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Eleven Keys for Effective Cross- Cultural Ministry

by
Duane L. Anderson



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Eleven Keys for Effective Cross- Cultural Ministry

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- K. Do we focus on methods that work in the culture of our church to help our church in its growth or do we help people learn to understand Biblical principles that will transform their lives and help them to reach out to people of many different cultures?

Introduction

In Matthew 28:18-20, Christ said:

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.’ Amen.”

In these verses, we are given one command:

Make Disciples

this command is to be carried out by three participles:

going

baptizing

teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you

That command is defined in Matthew 13:52:

“Then He said to them, “Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure *things* new and old.”

A Disciple (one who is instructed) is:

the head of a spiritual household

has a treasure (the Word of God)

brings out of that treasure things new (has a learner’s attitude)

brings out of that treasure things old (can teach the basics of Christianity)

That command is illustrated in Matthew 27:57:

“Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus.”

That command was continually carried out:

Acts 14:21-23

“And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and *saying*, ‘We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.’ So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.”

we also want to be obedient by carrying out that command!

I. Understanding the Basics for Being Faithful to Scripture

A. Understanding the tri-cultural obstacle that we face in making the Bible clearly understood today

1. the culture in which the Scriptures were written

2 Peter 1:19-21

“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.”

The writers of Scripture originally wrote in their culture and often to their own culture or a culture in which they had ministered

Luke 1:3-4

“It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.”

1 Thessalonians 1:1

“Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

The writers of Scripture wrote to people who knew their culture

2 Peter 1:1-2

“Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.”

The writers of Scripture were led by God to write to people of all future cultures

2 Timothy 3:16-17

“All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

**we want to help Christians understand the culture
in which the Scriptures were originally written!**

2. the culture in a world where people serve the gods of this world

Some people have no background of Scripture and we must begin at:

Creation - Acts 17:22-34

Acts 17:23

“For as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you.”

**Some people feel that they are so sinful that God will not accept them
and we must begin with:**

Compassion - John 4:1-42

John 4:16-18, 28-29

“Jesus said to her, ‘Go, call your husband, and come here.’ The woman answered and said, ‘I have no husband.’ Jesus said to her, ‘You have well said, “I have no husband,” for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly.’ ...²⁸The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, ‘Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?’”

Some people have a limited background of Scripture and we must begin by:

Clarification - Acts 17:11-12

“These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily *to find out* whether these things were so. Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men.”

Some people depend on their own religious works and we must begin by:

Confrontation - John 3:1-21

John 3:3

“Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’”

**we want to help Christians learn to take the time
to understand the background of the people they
are working to reach with the Gospel!**

3. the cultural context for most people with whom we share the Gospel includes a very different life

**We have been given spiritual life
but are sharing the Gospel with those who are still children of wrath**

Ephesians 2:1-3

“And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.”

Some of us grew up learning the Word of God

2 Timothy 3:14-15

“But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

Some of us became a Christian as a child or youth

Acts 16:1-3a

“Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, *the* son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father *was* Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted to have him go on with him.”

Some of us followed Christ as adults

Matthew 4:18-19

“And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.’”

Many of us must learn to cross cultural, ethnic or language barriers

Acts 1:8

““But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.””

we want to help Christians learn to cross cultural barriers!

B. Understanding the Greek and Hebrew forms of education

1. Greek education defined and illustrated

a. Greek education was designed to gain worldly wisdom (knowledge)

1 Corinthians 1:22

“For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom.”

Worldly or human wisdom (knowledge) defined

James 3:14-16

“But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there.”

Teachers in the Greek culture were often slaves and were considered instructors

1 Corinthians 4:15

“For though you might have ten thousand instructors (Greek word paidagogos) in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”

Teachers in the Greek culture used rules and severe discipline

Galatians 3:24-25

“Therefore the law was our tutor (paidagogos) *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor (paidagogos).”

**the Greek poet Homer first introduced a tutor (paidagogos) in his book,
“The Odyssey” several hundred years before Christ**

the name of the Greek slave in that book was:

Mentor

**we see that the purpose of the law was to bring us to Christ
however, all Christians are justified (declared righteous) by faith
once we come to Christ, we are no longer under the law**

b. Greek education focused on imparting knowledge

Knowledge puffs up

1 Corinthians 8:1

“Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.”

Knowledge without love is worth nothing

1 Corinthians 13:2-3

“And though I have *the gift of* prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.”

Knowledge in itself will never bring a person to the truth

2 Timothy 3:7

“Always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Knowledge in itself does not cause people to seek God

Romans 1:28

“And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting.”

