

# **EVALUATION**

**AND PLANNING  
FOR MISSIONS**



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# Evaluating and Planning for Missions

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## **Foreword**

At some point in time we need to move from talking about missions to taking action. We need to make plans and set goals in order to accomplish what we have been talking about. We cannot simply wait and see if someone will respond or something will happen.

Jesus was no stranger to making plans and having goals. At one point he was warned that Herod was watching him. Jesus told the people what he was going to be doing and where he would be doing it for the next couple of days. He told people that his focus would be on the people of Israel. Yet there was a plan in place to reach beyond the geography and people of Palestine. He mentions that he has other sheep that need to be reached.

Jesus organized those following him into teams and sent them out to do ministry. This occurred at least twice. The one time he sent out the 12 and another time he sent out seventy. We have his instructions showing what he expected of them. When they returned, he received from them a report on what they had done and what had happened.

In his prayer in John 17 we see that Jesus had a larger plan that he was operating under. He was part of a plan that had been set up by His Father in heaven. He revealed that he had a clear understanding of that plan and knew what he was to do. This allowed him to have a clear perspective to see if he was accomplishing the tasks set for him by His Father.

Jn 17:4 I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do.

Jn 17:6-8 "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

Jesus also showed that the plan was to be renewed and extended. The disciples were to become part of the plan and would be sent out to continue the work that Jesus had begun. He also lets us see his commitment to the work that is being given to the disciples.

Jn 17:15-19 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

Finally we see that the plan will be continued on into the generations ahead. This plan, letting the world know who Jesus is and how to be brought into relationship with God, will be renewed with each group of people who believe. The

commitment that Jesus makes to the disciples will be renewed to each generation.

Jn 17:20-23 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me.

Jn 17:26- I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

In Acts 1:8 we have a quick summary of the first steps and goals for the disciples to consider as they began carrying out the plan and goals set for them. They are to be witnesses to the world of all they have seen and heard. They are to be aware of four key groups that need to receive the witness,

- Jerusalem – our family and friends,
- Judea – our ethnic group or tribe,
- Samaria – the outcasts and our enemies,
- The world – everyone else who needs to hear the gospel wherever they may be found.



Jesus also reminded them that the strength and direction needed to accomplish this task does not rest solely on their abilities and skills. They are to enter into a relationship with God and the Holy Spirit. In this relationship they will be able to set their goals for the work, make the plans needed to carry out those goals, and find the strength and skills needed to do the work.

As we take time to look at our need to set goals, make plans, and seek out the Lord for the strength and resources to carry out that task, we need to remember that the task given to us is not dependent on the resources and knowledge of man. It is a task given to us by God, who has all the resources we need and has clearly promised that he will supply all that is needed to carry out the task of missions.

## **Introduction**

In almost every activity of life, we must ask ourselves these questions, “who, what, how, why, where, and when?” At times, we ignore them and act on impulse; at other times we take time to seriously consider them.

These questions are important to our lives if we desire to grow and mature. These questions are a guide to tell us where we start, help us decide what needs to be done and where we should be headed. These questions are important to determining if we are doing the right thing, if we are effective in what we are doing and to help decide how to improve. These questions are critical to an honest evaluation so that we can see clearly where we are and the road before us. They also help us sense when is the right time to prepare for an activity, when it is time to wait, and when it is time to get busy.

At some point in time we will have to consider the need for evaluation. Evaluation occurs at many levels and at many points in life and activity. Each person involved in an activity needs to know if what they are doing is worthwhile and if it helps gain the desired objective. Each group needs to know if they are, in fact, doing their work properly, giving adequate guidance to those they lead, and if they have the needed skills and knowledge to direct the work they have been assigned to. Those assigned to do a task on behalf of others need to have a guide that will help them understand if they are doing the

work, and help them realize they will be held accountable for the work assigned.

Every level of a plan or program requires evaluation. That evaluation process should be designed to assist all those involved at each level to be effective and be able to improve in the area of work they are responsible for. Jesus in his prayer in John 17 takes time to review his ministry and evaluate what he has been doing and what is to be expected from those who follow him in the ministry that lies before. Paul, in sharing with the church in Philippi (Ph 3:12-4:1), deals with a number of issues in evaluating the work and the processes involved in reaching others and helping them become like Christ.

As one reads through the letters of the New Testament one quickly notes that a key area of concern for the writers is to provide evaluation, both positive and negative, of the churches, of their work and the life they are living in the world. It covers issues of teaching and preaching the word, everyday issues of personal relations, and concerns for maintaining a clear and consistent theology. It also focuses on effectiveness in evangelism and missions.

Let us take a more detailed look at the passage in Philippians. We will note that Paul reflects on six key areas that are critical in helping a church be effective in setting goals and making the plans needed to carry out those goals. It also gives us some useful tools in evaluating what is being done.

The six areas relate to six phrases that Paul uses to review his own ministry. In looking at these phrases we see that Paul has a clear understanding of his purpose, sets goals to accomplish that work, has plans for completing these goals, and is very aware of the need to evaluate all that he is doing.

**Goals** – Php 3:12-13 I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it, ...

Paul has a clear sense of a plan for his life and ministry. He also is aware that he has not fully completed all that is part of that plan. Thus his goal is to gain and accomplish all that Christ wants in his life and ministry.

**Focus** – Php 3:13-14 But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Paul knows the purpose of his work. He knows that the past is not something to be worried over. The key is to keep his focus clear and remember the results that are being targeted. This allows us to evaluate where we have been but not be restricted by past successes and failures. It helps us to remember that our focus should always be on God and the work we have been given.

**Purpose** – Php 3:14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Paul understands the purpose of his life and work. He understands that God has set goals for him and he strives to win the prize God is offering. It is also clear that the goals relate not to earthy possessions and goods but to a vision of what God has planned for him and the work. We must remember that God needs to be at the center of our activity. It is God who defines the purpose behind the work we are called to do. It is God who calls us. We do not call ourselves. We are to work for a prize that God is providing, not for the glory that man can offer.

