical reason why evangelism should take priority**. Christian social action presupposes socially responsible Christians and it can only be as a result of evangelism and good discipling that there are any such people! If social activity is the aim of evangelism then evangelism must precede it.

Does your team recognize this priority?

How would you rate your team's **motivation and involvement** in evangelism/social action?

	Very high	Moderate	Very low
Evangelism	├----------	----------	----------┤
Social Action	├----------	----------	----------┤

15.4 A theological attempt to integrate evangelism and social action

Below is an "Ecumenical Affirmation" (1982) on this issue. What do you think of it?

Note the intermingling of spiritual and social conditions.

> **"The Biblical promise of a new earth and a new heaven where love, peace, and justice will prevail** (Ps. 85:7-13, Is. 32:17-18; 65:17-25; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:1-2) **invites our actions as Christians in history. The contrast of that vision with the reality of today reveals the monstrosity of human sin and the evil unleashed by the rejection of God's liberating will for mankind. Sin, alienating persons from God, neighbour and nature, is found both in individual**

and corporate forms, both in slavery of the human will and in social, political and economic structures of domination and dependence.

"The Church is sent into the world to call people and nations to repentance, to announce forgiveness of sin and a new beginning in relations with God and with neighbours through Jesus Christ. This evangelistic calling has a new urgency today.

"In the world, where the number of people who have no opportunity to know the story of Jesus is growing steadily, how necessary it is to multiply the witnessing vocation of the church!"

"In a world where the majority of those who do not know Jesus are the poor of the earth, those to whom he promised the Kingdom of God, how essential it is to share with them the Good News of that Kingdom.

In a world where people are struggling for justice, freedom and liberation, often without the realization of their hopes, how important it is to announce that God's Kingdom is promised to them!

"In a world where the marginalized and the drop-outs of affluent society search desperately for comfort and identity in drugs or esoteric cults, how imperative it is to announce that He (Jesus) has come so that all may have life and may have it in all its fullness. (Jn. 10:10)

"In a world where so many find little meaning, except in the relative security of their affluence, how necessary it is to hear once again Jesus' invitation to discipleship, service and risk!"

"In a world where so many Christians are nominal in their commitment to Jesus Christ, how necessary it is to call them again to the fervour of their first love!"

" In a world where wars and rumours of war jeopardize the present and future of humankind, where an enormous part of natural resources and people are consumed in military build-up, how crucial it is to call the peace-makers blessed, convinced that God in Christ has broken all barriers and has reconciled the world to Himself." (Eph. 2:14; 2 Cor. 5:19)

In this text there are **seven** descriptions of the world today. Some of these describe the spiritual condition of people and some describe the social condition. Which would you put in which category?

Spiritual:

Social:

Both:

Many would say that evangelism (dealing with a person's' spiritual condition) and social action (dealing with his/her social condition) are separate and distinguishable. The above statement challenges this distinction. Why?

15.5 What is the "Good News" in the Gospel?

In **Evangelism and the Poor,** Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden say that the Gospel has **three** inseparable components without which it ceases to be "good news".

- **The Gospel is centred on Jesus Christ – the Incarnate Lord.**

  In Jesus and through His life, death and resurrection, **God is bringing about the restoration of man's relationship** with God, with other people in society and with the whole of creation.

- **The Gospel, as announced and demonstrated by Jesus in His words and actions, is the Gospel of the Kingdom**. The Gospel is the good news of God's kingly activity centred in Christ. This activity was evidenced and witnessed to in the Old Testament.

  - God's rule in history (not just OT history) judges all evil which alienates people from God and spoils God's original intention of wholeness for people and the creation.
  - God's judgment is a servant of His grace in bringing about the reconciliation of people to God and the restoration of God's original purpose of wholeness.

  This means that the Good News of the Kingdom is not **just a message**. It is news that the kingly rule of God is **now present** and is bringing judgment on evil. It is **now restoring** His creation. This kingly rule of God will culminate at the second coming of Christ in the full and final restoration of peoples, society, nature and the cosmos in a new heaven and a new earth.

- **Jesus especially linked the Good News with the poor**

  Those to whom He announced the Good News and **the way** He announced it to them were as important as the content of the Good News. He described the Gospel as especially Good News for the poor. It had special relevance to them. Jesus announced, demonstrated and implemented the Good News by identification and solidarity with the poor.

Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden are here emphasising two concepts not highlighted in the previous statements:

- **The Kingdom of God**
- **The priority of the poor**

How would you define these terms?

The Kingdom of God is: _____

_____

_____

The poor are: _____

_____

15.6 Fully Integrated Mission.

In '83 there was a conference in Wheaton Illinois on **"The Church in Response to Human Need."** It made the following statement:

"We are challenged to commit ourselves to a truly vigorous and full-orbed mission to the world, combining explosive creativity with painstaking faithfulness in small things. Our mission and vision are to be nurtured by the whole counsel of God (2 Tim. 3:16)**. A repentant, revived and vigorous church will call people to true repentance and faith and at the same time equip them to challenge the forces of evil and injustice** (2 Tim. 3:17)**. We thus move forward, without either relegating salvation merely to an eternal future or making it synonymous with a political or social dispensation to be achieved in the here and now. The Holy Spirit empowers us to serve and proclaim Him who has been raised from the dead, seated at the right hand of the Father and given to the church as Head over all things in heaven and on earth.** (Eph. 1:10, 20-22)

This statement contains an emphasis on:

- The Church
- Repentance and faith
- Forces of evil and injustice

Salvation is not _____

_____

Salvation is _____

_____

What vision do you have of the future? Will society get better and better or will it get worse? _____

_____

_____

What is the teaching of the Bible? _____

_____

15.7 Rene Padilla in "The Mission of the Church in the Light of the Kingdom of God" (1984)

Rene Padilla sees the Kingdom of God as the **integrating concept** for both evangelism and social responsibility. He concludes with four very powerful statements. Do you agree with him?

- **"Both evangelism and social responsibility can only be understood in the light of the fact that in Jesus Christ, the Kingdom of God has invaded history and is now both a present reality and a future hope – an "already" and a "not yet".**

  Accordingly, the Kingdom of God is neither "the progressive social improvement of mankind whereby the task of the Church is to transform earth into heaven and to do it now", nor "the present inner rule of God in the moral and spiritual dispositions of the soul with its seat in the heart." It is rather, God's redemptive power released in history bringing Good News to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, sight to the blind, and liberation for the oppressed.

- **Evangelism and social responsibility are inseparable. The Gospel is good news concerning the Kingdom of God. Good works are, on the other hand, the signs of the Kingdom, for which we are created in Christ Jesus. Both word and deed are inextricably united in the mission of Jesus and His apostles and both must continue to be held together in the mission of the church. The Kingdom of God is not merely God's rule over the world through creation and providence (in which case it could never be regarded as inaugurated by Jesus Christ). It is God's ultimate kingship over creation, which is in anticipation of the end and is now becoming present in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Both the proclamation and the visible signs through the church are brought about by the power of the Spirit – the agent of eschatology in the process of realisation – and point to the Kingdom which has come and is yet to come.**

  The widest and deepest human need is a personal encounter with Jesus Christ through whom the Kingdom is mediated*. "The same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on Him, for 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved'"* (Rom. 10:12, 13)**. From this perspective, and this perspective only, "In the church's mission of sacrificial service – evangelism is primary" (Lausanne Covenant). The Gospel must be proclaimed diligently. But the Gospel is good news concerning the Kingdom and the Kingdom is God's rule over the totality of life. Every human need, therefore, may be used by the Spirit of God as a beachhead for the demonstration of His Kingly power. That is why, in actual practice, the question as to what comes first, evangelism or social action, is irrelevant. In every concrete situation the needs themselves provide the guidelines for the definition of priorities.**

  As long as both evangelism and social responsibility are regarded as essential to mission, we need no rule of thumb to tell us which comes first and when. On the other level, if they are not seen as essential, the effort to understand the relationship between them is a useless academic exercise. It would be as useless as an effort to understand the relationship between the right wing and left wing of an aeroplane, when one believes that the aeroplane can fly with only one wing. And who can deny that the best way to understand the relationship between the two wings of an aeroplane is by actually flying it, rather than by theorizing about it?

- **The Church is called to demonstrate the Kingdom of God here and now, in what she is, as well as in what she proclaims. Because the Kingdom of God has already come and is yet to come, the "between the times" church is both an eschatological and a historical reality. If she does not fully demonstrate the Kingdom, that is not because God's dynamic reign has invaded the present age 'without the authority or the power of transforming it into the age to come', but because the consummation has not yet arrived.**

  The power which is active in the church is like the working of God's mighty strength, *"Which He exerted in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given not only in the present age but also in the one to come"* (Eph. 1:20, 21)**. The mission of the church is the historical demonstration of that power through word and deed, in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

- **Because of His death and resurrection, Jesus Christ has been enthroned as Lord of the Universe. The whole world, therefore, has been placed under His Lordship. The church anticipates the destiny of all mankind. Between the times therefore, the community that confesses Jesus as Lord and through Him acknowledges God as "both the Creator and the Judge of all men", is called to "share His concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men from every kind of oppression." (Lausanne Covenant) Commitment to Jesus Christ is commitment to Him as the Lord of the Universe, the King before whom every knee will bow – the final destiny of human history. But the consummation of God's Kingdom is God's work.**

W. Pannenburg said this:

"The Kingdom of God will not be established by man. It is most emphatically the Kingdom of God. Man is not to be exalted but degraded when he falls victim to illusions about his power."

Discuss as a team these four points. Are they valid? Is the concept of the Kingdom of God the integrating factor between evangelism and social action?

15.8 Ronald Sider's four conflicting viewpoints

Ronald Sider outlines four conflicting viewpoints that some Christians seem to hold.

