

AN ANALYSIS OF MINISTRY MODEL FORMATION

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A Paper

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by

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## Research Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to analyze models for church ministry, develop my personal ministry model, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and identify factors that have influenced its development.

## Delimitations of the Study

The study will be delimited to select writings of Kennon L. Callahan, Jim Cymbala, D.G. McCoury, Gene Mims, Robert Lewis, Randy Pope, and Rick Warren.

## Research Questions

1. Are there identifiable ministry models from the above authors?
2. What is the author's personal ministry model?
3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current ministry model?
4. What previous experiences have shaped the author's ministry model?
5. What previous experiences have shaped the author's spiritual development?

## Terminology

**Single-staff church:** “These churches may have a full-time pastor who lives on the field. Some of them are served by a bivocational pastor. Others are pastored by part-time ministers serving other single-staff churches, a volunteer, a part-time person, or a bivocational minister might serve as minister of music, minister of youth, minister of education, or a combination of these positions” (McCoury 1988, 4).

**Family-Chapel Church:** “The family-chapel church averages less than sixty persons in attendance. This church carries the name “family chapel” for several reasons. First, it functions frequently as an extended family. This church has a family heritage and a powerful father/mother (patriarch/matriarch) figures. Newcomers-if there are any-are usually “adopted” into this family (McCoury 1988, 26).

**Single Cell:** “This term means the family-chapel church does not have a complex organization. All participants identify as part of the whole, not as part of a subdivision of the whole. Typically, events involve the whole body, directly or indirectly, not just one segment of the church. Who is more important than what. Members relate to one another in economic, family, social, and community roles as well as in church roles (McCoury 1988, 26).

**Patriarch/Matriarch:** This individual is the key to the administrative nature of the family-chapel church.

**Collective-Alliance Church:** This pastor is in the opposite position of the family chapel. “The key to the collective-alliance church is the pastor. The collective-alliance pastor develops the administration” (McCoury 1988, 37).

**Equipped-Leader Church:** “In this concept, you see the pastor, deacons, and volunteer leaders as a part of the church’s leadership team. In this model the pastor is the leader of the leaders. This church leadership team equips each member of the church to be on mission. Thus, the pastor is the equippier of the equippers” (McCoury 1988, 51).

**The University Church:** “where the emphasis is on teaching, learning, and doctrine” (Mims 2001, 25). The key is instruction and the pastor is viewed as a professor.

**The Arena Church:** “worship-centered, where performance and entertainment are key” (Mims 2001, 25). The key is experience and the pastor is viewed as a performer.

**The Corporate Church:** “large, complex, intricate and model of efficiency” (Mims 2001, 25). The key is vision and the pastor is viewed as CEO.

**The Machine Church:** “program-oriented, focused on building, missions, and task management” (Mims 2001, 25). The key is keeping the established programs running and the pastor is viewed as a manager.

**The Family Chapel:** “based on family ties, where personal relationships come first” (Mims 2001, 25). The key is personal relationships within the church and the pastor is viewed as a chaplain.

**The Legacy Church:** “rich in tradition, often focused on a great event or personality of the past” (Mims 2001, 25). The key is the history of the church and the pastor is viewed as curator of a museum.

**The Community Center Church:** “committed to community service and local issues” (Mims 2001, 25). The key is current issues and the pastor is viewed as a prophet because he spends time analyzing society.

### **What are the previous experiences that have shaped my spiritual development?**

For the majority of my Christian experience I have only known the single-staff church model. These churches have predominantly been one hundred or fewer in attendance. During my seminary training I attended what I would call a large church with multiple paid staff. In my current ministry experience I am the Discipleship Training Director at the First Baptist Church in Griffith, Indiana. We are nearing the two hundred barrier in Sunday school attendance and we average two hundred and thirty to two hundred and fifty during a typical Sunday morning worship service.

I have been a member and/or served in some capacity in eleven churches in my lifetime. The following will be a discussion of those churches, ministry models used and the pastoral style as best I recall. I am describing these churches using McCoury's language in hindsight as I reflect upon previous experience.