**Building** – Php 3:16-17 Only let us live up to what we have already attained. Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.

In doing any building there is a plan that is laid down to guide us in the work. The ability to use the plan is based on skills and knowledge already gained that helps us understand the plan. Paul uses a similar concept to define what is to happen with the work. There is work that has already been done and we are encouraged to build on that work wisely. The work to come will be based on the pattern or plan already established. We need to understand clearly the plan of God and build on it. This plan will help us evaluate each group's contribution to the building process. It will guide us in what we are to do next.

**Partnering** – Php 3:17 Join with others in following my example.

Paul does not see himself as being able to do the work alone. He sees the need to share together with others in doing the work that has been given to him. He willingly accepts the help of others. On several occasions the church in Philippi sends gifts of money to aid him. They send Epaphroditus to assist Paul while he is in prison. Paul talks about how John Mark was useful to him. In his letters to Timothy and Titus he talks of people who were assigned various tasks to assist in the work. We must remember that the task of missions is always more than we can do alone. We need to join with others if we hope to carry out the task God has given us.

**Results** – Php 3:20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Paul knows what to expect from the work he is doing. If successful, the people he witnessed to and worked with would become citizens of heaven, members of God’s family. Their membership in a local church was important, but only as it led them to be full members in the kingdom of heaven. This idea is a part of his discussion in 1 Cor 3 regarding people claiming one leader over another. It is not about who is leading us or what church we are a member of. Our work must lead people to see themselves first as children of God and only secondly as a member of a particular church or fellowship. We need to be sure people are looking to Jesus and not to man.

Paul concludes with the comment, “that is how you should stand firm in the Lord. (Php 4:1)” In doing careful evaluation

we will be able to see what is happening. We will be able to deal with past mistakes and avoid future problems. We will become more effective in the use of God's resources. It will allow us to stand and move forward in the work we have been given. It will point people to Jesus, who alone can save them from their sins.

Let's take these areas one by one and see what can be learned and how they can apply to developing a plan for working in the area of missions.

## ***Evaluation Area One- Goals***

### Not yet there – Goals and knowing where we are going

Goals – Targets we set so we can know how we are doing. There are many types of goals. Paul challenges us to press on toward the goal. We are to take hold of the very goal Christ took hold of us for. The discussion of what that goal is would be a fruitful discussion but our focus here is setting and evaluating goals.

In talking about the goal, Paul says he has not succeeded yet and so needs to keep working. He has goals, and these are being used to determine how he is doing in achieving the end results that are defined by those goals.

We need to consider what kinds of goals we need to be setting for ourselves and the task of missions that God has given us. We need to think through what issues are involved in setting a goal and working towards it. In thinking through this topic it may be helpful to keep in mind the life of an athlete and what is involved in successful competition in a sports event.

The athlete has a clear idea of the goal being sought. He also has an understanding of his current situation. The athlete knows his current abilities and that makes it easy to determine what he or she will need to do to move from his current condition to the goal that is being set. There is also a clear knowledge of the commitment that will be needed to reach the goal.



This also means there will be a way to measure or evaluate his progress as he moves toward the established goal. He may break down the final goal into a series of smaller steps to help measure how he is doing. The goals may be related to different training that, different resources, and maybe how to get help from other people to reach the final goal.

Here is a quick outline that may help see the sequence involved in setting up a goal and the steps involved in reaching that goal.

1. We need to clearly state what our overall goal is. We then may need to break this overall goal down to smaller goals.
2. We will need to determine the time frame involved in reaching the goal. It will also be helpful to determine how long each step should take in reaching the final goal.
3. We will need to decide who will be needed and when they will be needed to assist in reaching the goal.
4. We need to determine what the cost will be to reach the goal and how we will obtain the resources and materials needed. This also involves identifying when these resources and materials will be needed.

As you can see when we set up one goal we often find we will need to prepare a set of goals in areas related to reaching the central goal. We can differentiate between the two types of goals by calling the main goal our **purpose statement**. All of the others become supporting goals for accomplishing our stated purpose.

As we look at the athlete we can begin to understand how the purpose statement and goals fit into the whole picture of making and evaluating a plan. For an athlete this is how it may look.

1. Goal or purpose – To win the competition or to set a record in a particular type of competition.
2. Time Frame – To win the event by the end of this year, or set a record by the end of his career in his area of competition.
3. Responsibility – He will need to make commitments for his own life, and will need help from other people in specific areas in order to reach his goal.
4. Expense – It will cost this much to purchase needed equipment and training for this goal. He will need finances for these activities, at this point in his program.

NOTE – Sometimes we must run the race or compete many times in order to reach the goal. In some competitions there are many heats or rounds before the winner is declared. In other areas of competition it may take years to accumulate enough results to reach some goals.

Let's focus more specifically on the place of goals as relates to missions and how they help us understand key aspects of our activity.

**Goals** – Here are some key questions to ask as we look at evaluating our goals, or in setting our goals for missions.

What -                    Do we know what we want to do?

- Do we know what steps will be needed to accomplish what we want to do?
- Do we know what help will be needed along the way?
- Where – Do we know where we will be doing this work?
- Do we know what it will take to get to the works location?
- When – Do we know when we expect to start and when we hope to finish?
- Who - Do we know who should be involved and when they should be involved?
- How – Do we know how we will do the work?
- Do we know how much it will cost?
- Do we know how we will raise the resources needed?

This is a sample list of the kinds of questions we need to ask. These will help us to set the needed goals for accomplishing our main goal or purpose. This will help us in understanding how to deal with three more areas and their relationship to our goals. When we set goals we need to deal with the **outcome** of our goal, knowing who will be **responsible**, and dealing with the **resources** involved.

**Outcomes** – Knowing how to measure what is happening so we know how we are doing.

**Responsibility** – Knowing how to assign responsibility for each area involved in reaching our goal.

**Resources** – Knowing how to properly handle the resources needed and how to be accountable for their use.

Each of these areas involves a process that is critical to reaching our purpose.