- Evangelism is the primary mission of the church. From this perspective the Gospel is individualistic. The social ministry is a response of the regenerate, but entirely distinct from evangelism.
- The primary mission of the church is the expansion of the corporate body of the believers. By their deeds, words and life together, Christians announce the Good News that it is now possible to live in a new society – the visible body of believers – where all relationships are being transformed. The church incarnates the values of the new age in its personal, economic and social relationships.
- The conversion of individuals and the political restructuring of society are equally important parts of evangelism and salvation. Evangelism may be directed to groups, to power structures and to cultural configurations of persons as well as to individuals.
- Evangelism is politics because salvation is social justice. In this view, salvation and social justice are equated. Salvation is humanisation.

Ronald Sider thinks that evangelism and social action are inseparable, distinct and equally important dimensions of the total task of the church.

Which of the four positions would you support as the most Biblical and why?

Divide up your team into four groups and present arguments for each position to the whole group.

15.9 Final Questions

Imagine you are asked to give an account of your views on salvation and social action.

How would you respond to the following questions?

Salvation – from what?

Through what?

For what?

Social Action: for what purpose?

With what motivation?

Conclusion:

The questions I still want to ask are:

16. TRANSFORMATION : A NEW MODEL OF LEADERSHIP & SPIRITUAL GIFTS

16.1 Challenging the hierarchical pattern of leadership

16.2 An alternative leadership style

16.3 Everyone contributing

16.4 Spiritual gifts

16.5 Other gifts and abilities

16.6 The nature of the Community of the Kingdom

16.7 Community needs

16.8 Kingdom goals

16. TRANSFORMATION : A NEW MODEL OF LEADERSHIP & SPIRITUAL GIFTS

16.1 Challenging the hierarchical pattern of leadership

Jesus and the Pharisees were in constant conflict. The reason for this was usually the self-centredness and bigotry of the Pharisees. But another reason was that Jesus challenged their style of leadership. He provoked their bitter reactions by His confrontational approach. The issue centred around their concentration on status and their hierarchical concept of leadership. Jesus called them to redefine their role and to open themselves to a new understanding of their God-given responsibilities. Like the kings and priests of the Old Testament they were appointed to be **shepherds.** (Ezek. 9) In the first century A.D. they were failing dismally in this role. They were "lording" it over people. They were concerned more for their own interests, positions and status, than for the welfare of the people.

The Pharisaical understanding and practice of religion oppressed the poor in particular. This was because they could not hope to keep all the demands of the law – not the law given to Moses, but all the additions added on over the centuries.

The Gentiles, too, were excluded from worshipping God in the temple. This was because the courtyard of the temple was filled with traders and their wares. It was impossible to pray there.

Read Ezek. 34 and Mt. 23 and list the failures of Israel's religious/political leaders.

16.2 An alternative leadership style

The Ezekiel and Matthew passages don't just condemn the negative patterns of the hierarchical leadership they observed around them. They also suggest what true leadership is.

	Reference
Caring for people	_____
Strengthening the weak	_____
Healing the sick and crippled	_____
Providing the cost of a home for the homeless	_____
Guaranteeing justice	_____
Protecting the weak	_____
Establishing peace and ending oppression	_____
Treating all as equals	_____
Serving others	_____
Distinguishing priorities	_____
Concentrating on justice, mercy and faith	_____

16.3 Everyone contributing:

In contrast to the pattern of leadership exemplified by the Pharisees and others, Jesus taught and modelled two alternative models of leadership:

- **Servant leadership**
- **Everyone contributing in the area of their spiritual gift/s**

The reality is that **everyone** can contribute in **both** areas. The simple servant tasks of washing the feet of a guest, providing hospitality, advice and care are ministries all can be involved in. Similarly, Scripture emphasizes that ***"Every Christian has been given a spiritual gift"*** 1 Pet. 4:10.

Does your team, the church that sent you out and the church you are seeking to plant and strengthen recognize the gifts of each member and encourage them to develop their gifts?

16.4 Spiritual gifts

In the New Testament a great variety of spiritual gifts are listed. These have been grouped together into three basic categories.

- **The ability to communicate:**
  - **Word of Wisdom**: (*logos sophias*) 1 Cor. 12:3 – ability to express spiritual truth
  - **Word of Knowledge**: (*logos gnoseos*) 1 Cor. 12:8 – ability to express understanding
  - **Prophecy**: 1 Cor. 12:10 – ability to declare God's message with relevance to a given situation
  - **Exhortation**: (*paraklesis* – encouragement) Rom. 12:8 – ability to encourage and stimulate spiritual growth
  - **Speaking**: (*loleo*) 1 Pet. 4:11 – ability to **verbally** give the Word of God (in contrast to writing)
  - **Evangelist**: (*evangelistes* – a messenger of Good News) Eph. 4:11 – ability to share the Gospel effectively – either personally or in public meetings
  - **Apostle**: (*apostolos* – a sent one) Eph. 4:11. The definition of a present-day apostle would be someone with the ability to **pioneer** a new work (church planting movement)
- **The ability to do something for the Body:**
  - **Service**: (*diakonia*) Rom. 12:7 – ability in practical areas
  - **Pastor**: (*poimen*-shepherd) Eph. 4:11 – caring for the spiritual well-being of others
  - **Giving**: (*metadidomi* – give a share of) Rom. 12:8 – ability to contribute **wisely**
  - **Ruling**: (*proistomi* – to stand before) Rom. 12:8 – leadership ability

- **Acts of Mercy**: (*eleeo* – feel sympathy) Rom. 12:8 – ability to comfort, sustain, help in time of need
- **Faith**: (*pistis* – trust involving commitment) 1 Cor. 12:9 – ability to exercise creative faith for God's supply – spiritual and material
- **Helping**: (*antilempsis* – taking hold of, supporting) 1 Cor. 12:28 – ability to assist others
- **Administration**: (*kupernesis* – guidance/steering) 1 Cor. 12:28 – ability to organise/plan

➢ **The ability to demonstrate God's power in signs and wonders**

- **Healing**: (*iaomai* – effect a cure) 1 Cor. 12:8 – being a channel for God's power to heal others
- **Miracles**: (*dunamis* – power) 1 Cor. 12:10 – ability to trust God for an indication of His supernatural power
- **Discerning of spirits**: (*diakrisis pneumation*) 1 Cor. 12:10 – ability to discern spirits
- **Tongues**: (*gene glossan* – kinds of tongues) 1 Cor. 12:10 – ability to express praise to God in an unknown language
- **Interpretation of tongues**: (*hermeneia glosson*) 1 Cor. 12:10 – ability to discern spirits
- **Singleness**: 1 Cor. 7:1-11
- **Martyrdom**: 1 Cor. 13:3 – dying for the cause of the Kingdom. A gift only used once – one that cannot be practiced!

Fill out the chart below using the following key.

√√ Used a lot
√ Used sometimes
X not used
? Any gift you do not understand
! Any gift you do not agree with
• Any gift you think no longer applies in the twenty-first-century

	The Spiritual Gift	**Your Home Church**	**Your Current Team**	**Yourself**
1	Word of Wisdom			
2	Word of Knowledge			
3	Prophecy			
4	Teaching			
5	Exhortation			
6	Speaking			
7	Evangelist			
8	Apostle			
9	Service			
10	Pastor			
11	Giving			
12	Ruling			
13	Acts of Mercy			

14	Faith			
15	Helping			
16	Administration			
17.	Healing			
18.	Miracles			
19.	Discerning Spirits			
20.	Tongues			
21.	Interpret. of Tongues			
22.	Singleness			
23.	Martyrdom			

Which gifts are most necessary for these tasks in the church and in the community?

Minister of the Church:

_____

Community Worker:

_____

Politician:

_____

Youth Leader:

_____

Employer/Landowner:

_____

School Teacher:

_____

Member Care Personnel:

16.5 Other gifts and abilities

There seems to be no good reason to believe that the above New Testament list is exhaustive – i.e. there are no other gifts and abilities. Other gifts and abilities are needed in the church and in the community.

- The ability to learn languages!
- Counselling
- Accounting
- Intercession – the ministry of prayer
- Musical talent – and the gift of leading worship

Suggest other gifts and abilities that God has given to you or to people you know or know of:

Paul sums up the New Testament teaching on gifts with these categories.

- There are different kinds of **gifts** (*charismata*) – 1 Cor. 12:4
- There are different types of **service** (*diakonia*) – 1 Cor. 12:5
- There are different ways of **working** (*energemata*) – 1 Cor. 12:6

The overwhelming evidence of the New Testament is that **everyone** was encouraged to contribute to the life of the Kingdom Community by using their spiritual gifts and abilities. They did this joyfully and effectively.

16.6 The nature of the Community of the Kingdom

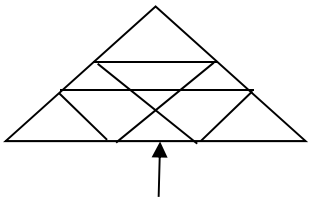
People have pictured the church and the Community of the Kingdom in various ways. Here are some of these ways:

- **A body**: Individuals are like the cells in the body. The same life sustains all the cells. The cells may be very different from each other – serving different functions. All the different cells are important. If one hurts all feel the pain.

- **A beehive**: Each comb is built on a previous layer. All are built on the same foundation. There is only one entrance to the hive. Different bees have different functions.

- **An atom**: There is one nucleus. All electrons are bound to the nucleus by electrostatic forces. All electrons are the same. Atoms are dynamic and not static. Atoms (except the inert gases) are incomplete and form bonds in order to be complete.