**First Baptist Church, Chesterton, Indiana, 1963-1972; Pastors: Paul Pardue, and James Gabhart**

I was born in the church. I was blessed with parents who placed high value upon obedience to Christ and the need to be active in a local church setting. I was saved and baptized at seven years old in this church in 1970 under the ministry of Paul Pardue. The church was more of a collective alliance church with tendencies of being a family chapel. The people followed the leadership of the pastor. When he resigned, the church called James Gabhart as the pastor. Pastor Gabhart was a kind man. He listened even to the ramblings of a child. My first ministry experiences came in this church when I began to sing.

Just one year ago I had the privilege of being, in a sense, interim pastor for three months in this church. There are members there that still remember me as a child and thanked God that they had a hand in my Christian development. The church incorporated aspects of the legacy church.

**First Baptist Church, Powell, Tennessee, 1972-1975; Pastor Robert J. Burns**

First Baptist Church of Powell, Tennessee, was the first large and multiple staffed church to which I was exposed. Pastor Robert J. Burns was a tall, deep-voiced man who demonstrated patience and humility, allowing me as a nine-year-old, access to him. As I recall I would always visit with him during Sunday and Wednesday evenings worship times. The church also had a Minister of Music, Larry Lewis (his brother was D. D. Lewis, former linebacker for the Dallas Cowboys), and a Children's Minister, Wayne Watson. This church would also be characterized

as an equipped-leader church with characteristics of a collective alliance. Pastor Burns was the leader. Under his leadership it was more of a university church. When Pastor Burns resigned from the church, he taught in a college in Missouri for a time.

**First Baptist Church, Dyer, Indiana, 1975-1987; Pastors: Jack Guerin, Ben McDaniel, Doug Anderson, and Ova Murrill**

The First Baptist Church of Dyer was a single staff collective alliance church. Like many Southern Baptist churches in Northwest Indiana, it was a church that was predominantly populated by southern families who moved to Northwest Indiana in the 1950's to work in the steel mills or at Ford. These individuals looked forward to retirement and to move "back home."

Pastors Jack Guerin (beginning date ?-1976) and Ben McDaniel (1981-1982) did not have the leadership skill sets to effectively lead. The comments I recall about Pastor Gurrien regarded his preaching. He basically preached the same sermon Sunday after Sunday. He used a different text but basically preached evangelistic sermons to a congregation of Christians. He failed to feed the flock. He was a personable individual and spent much of his time visiting but little time in sermon preparation.

Pastor Ben McDaniel was the opposite of Pastor Jack. He was a recent seminary graduate and his view of the pastorate was one of studying and preaching. In retrospect he desired a university church but the church was a family chapel. Leadership in the congregation, my father included, viewed him as lazy because he spent little time in developing relationships with members of the church. As a result his tenure in the church was short.

Doug Anderson (1977-1980) and Ova Murrill (1983-1997) began as strong leaders. Pastor Doug was instrumental in developing me in leadership roles within the church. Under his ministry I began as the song leader while I was in high school. Under Doug's encouragement I competed in the speaker's tournament and competed in the Indiana Baptist state competition.

Pastor Ova Murrill remained a strong leader until he was nearing retirement. I believe he became afraid of “rocking the boat” and losing his position before he retired. The end result of his lack of stance on important issues was that leadership began to leave the church. Pastor Murrill began his ministry preaching solid biblical sermons. However, as he neared retirement his preaching was to entertain and not confront and/or feed the flock. About a year after Pastor Murrill retired, the church left the SBC and became Pentecostal. Pastor Murrill must take some of the responsibility because during the latter years of his ministry he encouraged an atmosphere that was more emotional and not biblical.

During his early ministry I was the song leader of the church. I resigned the position because I was a student at the Moody Bible Institute and was not able to be at the church on Sundays due to other ministry requirements in conjunction with school. During his ministry I was licensed in 1985 and ordained in 1986. The church was helpful and encouraging while I was in seminary from 1990-93. At times when I was on break from school, I was given opportunities to preach.

#### **Highland Baptist Church, Highland, Indiana, 1987-1989; Pastor Ron Murrill**

I began ministry at the Highland Baptist Church in January of 1987. Ron Murrill is the son of Ova Murrill. I was a recent graduate of the Moody Bible Institute and looking for a place to minister. Ron had recently moved to the area from Ohio and was in need of help at Highland. Highland Baptist Church was a family chapel and the pastor was a university church pastor. There were two main families who vied for authority and power within the church. One group was willing to allow the pastor rightful authority, yet the other was completely unwilling. It was a hostile environment where accusations and near fistfights were predominant.