**Greek education - common in the western world
focuses on knowledge - often by lecture**



**Hebrew education is like a three legged stool
knowledge, character, ministry skills
Hebrew education - common in the majority world**

2. Hebrew education defined and illustrated

a. Hebrew education was to be built on three things

Exodus 18:20

“And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do.”

teach them ordinances and laws - knowledge of the Word of God

show them the way to walk - development of godly character

show them the work to do - development of ministry skills

Illustrated in the ministry of Christ

1) model godly character

take those who follow with you

Mark 1:17, 3:13-14

“Then Jesus said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’”
“And He went up on the mountain and called to *Him* those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach.”

2) develop godly knowledge

explain the Word of God to those who believe for their understanding

Mark 4:10-12

“But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable. And He said to them, ‘To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, so that “seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand; lest they should turn, and their sins be forgiven them.”’”

3) develop ministry skills and dependence on the Lord

give them opportunities for ministry

Mark 6:7-8, 30

“And He called the twelve to *Himself*, and began to send them out two *by* two, and gave them power over unclean spirits. He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in *their* money belts...Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught.”

b. Hebrew education was designed for life transformation

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

parents are to model love for the Lord by their example
(children become what they see in us)

parents are to have the Word of God in their hearts
(parents are to let the Word of God determine their actions)

parents are to teach the Word diligently
(parents are to sharpen their understanding or teach diligently)

parents are to teach during teachable moments
(these moments come throughout the day)

talk together as you sit in the house
(teach inside the home)

talk together as you go places together
(teach outside the home)

talk together when you lie down
(teach to the end of the day)

talk together when you get up
(teach from the beginning of the day)

parents are to teach the Word by their example
(we teach by what we do more than what we say)

parents are to meditate on the Word in their thoughts
(our thoughts determine our attitudes and actions)

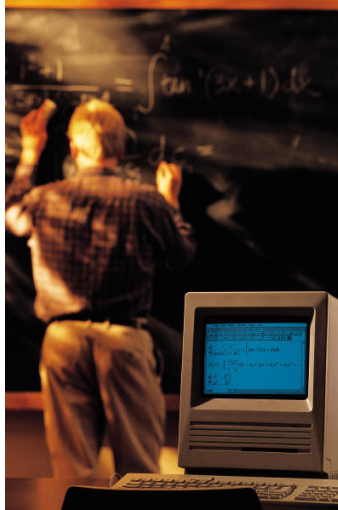
parents are to have reminders around the home
(our home is also part of the teaching)

c. challenges in being faithful to the original intent of Scripture and still sensitive to each individual culture

1) most missionaries have a background in the “western culture”

In the “western culture” the emphasis is on giving knowledge

Most teaching involves lectures by the teacher



2) most missionary work is carried out in “majority cultures” where most people grew up with a Hebrew form of education and thought

In most “majority cultures”, there is a balance of knowledge, character, and ministry skills

In most “majority cultures”, the emphasis is on developing wisdom



The following eleven chapters will focus on eleven of the key differences between the “western culture” and the “majority culture”

II. Understanding Eleven Keys for Effective Cross-Cultural Ministry

A. The “western culture” form of communication is rigid while the “majority culture” is flexible

The universities of the “western culture” have used the classroom to communicate most information for hundreds of years. The most common form of communication is the college lecture (knowledge).

Biblical training in most Bible Institutes, Christian Colleges and Theological Seminaries have adopted this model throughout the “western culture”.

The “majority culture” has used informal discussion and hands-on experience to help students come to a true understanding of the things being discussed.

Biblical training in the New Testament, and in the early church, involved a teacher and a group of followers ministering together and discussing the things they were teaching both with one another and with those whom they were reaching for Christ.

1. the training ministry of Christ

a. Christ invited people to spend time with Him

John 1:38-42

“Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, ‘What do you seek?’ They said to Him, ‘Rabbi’ (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), ‘where are You staying?’ He said to them, ‘Come and see.’ They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour). One of the two who heard John *speak*, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, ‘You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas’ (which is translated, A Stone).”

**Christ took time to question others
Christ invited others to spend time with Him
Christ took time to discuss their questions
Christ instilled a desire to tell their families
Christ told people what they could become**

Do you invite people to spend time with you?

b. Christ invited people to follow Him

Mark 1:16-20

“And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." They immediately left their nets and followed Him. When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also *were* in the boat mending their nets. And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.”

**these men had already spent some time
with Christ for about a year
these men were now invited to follow Christ
these men were promised that they would become equipped for ministry
these men immediately left their business and their father
these men chose to follow Christ**

c. Christ invited people to be with Him

Mark 3:13-15

“And He went up on the mountain and called to *Him* those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons.”