**Selection –** This is about choosing the right people to lead in each area. It is about knowing who must lead and who must follow. It is about choosing the right goals for our task and being able to communicate clearly why we have selected these goals for the task before us.

**Evaluation -** This is about knowing who should be involved in evaluating what we are doing, and how we are doing it. It deals with when we should do evaluation and how to respond to the results of that evaluation. It is taking the time to look at the results to make sure we are reaching our goals and doing so at an appropriate time and in the correct manner. This allows us to adjust our goals if needed.

**Support -** This is about setting in place a system that identifies areas of need and possible areas for obtaining support. It also deals with putting in place a means of reporting to those who are supporting what we are doing so they know what we need and when we will need it.

**Equipment -** This is about knowing what kind of training is needed and when we will need to get that training in order to reach our goal. It relates to the tools and supplies that will be needed to be effective in reaching the goal. Setting a goal without knowing what tools and training will be needed will only result in failure and frustration.

We need to always remember that goals are related to the nature of the endeavor. They need to match the activity, just like the type of goals an athlete sets relates to the specific type of competition he is involved in.

Individual Competition – There are many ways in which and individual may compete against others. There may be a single event that all have one chance at like a marathon. Another form will require each participant to repeat their performance at successively harder or higher levels like high jumping. Another will require them to compete several times to win a place in the final event. This occurs in swimming events and sprints. There are others where the athlete performs several times and each time is scored for that event. The total of all of the scores then determines the winner. This occurs in gymnastics and diving events.

Team Competition – Again there are many types of team competition. The most common is when a group competes against other groups in a single event. Relay races and sailing events are like this. You may compete in what are called elimination rounds. Each time you win you move closer to the championship. This occurs in basketball and soccer. There are also competitions where members of the team perform individually and receive a score. The total score for the team then determines the winner. This happens in gymnastics.

Each of these may have the same goal of winning but will require very different sets of goals to reach the main purpose. Individual competitions and team competitions have different

needs and so different sets of goals. One cannot simply take the goals of one and use them for the other. The same is true with missions. We need to know what we are going to do and set our goals in relation to that.

We always have to decide what we will do, and set goals accordingly. If we have no plan and no goals then it is likely that nothing will happen or we will fail. Setting goals does not guarantee success, but it will help us in doing good planning and that will help us to seek and find what God wants us to do.

Evaluation: As you reflect on this discussion answer the following questions.

1. What is our purpose or main goal as we look at missions?
2. What are goals are we setting to carry out this purpose?
3. What outcomes are we expecting from our goals?
4. Who have we asked to help us?
5. What resources have we committed to this work?

## ***Evaluation Area Two- Focus***

### **Looking Forward Not Back - Planning for results – Planning for the kingdom**

We need to understand that the job is never really done. It is much like the farmer who must plan year after year to provide food for himself and others. To reach a goal we may need to repeat what has been done many times. This will require us to maintain our focus. What we did last year will not last and must be redone. It may require us to review the past and if possible find ways to improve. But always we must keep in focus what we are doing and that what we did before is only beneficial if it helps us look ahead.

If our goal is to feed the hungry then planting food last year will not deal with the need this year. It also means choosing the right type of seeds to plant to be effective in providing food. If our goal is feeding people then we must focus on planting those kinds of crops. Planting flowers may be nice but does not fit the focus. It will not get the desired results. It also means being willing to risk the results of the past in order to do the work today and tomorrow.

Farmers have to let go of resources in order to get the result they are hoping for. There are no guarantees, only the hope that there will be a result. They also spend a great deal of time dealing with the growing process. This involves maintenance and support of the plants during development. Finally they must be ready to provide for the results of the effort. This involves a focus on the benefit we see our work

will have for others, and how to store and use what has been produced. It also means knowing how to keep the process going.

As we plan we must deal with issues of dependence and independence. How we share and control our resources will affect our focus and thus our goal. If we only see ourselves then we will narrow our focus and limit our sharing. If we see others and the part they can have in the work then our focus will widen and we will learn how to share more.

Farmers understand these principles. Everything they do is related to maintaining their focus. Three key principles are involved in the process of maintaining their focus.

Letting go: Every year the farmer has to let go of his resources and commit great amounts of time, energy and resources to leaving the past behind to move into the future.

Growing: Even after the original investment there is the ongoing process of making sure the plants have the resources needed and are protected in order gain the desired goal.

Providing: When the harvest comes there are many decisions related to who gets what and how it is to be kept. Bottom line decisions about sharing, selling, and keeping are a key part of the whole process.

In planning for missions we need to deal with the same issues.



Letting Go: We must understand that, how it was done in the past, may have no relation to the present. What we did last year is not enough to take care of this years needs. The goals we set need to be renewed on a regular basis. They also need to reflect what lies ahead and not be controlled by what was in the past.

Growing: We need to be aware that any goal we set will not do the work by itself. We will always need to be involved in doing the work needed to reach the goal we have set. It will take constant supervision by some or all if we are to effectively reach the desired goal.

Providing: We need to consider what will be needed to preserve the work being done. Who will take our place and will they be able to make use of what has been accomplished. Being able to do the work so that others can benefit and take over is a critical part of planning.

## **Process**

Here are some things to consider as one plans for the work of missions.

Planning – We learn to identify several key factors involved in the work

1. We identify what the needs are
2. We determine what work will need to be done
3. We provide the resources needed to do the work.