The church did not provide either adequate income or housing for the pastor and his family. One part of the church recognized this and allowed Ron to borrow money from the church as a down payment on a house. He bought a house in need of significant repair and

proceeded to make repairs. The other faction of the church resented pastoral independence and made life miserable. When Ron could no longer take the difficulties regarding his house, he put it up for sale. The agreement with the church was that Ron would pay back the loan of the down payment with no interest. The leader of the faction that resisted Ron's ministry claimed that the equity that had been built into the house through Ron's improvements belonged to the church and he sought to get that money. When that proved unsuccessful this faction of the church left. They would get their revenge by starving the pastor out. Ron resigned and took a church in Florida. I left in the fall of 1989 a few months before Ron left and became Associate Pastor and Minister of Music in Cedar Lake, IN.

**First Baptist Church, Cedar Lake, Indiana, 1989-1990; Pastor Paul Wilson**

This church was also a family chapel with two predominant families vying for power. Paul Wilson was a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and was a university pastor. While pastoring he was working on a Doctor of Ministry. Paul gave me opportunities to preach and teach. The church grew because of Paul's efforts at visiting and drawing people in. His efforts for church growth through visiting, his pursuit of higher education, and his preaching intimidated those who did not desire the church to grow. Paul said to me, "Churches are small for a reason. They like it that way." I have never forgotten that statement. Paul was instrumental in encouraging me to pursue a seminary education. I was only at Cedar Lake for a little over a year because I felt God's call to seminary and we moved to Louisville, Kentucky, where I attended Southern Seminary from 1990 to 1993. Paul left Cedar Lake and moved to Louisiana a year or two after I left. The church called an individual with no previous pastoral or educational experience. The church has since split twice.

### **Highland Baptist Church, Louisville, Kentucky, 1990**

Highland Baptist Church was my first experience in the “moderate” church of the SBC while a seminarian. I do not recall the names of the pastoral staff. The church had a woman as assistant pastor who was also the minister of education. What impressed me and drew me to the church was the Sunday school class. It was one of the best Sunday school classes I have ever experienced. The pastor did not draw me to the church; what drew me was the fellowship and quality biblical teaching in the Sunday school. We were members for less than one year. I left to accept the call to pastor the Union Baptist Church in Defoe, Kentucky. Highland was a combination of a university church with aspects of a legacy church.

### **Union Baptist Church, Defoe, Kentucky, 1990-1991**

This church was a family chapel with a machine mentality. It was also a powder keg with a lit fuse and I was naïve, unaware and inexperienced. This was my first full-time pastorate and I believed that somehow I could handle any situation and that I would have respect because I was pastor.

In the interview process I answered their questions and I asked too few. One question I asked regarded Bible versions. I asked what Bible version was predominant in the church. I told them that I used a New American Standard. I was told that would not be an issue; however, it became one of many issues. On my first Sunday as pastor one of the members, Sam Saterley, said as we walked in the front door, “If they run you off, I’m leaving too.”

I learned something of rural culture. Defoe was one hour from Louisville, Lexington, and Cincinnati. Defoe is in Henry County. I experienced a mentality that espoused that if you weren’t from Henry County you were nothing. Not everyone held that mentality; however, it was communicated to me from the associational director who also experienced that belief from first-hand experience.



I was pastor for only three months when the powder keg blew. I learned I was the sixth pastor the church had in ten years. Because I used a NASB rather than a KJV, there was one of the leaders who claimed I was not preaching from the Bible. This same individual was related to the person from whom we rented a house. My wife and I bought a White West Highland Terrier puppy, and we also had a dwarf rabbit as a pet. The owner of the house, who knew we had pets began, threatening us with eviction, and we moved to another house three months after moving on the field. In the church itself there were those teaching Sunday school that refused to stay for church and were not in attendance on Sunday evening or Wednesday. They were using their position and the Sunday school hour to spread discontent within the church. They did not appreciate being questioned about their behavior.

I was pastor at Union Baptist Church for eight months. I resigned shortly after I received a phone call from a member telling me I had no business having a dog or buying a new car. We bought a dealer demonstrator with 20,000 miles since we needed two vehicles because my wife worked at the seminary and I did not have school every day. I was told that this group was getting a petition signed to have me fired. Many of those signing were inactive members.