- **A triangle of cords:**



Chief "cornerstone"

It has to have symmetry.
All units are part of **adjoining** units.
If an individual is not **linked** to the community, he will be flat on his face – and the community will be incomplete.
Christ is "the cornerstone".

All these pictures have some strengths and weaknesses.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Body:		
Beehive:		
Atom		
Triangle		

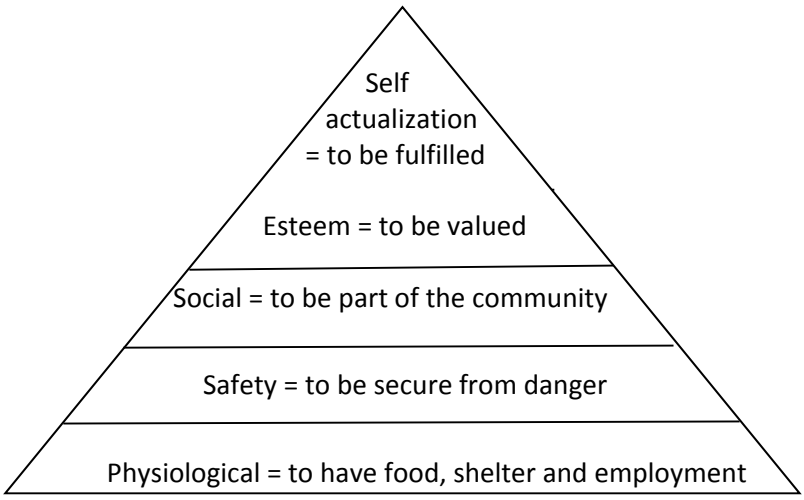
Can you come up with a better model of the Church Community?

16.7 Community needs

We need to link the discussion of gifts to community building and in particular to the needs of individuals and sub-groups within the community.

Maslow gave a classic definition of needs when he suggested the needs for a hierarchy or pyramid. Lower order needs must be predominantly satisfied before higher level needs are experienced. At any point in time, the need being experienced will provide motivation for its satisfaction.

Maslow's Pyramid of Needs was:



Can this be applied to church-planting situations? Is this one of the reasons why church-planting is sometimes so slow? Perhaps we are aiming as meeting the esteem level of needs – when the new believers are feeling huge physiological needs?

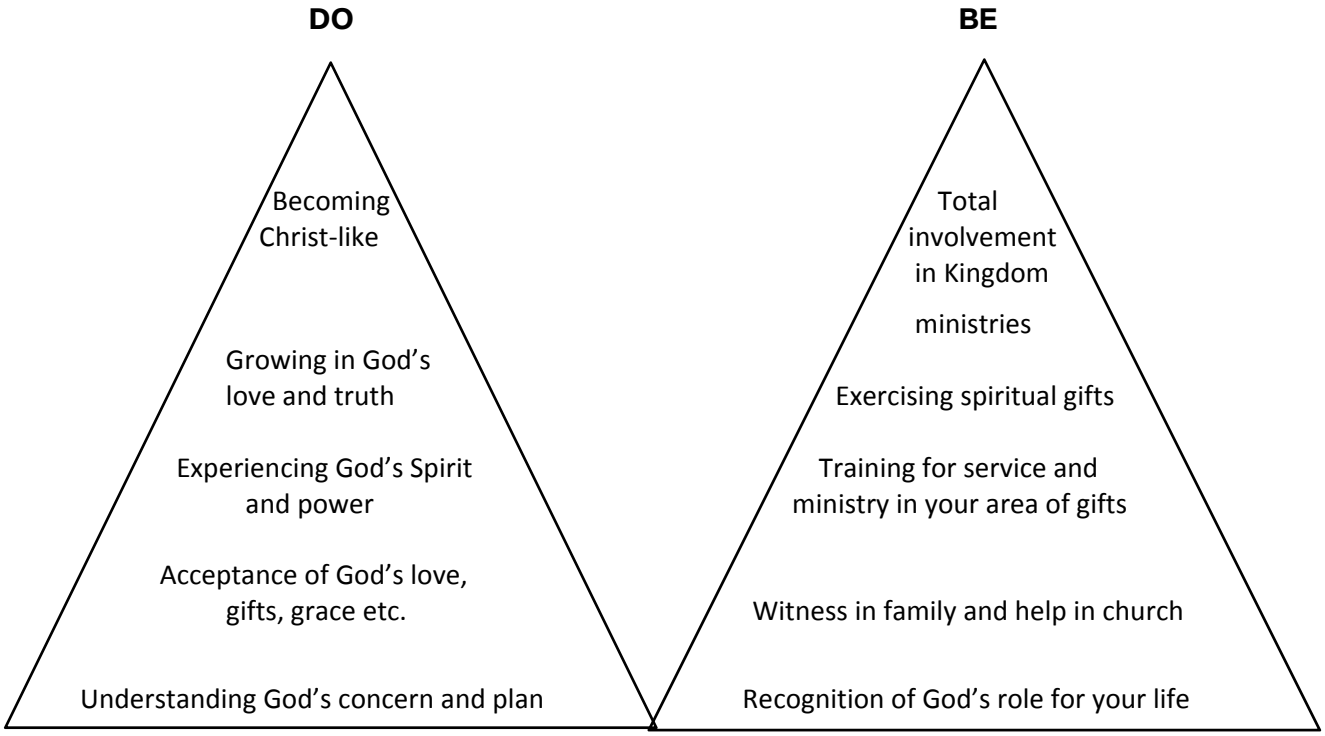
List specific illustrations for each level. Draw a line where your church plant has reached on this scale.

16.8 Kingdom goals

If we are to construct a Maslow–type list of the development stages in realising the goals of the Kingdom we should probably divide it into two halves – what we should **be** and what we should **do**.

Every Christian is a son or daughter of the Father, an heir and a citizen of the Kingdom. Every Christian is called to be an active co-worker with God and a builder in His Kingdom. If the gifts of the Spirit are the main tools with which we build and the work of the Spirit in our lives is the power through which

we become a 'new creation' reflecting the likeness of Christ, we should be able to link the gifts to the stages of growth and effectiveness in mission.



Being a citizen of the kingdom (Christian growth pyramid)	**Doing the work of the kingdom** (Christian mission pyramid)

Every Christian is a son or daughter of the Father, an heir and a citizen of the Kingdom. Every Christian is called to be an active co-worker with God and a builder of His Kingdom. If the gifts of the Spirit are the main tools with which we build and the work of the Spirit in our lives is the power through which we become a 'new creation' reflecting the likeness of Christ, we should be able to link the gifts to the stages of growth and effectiveness in mission.

Are the above pyramids sufficient? Can you construct another model?

If the gifts of the Spirit are exercised by all, then there may be a danger of anarchy with no recognised leadership or authority. Have you seen this danger? The New Testament stresses that all the gifts are to be used with humility and love. In using the gifts we must aim at unity and mutual up bringing!

17. TRANSFORMATION : THE MISSION MODEL (Paul's strategy to reach cities)

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17.6.1 The principle of materialism

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17.6.4 The principle of hope

17.7 Our mission strategy in reaching cities

17.7.1 Major hindrances

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17.7.3 Use existing networks

17.7.3.1 The biological network

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17.7.3.3 The vocational network

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17.7.4.3 Slums

17.8 Postscript – City Profile Questionnaire

17. TRANSFORMATION : THE MISSION MODEL (Paul's strategy to reach cities)

17.1 Paul the strategist

Paul was a missiologist – a master mission strategist. Before he became a Christian, he gathered information, exerted authority, built an image, travelled the country and exercised influence in an effort to stamp out Christianity. He saw Christianity as a new blasphemous sect in danger of corrupting Judaism. It was no fault of his that his strategy failed! God had other plans for Paul and other plans for the world. He wanted both changed! So from being a great persecutor of Christians, Paul became – in his generation – the greatest spreader of Christianity. The Holy Spirit has highlighted his strategy of mission as the model of mission for all time – especially in relation to cities.

17.2 Defining terms

There are a couple of terms that need defining – mission and strategy:

17.2.1 Mission:

In **The Gospel for the Cities**, Benjamin Tonna writes**, "Mission means primarily something to be done"**. The "something" that Jesus said "needed to be done" was for **salvation to be offered to all peoples everywhere**. This process must be repeated for every generation in every different people group and tribe everywhere.

Mission involves **sending**. This process has several links:

God the Father sent Jesus the Son.

The Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, through the church, sends out workers.

There are three distinct 'groups' involved in mission.

- **The initiator of the mission of salvation is God**. It is not a human plan. The plan comes from the Trinity. It was conceived in the mind of God before Creation. It was motivated by His love. It was inaugurated by Jesus in the incarnation. It is empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- **The church – the body of believers with Christ at its head**. The church is a fusion of the divine and human. The mandate of the Church is to reach out to those who live in its own culture (Jerusalem and Judea) and to those who live in other cultures in which the Gospel is not yet heard, understood or accepted (Samaria and the ends of the earth).
- **The 'ethne'**: Matthew refers to these intended recipients of the Gospel as 'ethne' – which means neither nation states nor individuals but "peoples" or "people groups". We are to disciple people groups.

17.2.2 Strategy:

This is defined in the dictionary as:

- **"a plan for achieving some purpose or end".**
- **"skill in managing or planning"**

So strategy is both **a plan of action and the implementation of the plan.**

Paul's goal – his mission – was to reach the world with the news that God was offering salvation to all in Christ. His strategy was to travel to the major cities of the Roman Empire and to preach the Gospel at every opportunity. To do this he used the trading and tourist networks to spread the Gospel, to plant churches and to place them under indigenous leadership. He wrote to all the churches to instruct

them and encourage them to reproduce themselves, so that a church planting movement would begin that would reach into every corner of the Roman Provinces.