Sewing – Preparing and planting

1. We prepare and teach those who are working
2. We provide resources for the work
3. We provide tools to do the work

Caring – Fertilizing, weeding and caring for work

1. We deal with the problems that will come
2. We encourage the work being done
3. We maintain the support needed
4. We support those working

Harvesting – Preparing for the results

1. We know what the desired results will be
2. We know how to gain results
3. We know when the work is ready for the next step
4. We know how to preserve what has been done
5. We know how to respond to the harvest

Feeding – Sharing what has been produced

1. We share the benefits of what is being done
2. We provide for the next step in the work
3. We let others benefit from the work

Storing – providing for the ongoing work

1. We understand how to maintain the work
2. We understand how to train others
3. We understand the commitment involved
4. We understand that the work must go on

Missions is like the life of the farmer. Every year he risks the past to move into the future. He casts his bread on the water

to allow God to bless. What are we risking in order to sow, care for, and reap the harvest?

### Evaluation

1. What are you ready to give?
2. What commitment is required of whom?
3. How will you share this information?
4. Who needs to be involved?
5. Are you planning for growth?

## ***Evaluation Area Three - Purpose***

### **Pressing on toward the Goal to win the Prize – the need for commitment**

We need to review our purpose so that we can be clear about it and then be clear about the commitment required to carry it out. We realize that God has called us heavenward in Christ Jesus and has set a prize before us. Along with that is included the task that we must be faithful to carry out. Mature people understand the issues involved in a daily life committed to accomplishing a task that has been assigned. We need to understand that it is a daily, weekly, monthly, yearly commitment that will bring us to the place we are heading. As we understand these commitments this will allow us to fulfill the purpose we have for our life.

When we understand our purpose and plan accordingly we will be able to make mature decisions and the commitments needed. This will allow us to maintain the vision that has been given, keep things in focus and thus be able to live and act in faith. We see what God desires, keep our eyes on him and trust him to use us and our lives to accomplish what he desires.

The shepherd must live his life in this way. The sheep require his attention everyday and throughout each day. His life helps us understand what is involved in making a commitment to missions.

The Shepherd is:

1. Expected to be faithful in carrying out his duties
2. Needed to have a level of maturity to understand the nature of his work
3. Committed to the task at every moment of his life
4. Reliable and can be trusted to be there when needed

Let us consider the life and work of a shepherd as a way of evaluating our goals and making sure they will give us the results we desire.

Provisions –

Everyday there are needs that must be dealt with by the shepherd. The sheep need food, water and protection. In the same way we must deal with the daily needs of the work and those called to the work. The workers need key resources to keep things going-without these resources the workers will become tired and frustrated. The workers also need food, water and physical provisions to maintain their strength and remain encouraged.

The shepherd provides leadership in his willingness to deal with provisions. When we accept responsibility for the workers and carry out that responsibility we provide essential leadership and encouragement to those asked to do the work by obtaining needed provisions and support.

Water is essential. A drink of water often lifts the spirits of those who have been working. It provides a break in the work and restores essential fluids. Water brings needed

refreshment. We need to understand the need for rest and refreshment and provide for this in the work assigned. Even in the work world time is given for rest and a break from work. It recognizes the need for renewal and gives time to study and grow personally.

A shepherd protects his sheep and keeps them from danger. Our leadership must provide help for the struggles of life and the dangers that exist in that life. It realizes that good health is important for a worker to be able to continue working. Providing for ones' health, both by protecting people from unnecessary risk and providing for the care of those who have been hurt or become ill is an important issue to deal with.

Providing an environment for people to feel safe or secure is important so they are able to perform effectively. Being aware of the risks and dealing with them is critical. Providing times when one is free from risk and able to relax is important as well. Allowing people the opportunity to go home periodically for rest and restoration is important. It is also valuable to provide the means for this and a plan for when this should happen. There are risks involved in telling others about God. Some risks must be taken and some risks can be avoided. Do we recognize the issues involved in the safety of those who are called?

Some issues of security must be dealt with as relates to criminal activity and the like. Some must be clearly defined so that we can pray and ask for God to provide his peace. Sometimes safety is not about physical safety but spiritual

protection. Are we committed to a ministry of prayer and support that brings those sent a sense of safety and protection only the Lord can provide?

A key issue of safety is the level of support one feels for what they are doing. Are we providing goals that help to maintain their support financially, emotionally and physically? Are we providing tools to help people understand what the issues are for where they are? These may involve political understanding, cultural awareness, language skills and other related issues that help people to be aware of what is happening around them.

We must watch, learn, and understand the world where our workers are. This will help us understand the issues and thus avoid mistakes that may put our workers at unnecessary risk. It also allows us to communicate our awareness of their needs and so reduce the stress they face.

Shepherds understand that the better they are at taking care of their sheep the better the results will be. Likewise there are things we can do to increase our effectiveness. By allowing each one participating in the work to have a sense of the role they are playing, and how to do their best, we will see greater results. There are a number of ways we can set goals to improve on the work and so do a better job of reaching our goal.

1. Daily – There are things that must be cared for every day. Even as we need food and water everyday there are

activities that must be done daily. A devotional life and prayer are key activities that require our daily attention.

2. Regular – Getting supplies is a regular activity. Providing training is a regular activity. Raising funds and providing reports are regular activities designed to maintain the work.
3. Periodic – Even as a shepherd deals with shearing the sheep and the birth of lambs, (which occur within a larger time frame), we must deal with preparations and plans for such larger activities. These are events such as celebrations, missions conventions, retreats, special training, etc. that will improve our work and help us reach our goals.

We have two ways to look at the area of commitment. We can treat this as a temporary situation or need. This will result in not enough time, resources and personnel being committed to the task. It also means we will not provide for maintaining the work and so we guarantee the possibility of failing or we can treat this work as essential to life and adapt accordingly. We will make long term commitments, be willing to risk our resources and take the time needed to maintain both until the work is accomplished. This type of commitment will be reflected in the way we state our goals and the areas included in the goals we set.

Evaluation Issues: Consider the following questions as you review your goals.

1. Are we providing adequately for the needs of those being sent? Do we have a method of evaluating what



the needs are and how we are doing at providing for those needs?

2. Are we aware of the health issues of the place of ministry and of those being sent? Do we have a plan in place to care for those needs?