I announced my resignation on a Sunday morning and made it effective a few weeks into the future. I recall coming back to preach that evening and my name had been removed from the church sign. I was severely wounded by the experience.

In retrospect I viewed my “ministry,” such as it was, to free individuals from a situation they, for whatever reason, did not have the ability to leave on their own. When I resigned much of the leadership also resigned and left the church. I never asked or encouraged anyone to resign and leave. I think they like Sam Saterley, had had enough. They would no longer tolerate a group who were carnal in their mindset and action. We found our way to Lyndon Baptist Church for the next year.

**Lyndon Baptist Church, Louisville, Kentucky, 1992-1993; Pastor Dr. Raymond Bailey,  
Assistant Pastor Kelly Stanley**

Lyndon was an oasis for us after Defoe. At Lyndon we found acceptance, healing and I was given opportunities for ministry. Lyndon Baptist Church was an equipped-leader church and a university church. There were numerous ministries and I was given the opportunity to minister to the elderly who were unable to attend church. I developed relationships with these individuals and I enjoyed the ministry. One lady in particular was very frail and in need of a blood transfusion, and I had her blood type and donated blood for her.

Dr. Bailey gave me the opportunity to lead in a Wednesday evening service and asked me on one occasion to share on tithing during a Sunday morning worship service. I was humbled when, after I shared before the sermon, Dr. Bailey stood before the congregation and stated, “You just heard a better sermon than what I am going to preach.” I was greatly affirmed at Lyndon.

It was there I met Rob Edwards who was a MACE graduate from Southern and we developed a friendship that continues today. Rob introduced me to *Experiencing God* and *Master Life*. My heart has been in discipleship ever since.

**First Southern Baptist Church, Flora, Illinois, 1993-1995**

Two days after graduation from Southern Seminary I was called to pastor the First Southern Baptist Church in Flora, Illinois. It was a family chapel and a machine church with a strong patriarch figure. Again, I understand this from hindsight. This church started as the result of a church split from Oak Street Baptist Church. The pastor sought to secure a loan for building expansion that had not been approved by the church. When his actions were questioned, the pastor told those who did not like what he was doing to leave, and half the church left.

They began to meet in a school and purchased four acres of land. The church had an

interim pastor from the Illinois Baptist State Association that faithfully served them for nearly a year. I was their first full-time pastor. I participated in over fifty building committee meetings and helped them through their building program with a brand new facility.

The ministry was pastoral care in human crisis. My first Sunday as pastor Jim and Barbara Shannon joined. He was diagnosed with terminal cancer. I spent the next few months ministering to him and his wife. Jim Shannon's funeral was the first I officiated. I still have the letter Barb wrote to me. (See appendix.)

The most significant ministry experience I had in Flora was ministering to Larry and Mary Wilkerson when their son committed suicide. That devastated Larry and Mary and I recall lying on the floor with them in their home crying out to God for help. I spent months of daily then weekly personal ministry helping them through their grief. Larry and Mary believed that if they had just had a grave service and buried their son Kenny, they would be "over" the grief. I helped them understand the need to say "goodbye" to their son.

Another significant ministry experience was to help the church begin to see the need for reconciliation with Oak Street Baptist Church. There were very harsh and hard feelings between these congregations. Wounds were very deep. I began to encourage forgiveness and reconciliation. The point I sought to hammer home was that the community was aware of the split and the community was watching to see if God were real. I planted and others watered, and a few years ago ground was broken in reconciliation when one member from First Southern married a member from Oak Street.

A final note on Flora deals with ministry to the pastors. There was a ministerial alliance where the pastors gathered for lunch once a month. I participated and challenged the pastors to meet for a greater purpose than to eat. I had the opportunity to lead the pastor of the Northern Baptist Church, Church of God of Prophecy, the Nazarene, the Evangelical Methodist and the

Church of God in *Experiencing God* and *Fresh Encounter*.

I resigned this pastorate after two years for two reasons. First, I could not financially afford to remain. What looked like a \$30,000 salary on paper was severely diminished writing a \$1,200 quarterly check for taxes and social security. Additionally I was paying rent, health insurance a car payment, food and incidentals. We were going in the hole every month. I began substitute teaching in the school system to supplement my income. Some in the church did not like that I was “moonlighting.”