What other factors should be incorporated into the definition of:

Mission:_____

_____

Strategy: _____

_____

17.3 Important issues in Paul's mission strategy

The important issues in Paul's mission strategy are:

- **Revelation**
- **Proclamation**
- **Salvation**
- **Contextualisation**

We will look at these four briefly.

17.3.1 Revelation

Mission is based on the conviction there is something **essential** to share. Wherever the authority of Scripture has been questioned missionary vision has declined. Church growth studies always include as one of the key factors in church growth, a firm belief in the Bible as the revealed Word of God. Paul shared and proclaimed this belief. In his first recorded evangelistic sermon, he quotes five Old Testament passages to substantiate his argument. At the end of his ministry he writes, ***"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness."*** (2 Tim. 3:15-16)

Paul had a thorough knowledge of and total confidence in the uniqueness of the Scriptures as God's revelation to the world.

17.3.2 Proclamation

In an era when travelling was much more difficult than now, Paul covered great distances. The driving force behind his three great missionary journeys was the desire to share the Good News of the Gospel with as many people as possible, in as many places as humanly possible. He said, ***"The love of Christ constrains me."*** **(**2 Cor. 5:14) From the record in Acts 13 we follow Paul through Cyprus, Pamphylia, Pisidia, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, Perga, Attalia, Antioch in Syria, down to Jerusalem and back to Antioch in Syria. On the second and third journeys he travelled even further eventually reaching Rome the heart of the empire. In every place he went, he preached (heralded) and persuaded people in synagogues, homes, rented halls and in the market places. He was called to courts and palaces to explain his views and actions.

17.3.3 Salvation

Paul only had one message – the message that got Stephen stoned to death and Paul imprisoned, beaten, stoned, left to die and finally executed: ***"Christ and Him crucified… the power of God unto salvation."*** (1 Cor. 1:18, 23) ***"There is only one name given under heaven whereby men might be saved, the man Christ Jesus."*** (Acts 4:12)

In his farewell speech to the elders at Ephesus, he says, ***"I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."*** (Acts 20:21)

17.3.4 Contextualisation

While the essence of Paul's message remained unchanged the ideas used to convey it were adapted to the audience and to the location. So to Jews Paul could argue that Jesus was the Messiah by tracing God's purpose in history from the calling of Abraham in Ur right up to Christ's ascension into glory and the coming of the Holy Spirit. In Athens to the Greeks, where many ***"spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas,"*** (Acts. 17:21) Paul quoted from the Greek poets and old traditions.

At times he was a Jew. He dressed and behaved like a Jew living under the Law. He spoke to the Jews with an argument they could understand. At other times he was a Gentile (and even a Roman citizen). He was ***"All things to all men in order to win some."*** (1 Cor. 9:22)

He used images of the Roman Empire and urban life to convey spiritual truth to his Gentile audience. Some of his images are so graphic, we can easily see them in our imagination even though we come from a very different culture – the athlete on his blocks ready to start the race – then straining to reach the tape along the proscribed course – hoping to receive the victor's prize and not be disqualified. Or the Roman soldier armoured from head to foot in the distinctive and very impressive uniform of Caesar's army. Paul knew how to communicate effectively with each different audience.

If we put it in **marketing/communication terms**, Paul had a first class, extremely valuable product to sell (salvation). He was 100% convinced of its value. So with all his energy and intellectual skill **and** because he was enjoying the benefits of the product so immensely in his own experience, he sought to share it with others everywhere! In each place he researched his audience and presented his product in terms they were most likely to understand and appreciate.

It is true that some rejected the offer, but thousands did accept the offer of salvation. Paul then trained them as "salesmen" (disciples) and organised them into demonstration centres (churches) and marketing groups (evangelistic teams). By the end of his ministry he had established churches throughout the Roman Empire. He kept in touch with these churches and encouraged them through correspondence and personal visits.

17.4 Paul's mission strategy focused on key cities

A LCOWE Report on **Reaching Large Cities** says this:

"The progression of the Bible is from a garden to the Eternal City. We will have an urban future! The Bible includes over 1,200 references to cities and the Biblical rationale and resources for the urban mission of the church are drawn from both Old and New Testaments. At least 119 cities can be found in the Biblical record. Case studies of major cities in various contexts suggest "place" should be included in our theological understanding alongside "people, programmes, and principles."

17.4.1 A brief look at four Old Testament cities.

17.4.1.1 Sodom (Gen. 18 and 19; Ezek. 16:48 ff)

- God sees the behaviour of people in cities.
- There can be a godly motive for urban concern (note Abraham's prayer born out of his relationship with Lot).
- There is a relationship between the presence of godly people in a city and the preservation of that city. Ten righteous could have saved it.
- God can distinguish the one from the many. He distinguished Lot from the rest as He did Rahab in Jericho in Joshua's time.

- An 'escape theology' is not enough to guide those who flee the city. The primary evil is not environmental. It is personal – within us. (Gen. 19 and Mk. 7)
- One reason stated in the Bible for Sodom's destruction is given in Ezek. 16: 48-50. In addition to being proud and arrogant, Sodom was wealthy and did not take care of her poor. God says that He hates that! Sadly, there is hardly a city in the world where there isn't a growing disparity between the rich and the poor.

There appears to be three strategies for this city:

- ♦ Put more "righteous" into the city
- ♦ Raise up intercessors for the city
- ♦ Do "works of power" in the city – based on Mt. 11:23

17.4.1.2 Nineveh (see Jonah and Nahum)

- Note: It was difficult to persuade Jonah to take a message to this capital city.
- Observe God's concern in this case for the city as a place – no names are mentioned.
- Given the record of extreme cruelty and violence of Assyrian conquests and the destruction among the surrounding nations, including the destruction and exile of the Northern Kingdom, Jonah is a story of grace for the chief of sinful urban systems.
- From Jonah 3:6 notice that eventually the king heard. He then ordered a fast. It was a grass-roots movement of repentance that moved up to the King. Jonah went to the poor ordinary people rather than directly to the King. Top-down-movements never work!
- God accepts the repentance of Nineveh, graciously forgiving those who turned to Him in spite of His messenger's motives and conduct.
- In Nahum's report about Nineveh, twice God says, ***"I am against you!"*** (2:13 and 3:5) There were two reasons for this:
  - ✓ militaristic violence (3:1 ff)
  - ✓ commercial exploitation (3:16)
- Notice that Nahum later reports God's judgment and woe on Nineveh, perhaps because that repentance was temporary and shallow. It is interesting to speculate on "what if". What if Jonah had stayed in Nineveh, discipled the people and brought about a true understanding of who the Living God was? It did not happen and the Babylonians destroyed Nineveh.

17.4.1.3 Babylon (cf. Daniel and many other passages. Jer. 29:4-7)

- This city functions as a symbol of all that is evil in urban life – a symbol of rebellion.
- The Babylonians destroyed the temple in Jerusalem, ended the monarchy, pulled down the walls and gates of the city and exiled the people. But God still loves Babylonians and wants to bless them if he can!
- God provides choice Hebrew sons who functioned within the structures (if not in the life style) of Babylonian rule. These men mastered Babylonian culture, yet carefully separated their own faith from that culture.
- While in Babylon, Daniel received the God-given vision of angelic/demonic forces (the principalities and powers) that stand behind all governments and cultures.
- In the diaspora of the Babylonian captivity, Judaism developed. This led to the translation of the Old Testament into Greek and the development of the synagogue. These two factors led to the rapid spread of Christianity among the Greek-speaking cities of the Roman World after Pentecost.
- The Lord told the Hebrew exiles living in Babylon that He had **sent** them to the city and, as urban dwellers, they were to live in that culture with their families and ***"Seek the welfare of the***

city…and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare." (Jer. 29:7) So God's grace was given to this city. Welfare is a rich word – Shalom!

- In the Book of Revelation Babylon is a code name for Rome and the Roman Empire as an evil dictatorial empire. The New Jerusalem is the code word for the heavenly city God is building.
- The strategy emerging to reach this city is "doing good" for the people of the city and seeking its welfare.

17.4.1.4 **Jerusalem** (Old Testament) – Nehemiah

- There is over a thousand-year record of God's grace shown to this city – from its capture by David until its destruction by Titus in A.D. 70.
- The list of the range of ministries for good or for evil, by faithful or unfaithful leadership is long in the Bible.
- Jerusalem (and all cities) are reviewed by God and judged according to their behaviour, (Lam. 1:1 ff) but even in the midst of the ruins of Jerusalem, the prophet Jeremiah can see the merciful hand of God (Lam. 3:21 ff) giving hope to the godly.
- Jesus wept out of compassion for this city. (Mt. 23:27-39; Lk. 19:41-44) He dramatically described its destruction.
- Under Nehemiah we see an urban renewal programme – rebuilding the walls and reconstructing the city. One of the things he did was to organize a Bible Teaching Convention. (Neh. 8) As most people now spoke Aramaic rather than Hebrew, there was translation as the Bible was read and this was accompanied by a massive Bible Training Programme.
- Note that education, in terms of Bible truths, is most effectively done in the context of feasting, joy and celebration. (8:9, 10-12)
- The "Good News" of the Gospel needs to be presented in the context of joy.

17.4.2 Pauline strategy in cities

There were 5 major communication centres in the Mediterranean basin of the Roman Empire – Rome, Alexandria, Corinth, Ephesus and Antioch.

- Paul spent a significant amount of time in four of these centres:
  - 1½ years in Corinth
  - 2 years+ in Rome
  - 3 years in Ephesus
  - 1 year+ in Antioch
- Apollos came from Alexandria so presumably the Gospel had reached there. According to tradition John Mark (with Barnabas?) first preached the Gospel in Alexandria.

I want to focus on two cities: Antioch and Ephesus.