3. Are we providing for the renewal and spiritual growth of those serving and for their ongoing training?

4. Are we setting up the means to communicate and receive reports so we can be aware of what is happening and the ongoing needs to encourage the work?

5. Are we preparing for related issues of support as the work proceeds?

6. Are we reviewing and preparing for long term issues involved in the work?

7. Are we evaluating and selecting people for the work with an understanding of the commitments involved in carrying out the work we are involved in?

## ***Evaluation Area Four - Application***

### **Living up to what we have attained**

We are encouraged to live up to what we have attained. That means that we should use our blessings, knowledge, skills and gifts according to God's plan and not our own. The idea of "living" suggests that it is not something we do occasionally but it must become part of our life and how we live day by day.

One of the key measurements of maturity is our ability to put to use what has been given us, whether it is education, skills, personality or resources. What we use them for is a further means of measuring where we are at. Do we use them for our own needs? Do we help those who are close to us? Or do we do both of those and also look beyond to the needs of others? Maturity involves a confidence in who we are that allows us to risk what we have to benefit others. A person who is involved in the construction of houses is very aware that if the foundation is not properly set, then what is built on it will not last. A good foundation allows for good work. Still one must also continue to build properly on that foundation or there will be other types of issues and problems.

A carpenter who has been fully trained has learned several key skills. He is able to build a structure that is appropriate for its intended use. He also understands what resources are available and how to use them in building this structure. This is based on his understanding of the location of the building and an awareness of the conditions of that location (soil,

elevation, etc.) that will affect the structure. In all of this a good carpenter understands the value and purpose of the work he is doing.

Let us look at this again by studying the different parts of a building as a way of understanding how to set up our goals and plans for missions. We need to know how to apply the process for each activity we seek to be involved in. The goals and plans for missions may look very different from the goals for doing evangelism in our church.

**Foundation-** There are two key issues that are part of the idea of building a foundation that will be able to support the work we are intending to do.

1. We need to know the reasons for the work. If we do not understand why, or what are building, then we may build the wrong kind of foundation for that activity. This results in a lot of wasted energy and resources, and an ineffective use of what has been built. It also may result in not committing enough resources and so we produce an inferior foundation for the work. That may result in damage to the structure or the possibility of it collapsing long before the work is completed.

2. We also need to know where we are working. Different settings require different materials and preparation to build a good base. Do we know where our people are and what to do to have a good foundation in that location? Do we understand the purpose of what we are doing? Do we know how to

prepare them for the location chosen for the work they will be asked to do?

**Floor/Walls** – These are the visual evidences of what we are doing. They bring us into direct contact with the world or environment where we are working.

The nature of the construction of the floor and walls will reveal the purpose of that structure. A house, a church, a school, each requires different types of walls and floors. A house is for the support and protection of a family. A church is to provide a place of worship and ministry for the people of God. A school is designed for teaching and training. Do we know what we are expecting to accomplish by our work? Are we building in such a way as to make it possible for people to worship God, receive training, and care for their needs?

This concept of building relates directly to the results we want from our goals. When we clearly know what we want to accomplish then we will know how best to build or develop our plan for missions. What we develop will allow others to see clearly what we are asking them to be involved in and what it will take to accomplish that work.

**Roof** – For a building to be used to its full extent it needs a covering. This will allow us to continue be able to use what we are building. Do we understand that all of what we do needs to be sheltered and protected? Are we building in such a way as to receive God's blessing and protection? It is an important issue and should be dealt with even as the

foundation is put in. It is about building and planning for results that will last and be able to stand up to the trials that will come.

**Maintenance** – All builders must plan for upkeep and improvement. Without such planning, in time, even the best work may become unusable. When we have completed our work, then what are the next steps? Good planning helps us to think about what will happen after we are done. It also allows for the possibility of growth and change in the work we are doing. Building in a corner with no room to grow or develop suggests poor planning.

We will have to choose how we use the plans and goals we set. We can do our work in an inferior manner and use inferior materials. This may get quick results for today but end up in disaster and failure later. Or we can see the value of the work and act accordingly. We are willing to take the time to do good planning, to allow the time needed to do effective work and to do the work in such a way that when we are done it will be usable to those who are to continue the work after us.

Consider the following questions as you think about applying the skills and abilities God has given you to setting the goals and plans for missions.

1. Does the work we are doing reflect God's activity in our lives and ministry?
2. Does the work we are doing fit the context of where it is being done?
3. Does the work attract others to join us?

4. Does the work bring the presence of God to others?
5. Does the work have a plan for maintenance and growth?

## ***Evaluation Area Five - Partnering***

### **Joining with others in following the example given to us**

A key part of growing and being effective is learning what our abilities and limitations are. God has given each of us skills, gifts, and resources but one person cannot accomplish everything. Each person is encouraged to share what they have been given to work together and thus accomplish God's work.

To deal with the areas where we don't have what is needed we must learn what other resources are available to us. Teachers understand this truth in their work of training their students. They make use of many resources to be effective in communicating what they have learned to others. They also look at who they are teaching to determine what resources will be needed. The teacher has to deal with three areas in determining what resources will be needed. In the same way we will need to evaluate our situation in order to understand where we may need help.

The teacher has to:

#### **1. Understand the level of the group of students that are being taught.**

What is taught to primary students, secondary students or university students will be very different. Even with each age group there will be differences based on the group being taught. This is clearer the farther we go in education. In primary school one teacher deals with all of the topics. In the

secondary school teachers will focus on specific topics and groups of students. At the university level there are general classes and majors and teachers need to know the difference as they prepare the materials for these different levels of interest.

## 2. Understand the needs of the situation and how it affects the teaching.

Are these students young or old? Are they men or women? What skills do they already have? What resources do I have to be able to teach them? How does my location affect what will be done?

## 3. Understand how to find help.

This means knowing when the available resources and skills have been exhausted and others are needed to help do the work. It means knowing where to find resources and information to be able to do the job assigned. It means knowing if more training is needed for the teacher to do the job. It means depending on others to do what I cannot do.