Secondly, both my wife’s and my parents are elderly. Our daughter was born in Flora and we wanted them to get to know their grandchild before it was too late. My mother-in-law is currently dying of cancer and has been given no more than six months to live. My mother has been suffering from Alzheimer’s disease since 1992 and is spiraling downward quickly over the past two years.

#### **First Baptist Church of Liverpool, Lake Station, Indiana, 1995-1997; Pastor Ron Murrill**

I reigned as pastor of First Southern Baptist Church of Flora in July of 1995 and moved to Hammond, Indiana. My friend, Ron Murrill, had moved back to the area and asked me to help him by leading music at the First Baptist Church of Liverpool in Lake Station. Liverpool was another small family chapel with a Corinthian twist. Liverpool was a cesspool of sin. There had been longstanding issues of adultery taking place with members of the church. Previous pastors who attempted to confront the situation were run off. There were also pedophiles, and persons arrested as voyeurs.

When Ron became aware of the sinfulness and he began to confront the people and the situations, he suffered severe backlash. There were threats against him and his family. Ron did not waiver but stood up and “cleaned house.” The offenders refused to repent even when caught committing their acts on church property. They left the church and moved to another church and

continued their practices. What was so disappointing was months afterward there were those in the church who expressed how they missed those who left and wished they would return.

Ron resigned the church and accepted a pastorate in Ohio. Some in the church resented Ron's leaving and since I was someone Ron brought in from the outside, I also experienced a backlash. Knowing I would not have a future at this church, I left and began attending First Baptist Church of Griffith, Indiana.

**First Baptist Church, Griffith Indiana, 1997-present; Pastor James Heard, Pastor Dr. Scott Hobbs**

FBC Griffith is a family chapel that under the leadership of James Heard became a collective alliance. Pastor Heard was a strong and domineering leader. He was a dictator and exerted control in all church programs. The church operated in the machine style implementing the SBC program.

I came as a "maverick" into this church. Many of my ideas and visions for the church were viewed with suspicion by the pastor and chairman of the deacons. I was asked to lead the music because of my previous experience. However, there was clearly apprehension that I would dramatically change the worship experience and offend the older members. The point I raised was the need to attract younger families. This church, if it did not make some major changes, would experience atrophy as many of the Southern Baptist churches in Northwest Indiana had because they failed to adjust their method of ministry.

James Heard pastored the church between seven and eight years. He led them through a major building program that constructed a new auditorium with additional Sunday school space. However, since he was a collective alliance pastor and not an equipped-leader pastor, the church struggled after his retirement. Major decisions such as addressing issues in the church

constitution were not dealt with because it was believed the church needed to have a pastor to successfully lead and accomplish that task.

Pastor Heard's model of the pastor's role also hindered the church in their selection of a new pastor. Pastor Heard was a workaholic. He was the primary force behind church growth. To his credit, during his last year as pastor he brought into the church the FAITH strategy and began training members in sharing their faith. That training continues today.

To his detriment, after his retirement and leaving the church, he still continued to have a hand in the direction of the church. Members on the pulpit committee were consulting him and prior to his leaving, he instructed the pulpit committee from which schools should they accept resumes.

I had thought I might be a candidate as the next pastor, but that was not to be. Early on in my ministry I had been asked to preach during a Baptist Men's Day. Members expressed how much they appreciated the message and told Pastor Heard that they would like to hear me preach more often. The next opportunity I was given was a year later.

I was asked to become the Discipleship Training Director. I have held this position for approximately five years. It has been an uphill climb. There were those who wanted the traditional SBC discipleship of "reading parts" and I brought materials other than SBC. My philosophy has been to offer various classes for people to choose. My model is one of an equipped-leader university. I believe the role of the pastor is to "equip the saints for the work of ministry," whether that is using SBC material or not. I want what is best.

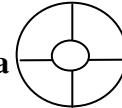
Dr. Scott Hobbs became the pastor two years ago. Scott has given me freedom and encouragement regarding discipleship. He initiated a major change in the ministry model by allowing the Sunday evening to be broken into classes. The church gathers in the worship center for praise and scatters for discipleship. There has been resistance to this model by some of the

more traditionalists who insist the pastor must preach and give the traditional invitation.

However, there have been a number of breakthroughs. We have had classes in many subjects and evening attendance has increased. People are growing in their faith. We now have a men's ministry where some discipleship classes have occurred, a women's ministry that has broken into two groups that have studies, and a seniors group that has accomplished discipleship studies.