17.4.2.1 **Antioch** (Acts 11:19-26)

This was a spontaneous church. It was not the product of a mission strategy. They didn't have meetings in Jerusalem planning a church planting strategy for key cities in the Mediterranean – or if they did we are not told about it. The church in Antioch was a spontaneous move of the Gospel and Gentiles (non-Jews) started to respond! Then the Jewish believers had to grapple with the problem: did Gentile believers have to become Jewish and live under the Law in order to openly identify themselves as followers of Jesus. The Jerusalem church sent Barnabas to check out what was happening because Gentile believers were being identified by a new name – Christians. Barnabas was "a good man". Goodness is a quality that gives objectivity. He could discern the grace of God at work

in this group of unholy (by Jewish standards) Gentile believers who looked absolutely nothing like their fellow–believers in the Jerusalem church.

Therefore we have to acknowledge as leaders that there may be a spontaneous move of the Holy Spirit unlike anything we have planned. We need to develop this quality of "goodness". It is the ability to discern what is of God in church growth and missions in general. The opposite is a critical spirit to everything we didn't plan and haven't experienced.

The characteristics of the Antioch church (Acts 11-13)

1. God uses ordinary people who are not rut-bound.
2. It was a submissive church, concerned about unity with other churches.
3. It was a church well taught in the Scriptures.
4. It was a church open to the ministry of outsiders and with a wide variety of gifts.
5. It was a responsible caring church responding to needs and generous with money.
6. It was a church that experienced the power of God in answer to prayer.
7. It was a multi-cultural ministry led by a multi-cultural team.
8. It was a worshipping church – practicing corporate worship.
9. It was a church that did everything with one accord in mind and purpose.
10. It was a missionary-sending church.

An essential strategy in all this is the **outward looking, heterogeneous church**.
Homogenous churches usually have an "in-house only" vision.

17.4.2.2 Ephesus

The main strategy in this city was through "The School of Tyrannus". Through this school Paul influenced the city and the whole of the Roman Province of Asia. So there was an emphasis on **teaching**.

Clearly there were a number of significant breakthroughs. Remember the day that they – the new believers – burnt all their occult books! So it was **not only teaching** that was vital. There was a display of supernatural power! (See Acts 18: 18-28; 19:1-41 and 20:1) Ephesus was a centre of demonic power and false religion. This is why Paul deliberately attacked the occult scene in order,
in some measure, to release the city from bondage.

The church in Ephesus grew very large, but more importantly it spread throughout the region. Paul could write to Colossae and call it his own church though apparently he never went there. He mentions Hierapolis and Laodicea – several weeks walk from Ephesus – as part of his work in Ephesus. So a whole group of churches came out of the Ephesian church. Possibly all the churches in the Book of Revelation came into being during Paul's time in Ephesus.

So the School of Tyrannus was a resource centre to a church planting movement that reached a whole area! Almost all cities have a hinterland. I am in London at the present and what happens in London affects the whole of S.E. England up to a radius of at least 100 kilometres. So teaching/resource centres for urban church planting are crucial in cities.

In Summary

	Strategy inferred
Sodom:	more righteous in the city more intercessors for cities more works of power

Nineveh:	more itinerant evangelism grass roots evangelism
Babylon:	more holistic ministry
Jerusalem:	Biblical teaching should be done in the context of joy and feasting
Antioch:	the case for heterogonous churches
Ephesus:	the case for teaching centres

17.4.3 The challenge of Greater Cairo

Greater Cairo is made up of three major cities:

- **Cairo** on the east bank of the Nile with Heliopolis and New Cairo
- **Giza** (out towards the pyramids) on the west bank
- **Imbaba** (north of Giza).

In total it has a population of around 20 million. It is growing at the rate of one million more every 9 months. It is the largest city in Africa and the largest city in the Muslim World.

Cairo has a huge influence in Egypt and throughout the Arab World. Egyptians call it "the Mother of the World". It is a political centre and a religious centre. Al 'Azar University is the most important Islamic university in the world. Cairo is an academic centre with several famous universities. It is also an industrial centre. It is the centre of the Arab movie industry. It is a major city!

It has huge problems. A new primary school would have to be built every 15 minutes just to keep up with the population growth. There are large slum areas. About 70% of the population live below the poverty line. Yet Cairo has more Mercedes–Benz cars than any city outside Germany. Some extremely wealthy people live in Cairo!

The direction of change will determine the quality of life in the future. Christians in Cairo must understand the forces shaping their city and then they must seek to influence its destiny. The time for such involvement is **now**! We will have no right to lament over the sins of the city in the future, if we do not seek the salvation of the city now.

Write a description of your city – its trends, its influences and the forces shaping its future.

Describe how you can influence change.

17.5 Paul's mission strategy focused on key people

In the Biblical record key people often play vital roles:

- **Joseph:** the Egyptian economist. In two seven-year plans (one for budget surpluses and one for budget deficits) he moved rural populations into urban areas in order to feed them. This included God's People. He did it by means of direct government. (Gen. 37-50)
- **Daniel:** the Babylonian civil servant who served through several coups. He made much more just, the otherwise harsh policies of an oppressive urban-based government.
- **Nehemiah**: a senior court official who got a major government grant and an official leave of absence to create a "model-city" plan for the rebuilding of Jerusalem. There he creatively used the tithe principle to recruit 10% of the villages and the families to re-populate Jerusalem at a time when most people chose not to live there. (Neh. 11:1)

17.5.1 Paul

Paul was the urban evangelist/church planter par excellence who "followed the contours of the urbanized Roman Empire" with a number of strategies and styles primarily focused on the central role of a reproducing local church that would rapidly plant daughter churches. Paul focused on building **a team** and adding **key people** to that team as evangelists, disciplers and teachers. Luke, Timothy, Silas, Titus and many more come to mind. I would like to focus on just one person.

17.5.2 Onesimus

One of the most remarkable stories of the early church begins in Acts and Philemon and ends in the writings of an early church father Irenaeus. This is the story of Onesimus. He was a runaway slave and at that time this was a capital offense. Onesimus, thinking he would find anonymity and employment in a large city, escaped to Rome. In order to survive, he lived in the poorest area and got odd jobs. Also in that section of the city there was a prisoner under house arrest who gave lectures each day on the Christian faith to anyone who came to listen. Onesimus came, listened, believed and became a follower of Jesus. Then a remarkable change began to take place in him. His attitude, his beliefs and his actions changed. Paul saw his potential. Paul, a Roman citizen, called this slave "my beloved brother". Onesimus was sent back to his owner. His owner also had independently become a follower of Jesus. He forgave Onesimus and treated him as a family member and friend. Here the story in the New Testament ends.

In the second century A.D. Irenaeus takes up the story when he is writing about the history of the church in Ephesus. The church that Paul planted in Ephesus was "pastored" by the Apostle John until his exile. When John was exiled, the elders chose an ex-slave, Onesimus, to be pastor of this church in Ephesus that was perhaps the largest church in the world at the time.

This incredible story could only have happened because Paul and followers of Jesus everywhere forgot their prejudices and class consciousness, recognised the spiritual potential of their humblest members and encouraged them in the development of their God-given gifts.

The principle is clear – **God doesn't use strategies, He uses people** and the people that God uses are usually very ordinary. They have benefitted from hearing the Good News. They have been changed, trained, mobilised and encouraged to pass on the Good News.

What view does your "host culture" take of human potential? Would it be possible to move from the lowest to the highest level of society in a generation?

Is it any different in the church?

Who are the encouragers-disciplers in your team?

Are you training people of great potential to be agents of spiritual **and** social transformation?

We have looked at the following ingredients in Paul's strategy

- Important issues (17:3)
- Important cities (17:4)
- Key people (17:5)

17.6 Paul's mission strategy focused on key Biblical principles

I will mention four:

- The Principle of Materialism
- The Principle of Corporate Solidarity
- The Principle of Incarnation
- The Principle of Hope

17.6.1 The Principle of Materialism

The Bible begins with the creation of matter and concludes with the re-creation of matter – in particular the resurrection of real bodies – Christ's body now and ours then.

The first gifts of the Spirit mentioned in the Bible (the ability to make beautiful things) were given to Bezalel and Oholiab. (Ex. 31:1) They had to make a physical, material place of worship for the People of God who already had the Fire and the Cloud of the Holy Spirit's presence.

These are just a couple of examples to show that Christianity really truly **integrates** matter and spirit in a coherent way. There is an essential holism at the heart of Biblical Christianity. Since the enlightenment, this has largely been absent in western Christianity. Approaching cities **requires** an effective holistic approach – both structurally and spiritually, both institutionally and individually.

Discuss the implication of a holistic approach to the material/spiritual issues in cities in your ministry.

17.6.2 The Principle of Corporate Solidarity

In the Bible individual people are identified (i.e. find their identity) by family and by place. People have identity in land and often in a city. In a big city there is corporate solidarity with suburbs and villages that depend on that city. See Ezek. 16 where several cities are described in personal terms. So the idea that a follower of Jesus can stay in a place and not take spiritual/material responsibility for that place is a violation of Biblical truth.

17.6.3 The Principle of Incarnation

The example that Jesus set us was to ***"become flesh and dwell among us"*** (Jn. 1:14). His life and pattern of ministry and the implicit principles derived from that ministry, show that our presence and witness in the city should be "incarnational" in nature. Jesus stayed two days with the newly forgiven Samaritans. (Jn. 4:10) He lived with them eating their food and sleeping in their beds as one of them.

Media ministries that are impersonal, although necessary – even vital, are no substitute for a physical presence in the city. There is a tendency among evangelicals to **use** cities. They use them for the convenience of transport links, shops and government offices as well as for employment opportunities, but they have no sense of responsibility for the well-being of the people of that city. There is little witness or service to its people or its institutions.