In truth no teacher does their work entirely alone. Someone may have been teaching their students before, and someone else may carry on the work afterwards. It actually takes many teachers to provide a complete education for one student. It is all about being a partner with others to provide this education. Do we understand how we fit into the overall picture of missions?

All of the concerns of teaching and resources will affect our goals and plans for missions. We will be constantly involved



in evaluating and seeking understanding in critical areas in order for us to be effective. It means understanding the process of partnering.

This process involves evaluation of what is being done in three time frames. We need to know and evaluate

1. Resources of the Past – We need to review what others have done and accomplished before us. It is foolish to ignore this. We will find ourselves duplicating work and wasting resources in the process. In scripture we are told there is a great cloud of witnesses we need to be aware of. They have already seen and done the work. The more we can learn from them and make use of what they have done the easier it will be to do the work.

2. Resources of the Present – We need to consider what is already being done in the areas we are planning to work in. There may be teachers, pastors, and leaders who already have experience in what we want to do. They can be used to help us make our goals and plans more effective. They can help us learn the skills we will need to accomplish the task God has given us.

3. Resources of the future – We need to be aware that we, on our own, will never have enough resources to do the work. We need to always be thinking about asking others to join us in the work. We need to think about training others to continue the work in the future. They will take what we have today into the next day. They are the key to continuing what has been begun.

In order to effectively partner with others and make use of their resources and skills we need to work in the following four areas.

1. We need to be able to communicate clearly with those we will partner with. This will involve sharing freely what information we have and letting them know what we need. This involves communication based on humility and honesty. We will also need to be able to hear and understand what is communicated to us.

2. We need to be willing to take some risks. We will need to release our control and share it with others. We will need to admit that we don't know, and let those who have the training and skill use their knowledge and give them freedom to do the work. We must be willing to risk our comfort and try different ways to forward. We must risk our pride and our resources.

3. We need to learn to cooperate. The true measure of how well we are partnering will be seen in our ability to work together. We must learn to share in the work. It really isn't ours to begin with. It is God's and he has willingly decided to share it with us and has provided many resources to make possible this partnering for reaching a lost world.

4. We need to encourage and support those we are partnering with. We must help them and support what they are trying to do. Sometimes this will require acts of faith and belief in them as we move into unfamiliar areas. We must encourage those who we ask to help us, and not be afraid of the

evaluation and the challenges this will bring. Further we need to be open to their encouragement. Let them tell us how we are doing, evaluate our progress and challenge us further.

We can choose one of two paths. We can try and go it alone. This road is often chosen out of pride. It usually ends in failure or discouragement. Even when there is success it usually takes much longer to see results because it is all dependent on our resources and abilities. We can also choose to share the work and so share in the blessing. In contrast to the other option, there is a much greater chance of success and it often takes less time. This is because we are not relying on only our strength and ability but on the strength and abilities of others as well.

#### Evaluation Issues

1. Do you understand that some goals or plans can only be accomplished with partners?
2. What are you doing in the area of training and preparing to partner with others in God's work?
3. What are you willing to risk to make partnering possible?
4. How do we evaluate what is happening? Do we have a means of encouraging each other in the partnership?
5. Are we really cooperating and forming a partnership? Do we have a way to evaluate our attitude and level of sharing in the work and its effectiveness?

## ***Evaluation Area Six - Results***

### **Keeping our focus on heaven and our true citizenship**

Knowledge of the Ultimate – Do we understand where our loyalty lies and our true citizenship is?

We need to take time to deal with this issue because it affects how we decide what our goals are, what resources we will commit and how far we will go in sharing with others. It also will determine if we will trust others enough to share together in the work that is given to us.

Thinking through the ultimate purpose of our goals and planning will provide critical guidelines in evaluating what we are doing and why we are doing it.

- It will help us to pause and consider who the members of the kingdom are. Sometimes we get so narrow in our thinking that we forget there are others who are part of the kingdom of God. This will help to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.
- It will help us to consider how we can help and encourage others who are working in areas that we cannot work in. I
- It will keep us humble as we realize we are part of a much larger realm of activity.
- It will help us evaluate what we are doing eternal point of view.

We sometimes can become very limited in our view of what is being done. We see the buildings, we experience the training and then get caught up in counting and measuring results that are based on how much was given and how many were reached. The truth is, these may have little to do with the eternal scope of things.

We may build a fine building only to see it destroyed. We may provide wonderful training only to see very few use it. Over and over we may hope for great results but only see, through our eyes, very little accomplished. But in truth God may be laying a solid foundation what will happen later. Caring for one and leading another to the Lord may be all we accomplish, but in the scope of eternity that 'one' may become the key to much more than we could imagine.

Be reminded that:

- The kingdom of God is much greater than what we are doing.
- What we are doing must fit into an eternal plan, it must be viewed in the light of heaven.

Citizenship, and all the responsibilities associated with it, is an important concept in this process of reviewing what we are doing and how we are doing it. It helps us to remember that we are part of a very clearly defined authority structure. God is in charge and not us. We are called on to carry out his commands. While we are given a great deal of freedom to do so, in the final analysis the authority to act comes from God.

As citizens we have rights. These rights give us access to the skills and resources that will be required in order to carry out the work that has been assigned. These rights also include support emotionally, spiritually and physically. As citizens we have access to God himself who will hear and respond to our requests for assistance and encouragement.

Along with any citizenship there also comes responsibility. We do not have the right to function independently. We cannot disregard the impact of our actions and activities on the lives of others. We cannot disregard our responsibility to those who have agreed to support and pray for us. We are responsible for the task given, the resources committed and to report clearly and honestly what is being done.

Citizenship helps to clearly define our life and activity in several key areas. It defines our existence. As was mentioned above it will lay out for us our rights and privileges as well as reveal the work we are expected to do and our responsibility in relation to the work. Citizenship also defines our place and our possessions. Unlike the world, where these are used to elevate or degrade a person, in the kingdom of God they simply define our role as part of a team.