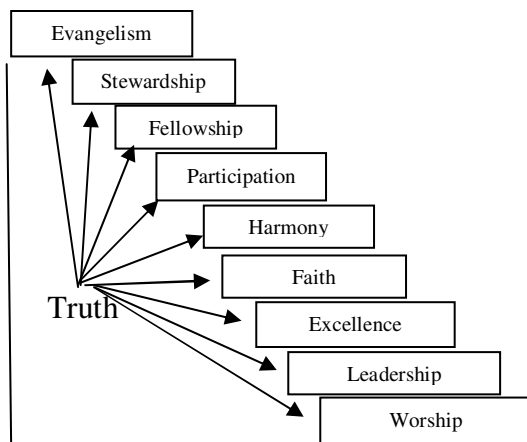
### Identifiable ministry models from the reading assignments

#### Brooklyn Tabernacle Brooklyn, New York, New York, Pastor Jim Cymbala



Jim Cymbala, pastor of the Brooklyn Tabernacle is the author of *Fresh wind, fresh fire*. As I read his book the image of a wheel came to mind as a description of his model of ministry. The hub of this model is prayer. The four spokes are preaching, worship, education, and service. In Cymbala's mind the most important service in his church is the Tuesday evening prayer time. "From this day on, the prayer meeting will be the barometer of our church. What happens on Tuesday night will be the gauge by which we will judge success or failure because that will be the measure by which God blesses us" (Cymbala 1997, 27). Later Cymbala says "Preaching, music, the reading of the Word—these things are fine; I believe in the practice of all of them. But they must never override prayer as the defining mark of God's dwelling" (Cymbala 1997, 71).

#### Southeast Christian Church Louisville, Kentucky, Pastor Bob Russell



Bob Russell is the pastor of Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky. In *When God builds a church*, Russell outlines the principles he as pastor operates by in the context of the church. As I analyze this book the image of a staircase comes to mind. For Russell the first principle is that of truth. Truth—believing it, teaching it, and applying it is the foundation that holds the staircase together. Truth has a direct relationship to every stair. Evangelism is the tenth principle that stands at the top of the staircase and “is the by-product of authentic worship” (Russell 2001, 51).

Russell lists four legitimate expectations from worship. They are a sense of God’s presence, a conviction of our sinfulness, a joyful reminder of God’s grace, and the inspiration to serve. I appreciate Russell’s definition of worship saying, “Worship is not defined by how many people raise their hands or dance in your service, but how many people have an encounter with God” (Russell 2001, 62).

People will be drawn to God when they visibly see excellence over mediocrity in the ministries of the church. People will be drawn to God when they see visionary people walking by faith that stimulates enthusiasm, prayer, sacrifice, and harmony. People will be drawn to God when they see the church as a whole participating in the ministry. People will be drawn to God when they see genuine fellowship within the congregation, the class and cell group. People will be drawn to God when they see others investing and generously giving their time, talents, and finances as a testimony of their love and commitment to Christ.

### **Fellowship Bible Church, Little Rock, Arkansas, Pastor Dr. Robert Lewis**

Robert Lewis writes *The church of irresistible influence* views the church as a spiritual bridge that “involves a physical reality. People need to see to believe” (Lewis 2001, 71). Lewis lists three steps in the bridge—building process. First is confession. “Confession means reading



afresh the words of Jesus Christ about his concept of the church—“salt” and “light”—and being grief—stricken over how far our churches fall short” (Lewis 2001, 72).

The second step is vision—seeing what God wants the church to be. “In seeking to become a church of irresistible influence, church leaders must again, in practical terms, envision for their people the church as profiled by Jesus and the apostles within the pages of the New Testament” (Lewis 2001, 74). Lewis continues:

- A church passionately committed to Jesus Christ and to the proclamation of the gospel;
  - A church of winsome lifestyles punctuated by high moral standards;
  - A church of radical love and selfless good deeds that amazes the world around it.
- Lewis 2001, 74

The third step of becoming a church of irresistible influence according to Lewis calls “Structure: unleashing people with a purpose” (Lewis 2001, 75). Vision is not enough. The vision must be translated to effective execution. Lewis proposes that an irresistible influence church be structured for personal hands-on exposure which he sees as “specific opportunities to connect with the world in a way that will build both confidence and compassion” (Lewis 2001, 77).