How would you apply the principle of **Corporate Solidarity** and the principle of **Incarnation** in your city?

17.6.4 The Principle of Hope

The Gospel is "news" not advice! It is not a paternalistic announcement of something urban masses must **do** in order to be saved. It is wonderful news that something redemptive **has been done** for them by Jesus Christ. It was done when He died for them on the Cross.

This news transforms people and through people their environments are changed with enormously powerful urban consequences (see Acts 17:6 ff for an example). Those who have repented of their past, experienced forgiveness and the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, will work out that salvation in a wide range of issues in the urban agenda. The result is incredible spiritual and social change.

Ultimately the salvation of cities will culminate in Christ's return, but we have a **vibrant hope now**. Continuous urban mission can make a huge difference **now**!

In trying to reach cities God has not left us weaponless. He has given us an array of Biblical resources for the task of missions in large and growing urban centres. Jesus Himself used multiple strategies (teaching, preaching, healing ministry) in His visits to the small villages of His day. (Mt. 9:35-38)

How **could** the Principle of Hope – the Gospel's transforming power – bring about change in your city?

17.7 Our mission strategy in reaching cities

There are four points I would like to make:

17.7.1 Major hindrances

We need to identify major hindrances to the effective evangelisation of city dwellers. These could be:

- Lack of co-operation between churches, and between churches and mission agencies, resulting in waste of limited resources
- The church being viewed by many as an unattractive option, boring, lacking in credibility and relevance. Why?
    - ✓ loss of spiritual life in the church
    - ✓ no evangelism
    - ✓ no sensitivity to the basic needs of food, clothing, housing, employment etc.
- Untrained leadership – lacking the ability to cope with complex urban society
- Forms of outreach abound, but systematic analysis of effectiveness is rare

Can you add to this list of hindrances in your city?

17.7.2 Some generalizations on strategy

- The family is central. Successful evangelism takes into account the special needs and dynamics of urban families. Are you aiming at whole family conversion?
- Neighbourhood cells (or house fellowships) witnessing collectively is often cited as the most successful conversion strategy in cities.
- Mass media, especially with a lot of "western" content, is often used and seldom critiqued. Yet it has frequently been reported to be largely ineffective. However, in the last 25 years it has been increasingly effective.
- No generalisation emerges with such clarity, from all continents, as the affirmation that the local church, operating **in house groups** as well as large meetings, is the key to evangelisation and its revitalization must be the concern of everyone.

Are you implementing any of these strategies or recommendations? How is it going?

Try and do the following:

1. Prepare a Power Point presentation of your city.
2. Make a list of barriers to ministry.
3. Make a list of potential solutions.
4. Get others in your city together to pray and strategize.
5. Write up case studies of effective ministry.
6. Explore ministry opportunities in prisons, schools, new industrial areas etc.

17.7.3 Use existing networks

Individual people find their identities and express their personalities within three primary networks.

17.7.3.1 The biological network (usually the strongest)

Everybody is part of a family and is related by blood or by marriage to a large number of people spanning three or four generations. This extended family network should be the primary focus of the new believer. If one new believer is looked after, discipled and their special needs identified and met, **the family will notice**! Believers should primarily minister into this extended network. Family events and rites of passage (birth ceremonies, weddings, funerals) and parties in general, provide lots of opportunities.

So the extended family of grandparents, aunts and uncles, spouse and children, cousins and in-laws can, in some cases, be well over 500 people!

17.7.3.2 The geographic network

The area where you live puts you in contact with your neighbours and the people who provide services for that community – shopkeepers, local government officials, medical staff, schoolteachers etc. Regular contact with neighbours and the people in the community can become the focus of our witness.

17.7.3.3 The vocational network

Rural people tend to find their identity exclusively in their biological and geographic frameworks. City dwellers also see themselves in terms of what they **do**. They identify with their profession or vocation. Note how frequently the question, "Who are you?" is answered by, "I am a teacher" or "I am a businessmen" or "I am a secretary". There is a very strong ethos of work in the Bible. Sadly this is rarely taught. If a person's identity is in an office, the local church needs to serve him/her there!

So an occupational network consists of your office staff, the members of your profession, the people in adjacent offices etc.

Cities are often multi-sectioned, so for example there is:

- Administrative Cairo
- Artistic Cairo
- Commercial Cairo
- Institutional Cairo – universities etc.
- Touristic Cairo
- Industrial Cairo
- Entertainment Cairo
- Wealthy Cairo
- Slum Cairo

Each of these needs a strategy to reach them in addition to the three networks above.

17.7.4 Poverty in the City

While the Old Testament speaks primarily to the issue of **rural** poverty, the Apostle Paul was confronted with **urban** poverty. Of course both are present with us today, but the experience of poverty in the city differs from that in the countryside. Paul took up a collection from Greece to give to the urban poor in Jerusalem.

Poverty in a city is often exacerbated by:

17.7.4.1 Rapid growth of the city

While in Europe and North America the population of large cities is static or decreasing in size, in Africa and Asia it is growing more than twice as fast as the birth rate of that country. Capital cities grow much faster than smaller provincial cities. Bangkok, for example, is 32 times larger than Thailand's second

city – Chiang Mai. This sort of growth puts tremendous pressure on necessary resources and services such as land, housing, sanitation and sewerage disposal, clean water and food. The quality of life in some slums can be truly awful.

17.7.4.2 Migrant minorities.

In large Asian/African cities there are settlements of migrant workers from other parts of the country and even from neighbouring countries. Different people groups live in the same neighbourhood. So the city isn't necessarily a homogenizing force. Cities often resemble a conglomerate of villages made up of people fleeing rural poverty and lack of opportunity as well as people from an ethnic/linguistic/cultural/ religious/geographic group who cluster together in a slum. There they find low paying jobs and they retain something of their identity. A whole country can sometimes be reached by planting churches into each of these migrant minorities.

17.7.4.3 Slums

The consensus amongst urban sociologists and planners is that slums are unavoidable in African/Asian cities. They are essential for the city because they provide a high-density cheap labour pool to perform essential services. They may seem superficially to be parasitic on business/commerce and the luxury housing areas but both are necessary – they are complementary.

The problem is lack of services. The high growth rate of the city, strained economies, inept government and the reluctance of the rich to pay taxes, combine to make it impossible for services to keep up with population growth in the slums. Settlement of slum areas precedes services – sometimes by many years, even decades.

Many of us are called to minister to the urban poor, for we share the concerns of God and want to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and share the Good News with the urban poor.

What could you do as a team to further outreach to the urban poor?

18. TRANSFORMATION : THE MODEL OF THE "NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH"

18.1 What is Eschatology?

- 18.1.1 Prophetic eschatology
- 18.1.2 Apocalyptic eschatology
- 18.1.3 The eschatology of Jesus
- 18.1.4 New Testament eschatology

18.2 Biblical references to end-time events

- 18.2.1 The wisdom literature of the Old Testament
- 18.2.2 The prophetic literature of the Old Testament
- 18.2.3 The teaching of Jesus relating to the end of this age
- 18.2.4 The teaching of Paul on the Second Coming
- 18.2.5 The teaching of Peter and John about the end times

18.3 Eschatology and history

18.4 Value changes and transformation

- 18.4.1 Imparting values
- 18.4.2 The worldview.
- 18.4.3 The belief system
- 18.4.4 The process of value change
- 18.4.5 Actions that express values

18.5 Development and eschatology

- 18.5.1 Within a historical context
- 18.5.2 Directed by divine wisdom
- 18.5.3 Expanded by substantial hope
- 18.5.4 Applied through vigorous mission

18.6 A transformed church transforming the community

18. TRANSFORMATION: THE MODEL OF THE "NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH"

18.1 What is Eschatology?

Literally it means the study of the end times and events. There are a number of types of eschatology:

18.1.1 Prophetic Eschatology

This is common in the Old Testament. Here God was seen as active in the present. The prophets related the fact that there was "an end" to the present and saw the present in terms of the end. The essence of their teaching was to motivate obedience in the present.

18.1.2 Apocalyptic Eschatology

This type of Eschatology was developed in the inter-testamental period (cf. Enoch and the Maccabees in the Apocrypha). It said that God **had** acted in the past and gave assurance that He would act in the future, but God had abandoned the present! God would vindicate His people and judge their enemies at the end of time and they must passively wait for that time to come.

18.1.3 The Eschatology of Jesus

In His ministry, Jesus demonstrated that God was active in the world **now**, both saving and judging. The Kingdom of God was a present reality where demons were driven out, the sick healed and new relationships of trust between alienated groups forged. So Jesus supported the prophetic view!

But Jesus also taught that the disease of sin was so pervasive in our fallen world that the Kingdom could never be **fully** realised in history by gradual incremental steps. The final destruction of this old universe would be the event that would inaugurate a new heaven and a new earth – the full Kingdom of God.

18.1.4 New Testament Eschatology

This goes beyond Old Testament prophetic eschatology in affirming that the **first fruits** of the final victory and God's 'shalom' **can be experienced now**. As believers we have the privilege of experiencing the forgiveness and the blessings of the Kingdom now, but the **final** consummation of time will happen cataclysmically. After that the full blessings of the Kingdom will be realised. So we are living in the Kingdom, but the Kingdom has not yet fully come. But it will come!

18.2 Biblical References to End Time Events

This is a summary of major passages.

18.2.1 The Wisdom Literature of the Old Testament

The major passages are the Messianic Psalms – including Ps. 96, 97, 98, 99, 103 and 104.