An interesting aspect of citizenship is that it also defines who your enemies will be. Both from the perspective of who will be against you and who will not. This same citizenship defines how we relate to those who are our enemies. Some, like Satan and his demons, are to be avoided completely. Others, like the lost of the world, are to be prayed for and treated with kindness. These definitions guide us in how to

interact with those who are not part of the kingdom, how to defend ourselves from their attacks, and how to enter into the territory of the enemy. All of this will be a factor in how we design and define our goals and plans.

Citizenship also implies structures of authority and responsibility. There will be people who are in charge and have authority over what is being done. The citizenship will define how these structures are to function, how responsibility is to be handled. Unlike the world we are told those in authority are to be the servants of those they have been told to lead. This will define how they act and what we should expect from them.

Finally, citizenship will guide us in defining our results. Jesus had to help people understand that the kingdom of God was not about conquering territory, gaining political power and great wealth. The results were about bringing people into relationship with God, regaining what had been lost through sin, and rebuilding relations among peoples of different cultures, tribes and languages.

Citizenship is about defining what a life lived in the presence of God should look like. It is about redefining what outcome we are seeking. Are we looking for the things of this world as a result of our labors, or are we looking for a crown that only God can give us? Are we seeking after a fine house here or a mansion that only Jesus can prepare for us in eternity? Our citizenship will help us see clearly the purpose of our activity and evaluate the results we are looking for.

Jesus would have died on the cross even if only one person had believed. Are we willing to invest our lives, resources and time so that one person can find God? All of heaven rejoices over the salvation of one who is lost. Will we be as generous?

Remembering where our citizenship lies, and who is providing the resources, is a very important part of setting goals and plans that relate to the kingdom of heaven. No matter how much we talk about what we are giving and doing, God has already done more. No matter how much we think of our time, our resources and our abilities, they really came from God who created us and the universe we live in.

We have a choice. We can believe that we are the ones in control, ignore what others are doing and how our activity fits into Gods overall plan. Or we can choose to start from the perspective that we are part of something much greater called the kingdom of heaven. We can be supportive of all that is being done and willing to share so that all may come to know God and become citizens of his kingdom.

The first attitude results in our being independent and selfish. We then become an island which is isolated. The second attitude will define us as a citizen of heaven and give us access to all its resources

#### Evaluation

1. Are we able to effectively evaluate why we are called to this place and this work?



2. Are we able to understand the issues involved in interacting with the world?
3. Are we able to define who the leaders are and what their responsibilities are?
4. Are we able to clearly define what results we can and should expect from our lives as citizens of heaven?

## Appendix – Practicums

### Introduction



*Evaluation and Planning for Missions - Practicum 3*

- Setting the Target
  - Vision/Purpose
- GOALS
  - Step One – What
    - Goals – Areas of Need
  - Step Two – How
    - Goals – Breaking it down
  - Step Three – When
    - Goals – Setting the Timeframe
  - Step Four - Who
    - Goals – Deciding Responsibility
- Scoring the Results
  - Evaluating – Reviewing and renewing

Evaluation and Planning requires that we take time to write down our vision and the steps that need to be taken to be able to fulfill that vision. Here are a few suggestions on how to develop a vision for mission and setting the goals needed to live out that vision through the church, to the world.

## Practicum One – Vision



*Evaluation and Planning for Missions - Practicum 3*

- **Setting the Target – Visions/Purpose**
  - **Key Questions**
    - Cause - Why are we doing this
    - Need - What result do we want
    - Response – How we will know
  - **Basis of Vision**
    - Understanding of Scripture
    - Understanding of world
    - Understanding of relationships

In this session our goal will be to write a vision statement for missions in our local church or for our district.

There are three questions that your vision statement must be able to answer for it to be effective in communicating.

1. Cause – Your vision statement should explain why you should be involved in missions. What is it that requires involvement in proclaiming the gospel to people of other tribes, nations and languages?
2. Need – Your vision statement should help people to understand the need to get involved. It should also help people define the results that come from fulfilling that need.

3. Response – Your vision statement should also define how you will know if you have effectively carried out your vision.


As you begin to consider what you want to say in your vision you need to be sure you consider these three areas in developing your vision.

1. Understanding Scripture – It is only as we truly understand what God wants that we begin to clearly state our vision. Our vision needs to reflect what God wants us to do.
2. Understanding of the world – It is only as we define and understand the world that we can define the parameters or extent of our vision. If our world means only our community, that will limit our vision. If it means the “world” then our vision needs to reflect that understanding. We need to be clear who is part of our world.
3. Understanding of relationships – It is only as we understand our relationship to: God, those who do not know God, the church and fellow believers, that our vision will become effective. Who is responsible to who will be a critical issue to determine. If we are, in fact, our brothers keeper then our vision should reflect that as well.

As you write your vision statement it is good to keep it as simple and clear as possible. If you can write one short sentence for each of the three questions, that is great. The goal is to keep the vision statement as short and simple as possible.



## Practicum Two – Goals: What



*Evaluation and Planning for Missions -  
Practicum 3*

- **GOALS**
  - Step One – What
    - Goals – Areas of Need
  
    - Aiming at a target
      - How we aim
      - What we aim
      - Where we aim
      - Results of aim
  - Goals
    - Help us accomplish the vision and help us decide what needs to be done.

Now that there is a vision statement, then we need to identify the areas in which we need to work. These are usually defined by goals. We identify these goals and then define what we want to do in each of them. The first area is to identify what we need in order to fulfill our vision; areas like teaching, finance, our resources require us to evaluate where we are, and what we have, so we can set a goal to do what we need to do.

Goals help us accomplish the vision and help us decide what needs to be done. This means identifying areas of strength and weakness so we can set goals to improve and strengthen those areas in order to accomplish our vision. Goals help us to move forward, show us what we will need to do, where we

need to work, and what should come as a result of our activity.