A second aspect of structure involves a personal ministry. “The Christian life is intended to crescendo around each person finding his or her place in the constantly unfolding fabric of kingdom work that engages the unique gifts and abilities with which each person has been endowed by God” (Lewis 2001, 79). I understand Lewis to be helping people understand their spiritual giftedness and giving them opportunities to use their gifts to build the body of Christ.

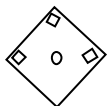
This leads to the third aspect of structure, which is strategic investments. These are the programs the church has in place that give people the opportunity to use their gifts in significant ministry experience. In my current church situation at First Baptist of Griffith, one such strategic investment is the program “Builders for Christ.” This program organizes members who use one

week of vacation time to travel to various parts of the country and helps construct church facilities for those churches that can not afford commercial construction costs.

Another program is the “FAITH Strategy” of equipping people to share their faith. It builds confidence and provides the learner with methods of effectively sharing their faith. Part of the training is being coupled with a leader, and in conjunction with a classroom setting, the learners then apply in a practical exercise what they have learned by going out and sharing their faith.

In Lewis’s structure there are three main phases. Phase 1 he calls “Discovery.” It is the newcomer orientation, small group training, and introduces church membership. The student is to be committed to this for eight to ten weeks. Phase 2 Lewis calls “Seasons of Life.” This is a three year commitment to small group participation that emphasizes growth and relationships “according to the member’s particular life stage” (Lewis 2001, 80). Phase 3 Lewis names as “Common Cause.” The purpose is “small group spiritual growth experience emphasizing service to Christ according to a member’s gifting and design” (Lewis 2001, 80). In Lewis’ model time is a key factor. Lewis desires those in leadership positions be fully equipped. I think he takes seriously the biblical mandate regarding deacons in 1 Timothy 3:6 where Paul says, “He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil.” Through this scripture specifically addresses the office of deacons, Lewis applies the enduring principle of not placing new or inexperienced converts into positions of authority and leadership they are not equipped to handle.

**Saddleback Valley Community Church, Orange County, California, Pastor Rick Warren**



The model Rick Warren uses is the baseball diamond. “We use the simple diagram of a baseball diamond to visually explain our education and assimilation process to our members.

Each base represents a completed class and a deeper level of commitment” (Warren 1995,144).

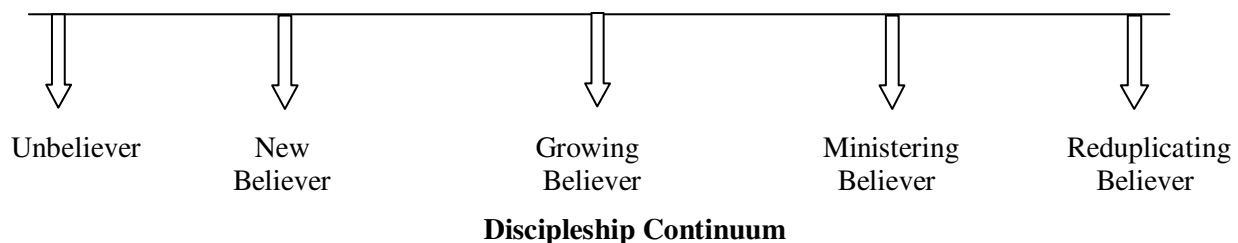
First base is the goal of the member being committed to membership. Preparation for achieving this goal is in level 101 classes that emphasize discovering church membership and covenant.

Second Base is the goal of commitment to maturity with 201 level classes emphasizing spiritual maturity. Third base is commitment to spiritual ministry with 301 level classes, and home plate is demonstrating commitment to mission with 401 level classes that emphasize life mission.