Read these Psalms and find evidence for the following statements:

- The Lord will judge the earth _____

_____

- This will be a time of great celebration for creation _____

_____

- He will judge the world in righteousness and justice _____

_____

- There will be lightening, earthquakes and storms _____

  _____

- All will praise the Lord _____

  _____

- The Lord is King _____

  _____

- His rule will be universal _____

  _____

- The wicked will not share God's new earth _____

  _____

18.2.2 The Prophetic Literature of the Old Testament

Look back to study #10, which attempted to summarise the Old Testament hope for a future age of peace and prosperity.

Which promises still await fulfilment?

In Daniel 7-14, how many times are the following terms found?

Son of Man _____

Ancient of Days _____

Most High _____

Anointed One _____

In the book of Zechariah, the One who is to reign in the everlasting Kingdom is the One who:

- rode as a King into Jerusalem on a young donkey (9:9)
- was sold for 30 pieces of silver (11:13)
- was pierced (12:10)

Important events of the end time include: prosperity, forgiveness, peace, neighbourliness, and truth. See 1:11, 17:3-9, 3:10; 8:3, 9:12.

- All nations will acknowledge the Lord. (8:23)
- He will reign in peace over the entire world. (9:9-10)

- There will be judgment. (13:8)
- Jerusalem will be secure. (14:11)

18.2.3 The teaching of Jesus relating to the end of this age

The following references (just from Matthew) show the extent and the frequency of themes of the end times – judgment and second coming of Jesus – in the teaching ministry of our Lord Jesus. They are divided into three sections: His parables, His warnings and His promises.

Beside the reference – give a brief summary.

Parables:

Mt. 13:8_____

_____

Mt. 13:30 _____

_____

Mt. 13:39 _____

_____

Mt. 13:49 _____

_____

Mt. 18:14 _____

_____

Mt. 18:34-35 _____

Mt. 22:1-14 _____

_____

Mt. 25:1-13 _____

_____

Mt. 25:14-30_____

_____

Mt. 25:31-46 _____

_____

Warnings:

Mt. 7:22-23 _____

_____

Mt. 10:15 _____

_____

Mt. 11:22-24 _____

_____

Mt. 12:32 _____

_____

Mt. 12:37_____

_____

Mt. 12:41-42 _____

_____

Mt. 13:12 _____

_____

Mt. 13:40-42 _____

Mt. 13:50 _____

Mt. 16:26 _____

_____

Mt. 16:27 _____

_____

Mt. 18:7-9 _____

_____

Mt. 19:30 _____

Mt. 20:46 _____

Mt. 22:11-14 _____

_____

Mt. 23:33-35 _____

_____

Promises:

Mt. 10:22 _____

_____

Mt. 10:42 _____

_____

Mt. 12:21 _____

_____

Mt. 13:12 _____

_____

Mt. 13:48

_____

Mt. 16:18-19 _____

_____

Mt. 16:28_____

_____

Mt. 18:18 _____

_____

Mt. 19:21 _____

_____

Mt. 19:28-29 _____

_____

Mt. 20:22-23 _____

_____

Mt. 22:30-32 _____

_____

Mt. 26:29 _____

_____

Mt. 26:64 _____

Mt. 28:20 _____

_____

The whole of ch. 24 has the theme of the Second Coming. List the main points below:

_____

_____

18.2.4 The teaching of Paul on the Second Coming

Here are just some of the relevant verses:

Acts 23:6	I hope in the resurrection of the dead.
Acts 24:15	I have the same hope in God as these men, that there will be a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked.
Rom. 2:16	God will judge man's secrets through Jesus Christ.
Rom. 6:23	The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ Our Lord.
Rom. 8:16-17	We are God's children…heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.
Rom. 8:19	Creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.
Rom. 8:21	Creation will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.
Rom. 8:23	We wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.
Rom. 11:26	All Israel will be saved.
1 Cor. 15:22	As in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive.
1 Cor. 15:24	The end will come when He hands over the Kingdom to God the Father after He has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.
1 Cor. 15:44/53	The body will be raised a spiritual, imperishable body.
2 Cor. 4:14	The one who raised Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus.
2 Cor. 5:1	We have an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands.

2 Cor. 5:10	We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ.
Phil. 2:9-11	God exalted Jesus to the highest place and gave Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.
1 Thess. 4:16	The Lord will come down from heaven and the dead in Christ will rise.
1 Thess. 5:2	The Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.
2 Tim. 3:1	There will be terrible times in the last days.

Try and summarise what Paul taught about.

- The role of Jesus in the last days
- What will happen to creation?
- What will happen to history?

18.2.5 The teaching of Peter and John about the End Times?

2 Pet. 3:7	The present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the Day of Judgment and the destruction of ungodly men.
2 Pet. 3:10	The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare.
2 Pet. 3:12	That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire and the elements will melt in the heat.
2 Pet. 3:13	But in keeping with His promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.
Rev. 3:12	The new Jerusalem is coming down out of heaven from God.
Rev. 5:10	You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God and they will reign on the earth.
Rev. 7:14	They have come out of the great tribulation.
Rev. 7:17	God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.
Rev. 14:16	He who was seated on the cloud swung his sickle over the earth and the earth was harvested.
Rev. 20:6	They will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.
Rev. 20:13	Each person was judged according to what he had done.
Rev. 21:1	Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth for the first earth had passed away.
Rev. 21:3	The dwelling of God is with men; He will live with them and be their God.
Rev. 21:4	He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.
Rev. 21:26	The glory and honour of the nations will be brought into the city.

Rev. 22:5 There will be no more night … for the Lord God will give them light.

What do these passages teach us about God?

What do they say about human destiny?

What will happen to the world?

18.3 Eschatology and history

In their book **The Church in Response to Human Need**, Vinay Samuel and Chis Sugden write about eschatology and history and the implications of this to Development Projects.
"How then will we be able to measure where God is active and involved in the ambiguities of human history?"

One clear guideline is where we see **the values of the Kingdom** replacing values that are "not-of-God" in people, in movements and in structures that give concrete expression to those values. We can see God at work where we see:

- Human dignity being affirmed
- People, especially the poor, discovering a sense of self-worth
- People developing a sense of having something to contribute to the world and to others.

Where we see people free and able to act according to their conscience without threat from others seeking to control their actions and thus their attitudes, there we can see God at work.

We can see God at work as people are able to make their own contribution to the life of a community, especially as participants in decisions which affect them in the family, in religious matters and in the political structures.

We can see God at work as we see people develop hope, a sense that it is possible and worthwhile to plan for the future. We can see God at work as we see people develop self-respect and a sense of

worth as they see the appreciation of the community. As people share in such a way that their humanity is enhanced; as people are committed to struggle against evil and injustice and as people have a growing sense of equity and justice, so we can see God at work.

We can see God at work when women, the weak and the handicapped have roles that accord them dignity and equality and where their needs are a priority. We can see God at work when power is shared in such a way that all benefit from its exercise and none are dehumanized.

We can see God at work when there is a sense of His presence in a community as well as a sense of the presence of evil **without** (i.e. the community is under attack) **and within**, together with a sense of humility about the limits of our knowledge and ability – especially in view of God's wisdom and power.

We will particularly look for God's work in actions such as decision-making, information sharing, emerging assistance and relief, creating employment, family decisions, actions in relation to the under-privileged and marginalized, actions that involve developing an ethos of inter-dependence between the individual and the community and actions that relate to the wise use of human and material resources and above all to the worship of God.

We will also look for the signs of God's activity expressed in the structures of the family, the ethnic group, the structures of political decision-making, in fact all structures of religious, social and economic organisation.

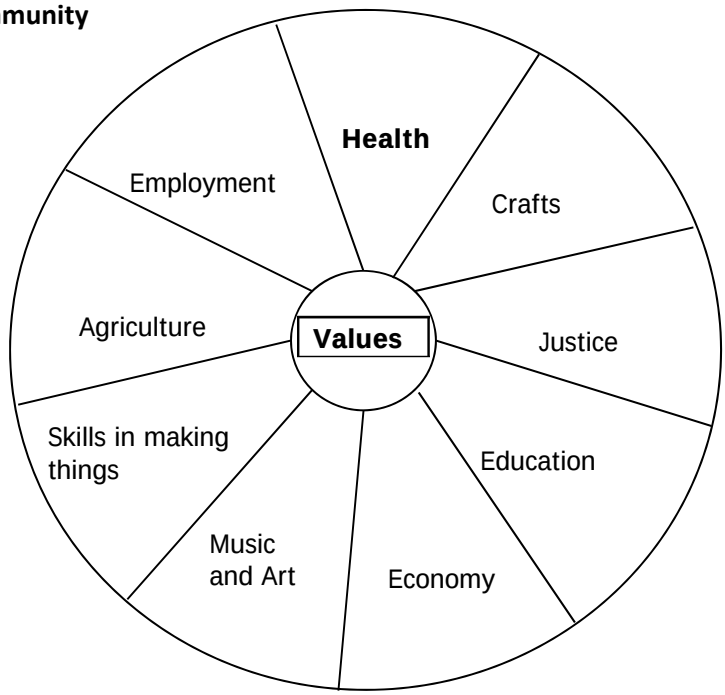
The temptation is to see God at work only through the preaching of the Gospel. But God is also to be seen at work when structures are transformed to promote the values of the Kingdom. It is possible to be content with the expression of these Kingdom values in the lives of individuals (i.e. in the process of discipleship) or in a small group of believers (i.e. a church plant). But values that don't find structural changes in the community as a whole, don't bring about lasting change. **So development work must focus just as much on the transformation of the structures of a community so that they reflect the values of the Kingdom.**