The task now is to determine what the areas of need are. Make a list of areas that are important to fulfilling your vision. Some areas could be finance, training, prayer etc. After identifying each area, then write a goal statement. It should identify the need and what you want to accomplish in that area. Try to write these statements in one sentence.

## Practicum Three – Goals: How



*Evaluation and Planning for Missions -  
Practicum 3*

- GOALS
  - Step Two – How
    - Goals – Breaking it down
  
    - Exploring the parts that make up the whole
      - What do we need to get
      - What do we need to do
      - What do we need to learn
  - Goals
    - Help us understand what the pieces are and how they fit together.

Now it is time to take those areas of need and break them down into smaller steps to reach a goal. The idea is to understand what is involved in reaching that goal. There are three questions that need to be answered so that we can build a plan to reach our goal.

1. What do we need to get– This identifies supplies, personnel and other resources that will be needed to make it possible to reach a given goal.
2. What do we need to do – This deal determines what those involved will need to do to make it possible to reach the goal. It can define a change in attitude, a change in priority, or a change in involvement.




3. What do we need to learn – This deals with understanding what we know and what we need to know in order to reach our goal.

At this point we are trying to understand how what we have relates to what we need and where we want to be. It involved seeing how to reach our goals and the methods that can be used to do so.

The task now is to take one of the goals and identify in writing what you need to get, need to do and need to learn in order to be able to successfully reach that goal. Again, as before, it is best if you can keep these statements to a single sentence.

A further step can be added to this process. Since the church is made up of various age groups and social groups, you can look at how you will reach your goal in a specific group of people within the church, i.e. children, youth, adults. Or your group of focus may be the worship service, prayer meetings, youth gatherings, etc. The more you can identify the needs and relate then to specific groups, the more effective you will be in developing needed methods to reach your goals.

## Practicum Four – Goals: When



*Evaluation and Planning for Missions -  
Practicum 3*

- GOALS
  - Step Three – When
    - Goals – Setting the Timeframe
  
    - Knowing when to do the work
      - Regular –
        - Week
        - Month
        - Year
        - Long term
      - Special
      - Celebration
  
  - Goals
    - Help us know when the work needs to be done and in what order.

It is always important to understand how long it will take to reach a specific goal. Some goals can be reached in short periods of time and others will take much longer. To be effective, we need to determine how long we want to spend in reaching a given goal. This should reflect the nature of that goal. For example if our goal is to have an annual missions conference, then the time frame for the goal would be one year. Once it is established we may decide we want to do this on a regular basis each year and so the time frame would change to long term. Holding a Sunday school class on missions may need a time frame of 3-4 months.

Determining when we want to complete our goals helps us be more effective in our planning. It also gives people a way to

evaluate how we are doing and how effective we are in setting our goals. The time frames are built around the nature of the goals:

1. Regular – These are events or plans that occur on a regular basis and the goals reflect that. These would be events that occur weekly, monthly or yearly and so we set our goals to reflect that.
2. Special – There are some things that may occur only once in a while or only needed in certain settings. Our goals need to reflect that and help us do the needed work to reach those special goals.
3. Celebration – These events are farther apart and reflect significant times of completion. Often they are anniversaries and similar types of events that require special time frames to reach the goals involved.

The task here is to again review the goals and the needs, and take each one and determine how long it will take to accomplish those goals and deal with the needs involved.

## Practicum Five – Goals: Who



*Evaluation and Planning for Missions - Practicum 5*

- GOALS
  - Step Four - Who
    - Goals – Deciding Responsibility
  
    - Assigning the work
      - Church
      - Committee
      - Individual
  - Goals
    - Help us understand who will do the work and the skills needed.

The goals that relate to accomplishing our vision should never be the work of one person. It will be easier to fulfill our vision as we get others involved. The more people who accept the responsibility of the vision and get involved, the more likely we will succeed in reaching our goals and making the vision a real part of the life of the church.

To do this we need to determine who should be responsible for the different goals that are being set and helping meet the needs represented by each of those goals. That means being willing to assign the work to the right people. This includes seeing who should be involved.

1. Church – There are areas where the entire church needs to be involved to reach the goal set.

2. Committees or small groups – There are areas where it is important for small groups of people to take responsibility to successfully reach the goal.
3. Individuals – There are many areas where individuals can take on a specific area of need and make it possible to reach the goal being set.

The task here is to review our goals and all the related information and determine who should be responsible. Will it be the work of the pastor, church board, Sunday school, or key individuals? Take time to look at how to get as many people and groups involved as possible. It is good to consider the skills of the people in the church in deciding who would be the best person for a giving area of responsibility.

## Practicum Five – Evaluation



*Evaluation and Planning for Missions - Practicum 5*

- GOALS
  - Step Four - Who
    - Goals – Deciding Responsibility
  
    - Assigning the work
      - Church
      - Committee
      - Individual
  - Goals
    - Help us understand the who will do the work and the skills needed.

Now it is time to evaluate what we have been doing. This involves looking at where we are today, where we want to be, and what our resources are. It is easy to develop goals and plans that are wonderful, but do not reflect the skills and abilities of the church. It is easy to create a goal so big it cannot be reached, and this discourages those who are involved and can make it hard to get others involved.

This means we should always take time to look at our vision, look at our goals, and then think about what can be done now and what needs to be done later. It is usually good to review, think about what can be done one year at a time. Taking smaller steps that we can succeed at is better than trying to take a big step that we does not bring success. When we

succeed people are encouraged. That means maybe we can take a bigger step the next time.

Three key questions that we can ask as we review:

1. What have we done that worked
2. What still needs to be done to reach our goal
3. What changes need to be made to encourage us in moving forward

At this time we need to remember the three key guides from above used to develop our vision:

1. Understanding of Scripture
2. Understanding of the world
3. Understanding of our relationships.

Proper goals allow us to expand our understanding in each of these areas. The more our understanding grows the better we will do at reaching our vision.

Take time to see if your goals need to be revised to reflect where you are and make it more likely that you will be able to fulfill your vision.