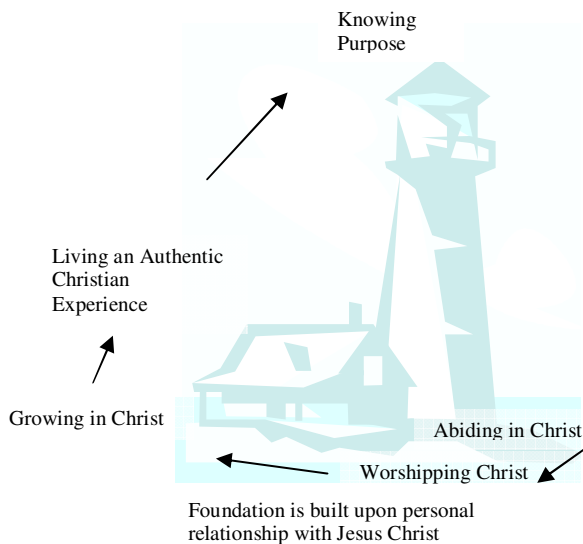
Warren calls this the life development process. He realizes that this is a life-long process with the goal of running the race to home plate because “you don’t get credit for runners left on base” (Warren 1995, 145).

### My Personal Ministry Model

My model of ministry flows from the commission of Matthew 28 to “make disciples.” I view everyone on what I will call the Discipleship Continuum. Every person falls into one of five categories. They are either an unbeliever, a new believer, a growing believer, ministering believer, or a reduplicating believer.



The model of ministry that communicates to me most effectively is that of a lighthouse.



The cornerstone of the lighthouse is based in John 15 and the principle of abiding in Christ. The next corner is that of worshipping Christ both corporately and personally. The next is growing in Christ that also has both corporate and personal implications. I see this as a logical progression. If I am abiding in Christ,

I will naturally desire to worship Christ, both publicly with a local body and personally. If I am worshipping I will naturally desire to grow in Christ. As I grow in Christ because I am worshipping and abiding, I will live an authentic Christian experience before a watching world and as a result I will be sensitive to God's direction and know my purpose and mission in life. This model has its beginnings from Ephesians 2:19-22 and Matthew 5:14.

The opposite is also true. If I am struggling with my purpose, the question must be asked, "Am I living an authentic Christian experience?" If I am not living an authentic Christian experience, then am I growing in Christ? If I am not consistently growing in Christ, am I worshipping Christ? If I am not worshipping Christ publicly and personally, am I truly abiding in Christ? If I am not abiding in Christ, is my faith on the foundation of a relationship with Christ or in a religious experience?

I have come to understand that my pastoral leanings are toward the university style model. I enjoy teaching and preaching. My preaching style is teaching. I enjoy the classroom as well as the pulpit.

The goal of the Discipleship Continuum is that seekers who are currently unbelievers will become new believers, who will become growing believers, then ministering believers, and ultimately grow to reduplicate themselves into the lives of others.

### **How does this work in the local church setting?**

Seekers need classes that will introduce them to the fundamentals of the Christian faith and the foundations of church membership. They need a safe class where they are free to ask any questions and have the confidence that they will be heard, understood, and answered.

New believers need discipleship classes that will effectively train them in the inductive bible study method. Bible book studies like John and James to help them understand the necessity of Jesus Christ impacting the whole of life. They need instruction on sharing their faith

and practical application such as the *FAITH Strategy* where the students learn and then do what they are learning.

Growing believers need classes that will teach them Old and New Testament survey and help them understand the unity of the Bible and how the individual books interrelate. They need classes in biblical theology to help them solidify their belief system and apologetics to give them logical reasoned arguments for their faith. One of the programs in which our church currently participates is “Builders for Christ.” Men and women have put legs on their faith and have traveled to parts of the country helping other churches build their facilities. It has made a tremendous impact upon those participating and has steadily grown in size over the past few years.

Ministering believers need instruction in teaching, biblical counseling, and pastoral care in human crisis. As individuals grow and mature, they participate in significant ministry experiences and leadership within the body. Finally, the reduplicating believer is one who teaches the above courses and mentors individuals in one on one and small group discipleship. This model is one of training, instruction, and practical application, because as Paul has effectively stated in Ephesians that Christ gave leadership to the church “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, [14] so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes” Ephesians 4:12-14 (English Standard Version).

## APPENDIX

### PERSONAL CORRESPONDANCE

Personal correspondence from Barbara Shannon to James Holesapple regarding ministry to her family dated November 18, 1993.

I have been so grateful that God sent you to Flora! Your support and concern has helped each of us in this family. Not only helped with our grief, but made Jesus very real to me. Our family will never be the same because of your influence. Jim and I had come to know God's love, but he is also using you to help Les and Terri become aware of a living God.

I pray God will continue to bless you! Thank you for being with us during this time.

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