18.4 Value changes and transformation

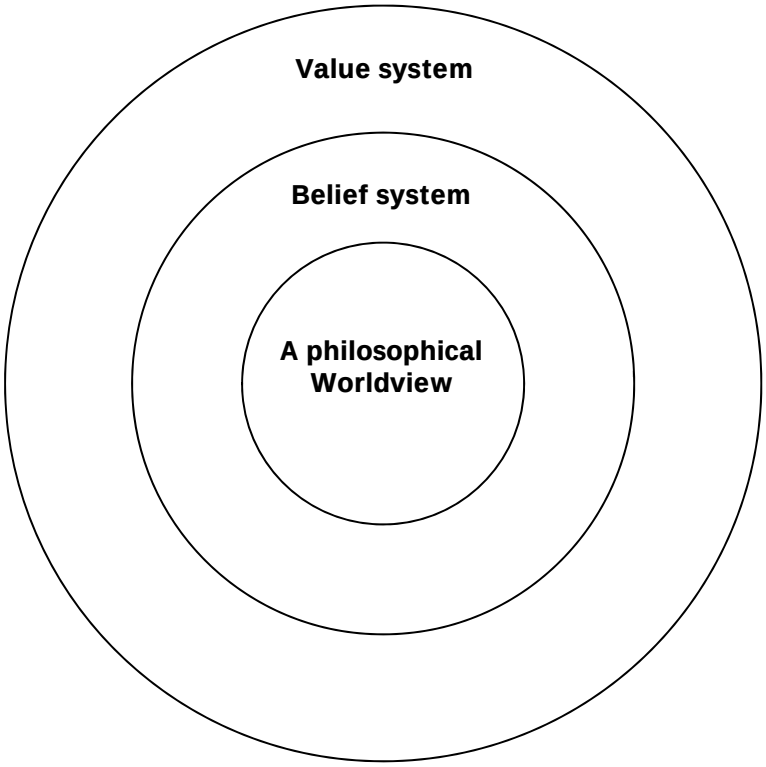
18.4.1 Imparting values

Many development programmes improve the physical environment and the quality of life of the community, but do not bring about **a value change**. So transformation has not taken place.

A Picture of a Community



A Fuller Picture



18.4.2 The Worldview

This is at the heart of a culture. It is the hardest thing to change and when a genuine change has taken place it is almost impossible to reverse.

The worldview answers questions as to what really gives meaning to life. For example, in a certain culture nothing happens by chance. The flow of the river is directed by the God of the river. If lighting strikes, it must have happened to snatch away a wicked person who deserved judgment. That is the only way to save the innocent. Lightning is believed to be the arrow of God shot at the wicked. Nobody dies from natural causes, so an adequate cause must always be sought in order to know how to save the sick.

This basic worldview of cause and effect is often discerned by observing people's actions in moments of distress.

18.4.3 The Belief System

This is seen in the religious practices, myths, stories, taboos etc. of a community. It is built around their worldview. The worldview is rarely understood or analysed by a people group. They talk about their belief system.

18.4.4 The process of value change

Value system today in the community → Process of development → **Christ-like values dominating the community**

The Holy Spirit, using the power of the Gospel preached, transforms the worldview and the belief systems. Evangelism/discipleship integrated with development can work the process through so there is a value change. This is the aim of development work!

Example:

The Value	Distorted Value System	Christ-like Value System
1. Loyalty	Only to my family	To all men (people)
2. Uniqueness of the individual	Only the powerful matter	All men, women and children matter
3. Compassion	Only to those who can help you	To all who are in need
4. Repentance	Only if caught	Taking personal responsibility for wrong done and correcting it
5. Forgiveness	Only to equals	To all who have sinned against you
6. Servanthood	Only to superiors	To all
7. Sharing	Only with my family	With all in need
8. Equality	Among men who own land	Among all men and women
9. Justice	Owed only to the rich and powerful	Owed to all even the poorest and weakest
10. Peace-making	Within the family	Within the community

18.4.5 Actions which express values

Action	Typical of Non-Christian Value System	Biblical Worldview Value
1. Decision-making	Only the wealthy are involved	Everyone has some role
2. Information-sharing	Only the educated and powerful	Everyone who needs to know
3. Relief assistance	Leader's families first then down the pecking order	The neediest first
4. Job opportunities	Only those who can pay or only those from my family	Those who are qualified
5. Treatment of people	A hierarchy developed from "high caste" to "out caste"	All are valued
6. Importance of religion	Not much except in crisis, during rites of passage or as a unifying political force	A God-centred life
7. Prayer	For money, power, health to perceived centres of power and influence	For God's glory
8. Family decisions	Father (or patriarch) alone	All have a role

Development work in a community aims at changing **values**. To do this several **sectors** need to be tackled at the same time. Which sector are you working in?

What other sectors **could** you add to your programmes in order to have a more holistic approach to value change?

Which response – relief, development or literature evangelism – is most likely to **change values** within a community? Why?

A **holistic approach** addressing several sectors at the same time, **together** with evangelism and discipleship (changing the belief systems and worldview), is most likely to change the value systems of the community even though this may happen slowly. Why is this so?

18.5 Development and Eschatology

Maurice Sinclair of SAMS (South American Missionary Society) wrote:

> **"Purpose: the purpose of this paper is to contribute to the task of bringing development and eschatology together into a Biblical wholeness while avoiding a false separation between the secular and the sacred.**

18.5.1 Within a historical context.

In the last two decades, modernisation (modernity) has been called into question by westerners. At the same time, indigenous communities left outside various national plans for modernisation have often fared better in times of crisis than those who were included.

As dreams for westernisation and modernisation are increasingly called into question, let us look at God's intentions for His people. Through the prophets He reveals the prospect of a new king, a new law, a new land, a new community and a new creation. In Jesus Christ God's New Kingdom has invaded our world.

Man's self-sufficiency and rebellion against God underlines the one persistent negative historical tend as Christ's Kingdom seeks to advance in human society. God's redemptive purpose underlines the one positive movement in history. God's purpose is progressive and assured. Both salvation and judgment appear closer than when we first believed.

18.5.2 Directed by divine wisdom

With a cosmic and eschatological storm brewing, this is no time to leave the ship's rudder idly swinging. We must set a wise course! We need to seek Biblical wisdom in **doing** as well as in **reflecting**. Pessimistic pre-millennialism appears to underestimate the good things God is prepared to do in the present age. We need to derive our intentions in development and transformation from God's Kingdom and God's intentions. This will help to bring into being a new age of wisdom, righteousness, justice, peace and compassion.

18.5.3 Expanded by substantial hope.

Biblical hope refuses to be extinguished. It is essential for Biblical development! Because of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus, not only is our hope secured, but Jesus promised that His followers would demonstrate the signs of hope – healings, miracles and deliverance. Cannot this type of transformation be part of our ministry as well as the reclamation of the desert and the renewal of urban dwellers in their slums? Perhaps in some approximate way this is how we can **demonstrate** the Kingdom of God?

18.5.4 Applied through vigorous mission

People who wish to put hope into action must have:

- a high view of our mission calling
- a passionate commitment to its advancement
- a restructuring that unites temporal and eternal goals

If we **talk** in ambitious terms of

what the church might do we are in danger of triumphalism. Scripture constantly use metaphors of **gradualism** – "building", "sowing", "fighting" etc. But humble steps do not preclude some giant strides! The powerful Spirit of God may provoke a great burst of creativity and a major release of compassion which could not only bring **eternal** hope to a broken people, but also some **temporal** hope as well.

In this last study what have been some of the most important points for you?

What can you apply in your project?

18.6 A transformed church transforming the community

Ronald Sider has written down his dream for a church reaching out effectively in its community. It is a great dream modelled on Martin Luther King's famous speech, "I have a dream…".

Is your dream something like this?

"I dream of a movement in the church today that is filled with the Holy Spirit, a movement that immerses all its activity in prayer, a movement that chatters the Gospel to every person who has yet not accepted Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Saviour, a movement that challenges every injustice in society in the name of the God revealed in Holy Scripture.

I dream of a Biblically balanced church that will go to every person no matter how poor and oppressed, no matter how battered and trampled their self-esteem and initiative may be, and tell them that the Lord of this whole universe loves them. I dream of a church that will tell them that God wants them to repent of their despair and sin and enter into a living personal relationship with the Risen Lord of history.

I dream of a Biblical church that will visibly demonstrate in its common life such different, loving, redeemed relationships that the poor and oppressed will eagerly flock to their fellowship. Such a church will hasten to share the Biblical truth that the God who now lives in their hearts is a God of justice, who hates the present unjust social systems that discriminate and oppress. Nothing could be more explosive than a faithful sharing of this total Biblical truth with the poor and oppressed.

I dream of a church that will dare to go to the rich and powerful and tell them God loves them too and wants them to repent and follow Christ. Certainly such a church would never forget to say that they must accept Jesus as Lord as well as Saviour, that coming to Christ means not just forgiveness of sins, but radical change so that Christ is Lord of all business practices and political decisions regardless of the cost.

I dream of a church that would immerse all this activity in deep, intercessory prayer, a church that is totally dependent on the transforming power of the blessed Holy Spirit.

I dream of a church that would have tens of thousands of people interceding all night, as others work in government and in business to demand sweeping systemic changes for the sake of peace and justice.

I dream of a church that would, after it had exhausted every other available means of influencing government, even dare to use boycotts and non-violent civil disobedience to demand an end to economic exploitation and massive military spending.

I dream of a church that remembers that earlier heroes of the faith defied governments, knowing that they had to obey God rather than people; a church that, as a last resort, peacefully and in the power of the Holy Spirit, embarks on total non-co-operation with governments until they seek justice, correct oppression and abolish weapons of mass destruction.

Such a church might be persecuted like the early Christians. Such a church might have martyrs. Such a church might also change the course of history."

Underline the elements in this dream you can identify with.

What would you add to your dream?

Will you make a response in prayer and commitment to the Lord of history and to His Kingdom programme in this troubled world?