**Christ had already spent about twenty-one months
with the larger group before He chose the twelve
Christ chose those that He wanted
Christ saw them respond and come to Him
Christ chose the twelve to be with Him
Christ chose the twelve that He might send them out to preach
Christ gave them power to heal sicknesses
Christ gave them power to cast out demons**

d. Christ sent out the twelve to learn to walk by faith in ministry
Mark 6:7-13

“And He called the twelve to *Himself*, and began to send them out two *by* two, and gave them power over unclean spirits. He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in *their* money belts—but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics. Also He said to them, ‘In whatever place you enter a house, stay there till you depart from that place. And whoever will not receive you nor hear you, when you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them. Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!’ So they went out and preached that *people* should repent. And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed *them*.”

Christ sent them out two-by-two to learn to minister as teams
Christ give them authority over unclean spirits (demons)
Christ commanded them to take nothing extra for the trip
(Christ wanted them to learn to walk by faith)
Christ told them to stay at only one place in each town
Christ had shown them the importance of preaching repentance
Christ gave them the opportunity to cast out many demons
Christ gave them the opportunity to heal many that were sick

e. Christ had the disciples report when they completed their ministry trip
Mark 6:30-32

“Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. And He said to them, ‘Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while.’ For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. So they departed to a deserted place in the boat by themselves.”

Christ gathered the twelve together to report
Christ had them tell what they had done
Christ had them tell what they had taught
Christ showed them the importance of time for rest

f. Christ sent the twelve out again as part of a group of seventy

Luke 10:1-12

“After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. Then He said to them, ‘The harvest truly *is* great, but the laborers *are* few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. Carry neither money bag, knapsack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road. But whatever house you enter, first say, “Peace to this house.” And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick there, and say to them, “The kingdom of God has come near to you.” But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, “The very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you.” But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city.’””

Christ again sent the seventy out in teams

Christ told them to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers

Christ said He sent them as lambs among wolves

(their only source of protection was dependence on the Shepherd)

Christ again told them to take nothing extra for the trip

(learning to walk by faith takes repeated lessons)

Christ told them to find a house of peace in which to stay

Christ told them to stay in that house while in that city

Christ told them to eat the things they were given

Christ told them not to move from house-to-house

Christ told them to heal the sick in that city

Christ told them to say that the kingdom of God had come near

Christ told them to wipe off the dust when a city rejected them

Christ said to remind that city that the kingdom of God had come near them

g. Christ used the report of the seventy to teach additional lessons
Luke 10:17-20

“Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, ‘Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.’ And He said to them, ‘I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.’”

Christ gave the seventy opportunity to report what they had done
Christ said that God used them to win a victory over Satan
Christ gave them authority over all of the power of the enemy
Christ told them that they were rejoicing for the wrong reason
Christ told them to rejoice because their names were written in heaven

h. Christ changed the status of the disciples as He neared the time of His death
John 15:15-17

“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another.”

Christ changed their status from servants to friends
Christ said that He had made known all things to them
Christ said that He had chosen them and appointed them
Christ said that they were now to go and bear fruit
Christ said they were to bear fruit that remained
Christ promised that their prayers would be answered
Christ reminded them of the new commandment
(Love one another as I have loved you - John 13:34-35)

i. Christ changed the status of the disciples to full partners in ministry

John 20:17, 19-21

“Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, “I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.”’ ...¹⁹Then, the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, ‘Peace *be* with you.’ When He had said this, He showed them *His* hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.’”

Christ called His disciples His brethren

Christ wanted the disciples to experience His peace

Christ wanted them to see proof of His resurrection

Christ now sent them as the Father had sent Him

j. Christ commissioned the disciples to “Make Disciples”

Matthew 28:18-20

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.’ Amen.”

Christ is the One who has all authority

Christ gave one command “Make Disciples”

Christ gave three particples to carry out that command

as you are *going* - make disciples in all the nations

***baptizing* - help disciples identify themselves as Christians**

***teaching* - them how to obey all that Christ commanded**

Christ promised the disciples that He would always be with them

Christ said this would be true until the end of the age (includes us)

**k. Christ promised the disciples power to carry out His commission
Luke 24:44-49**

“Then He said to them, ‘These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.’ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.’”

Christ reminded the disciples that He had fulfilled the whole Old Testament

Christ opened the understanding of the disciples

(He wanted them to comprehend the Scriptures)

Christ explained the necessity of His death and resurrection

Christ commissioned them to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins

Christ told them to begin their ministry at Jerusalem

Christ told them to wait until they received the power of the Holy Spirit

(they could do nothing in their own strength - John 15:5)

l. Christ told the disciples to cross barriers in a progressive order

Acts 1:8

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

**Jerusalem - the barrier of our own fear
sharing the Gospel with relatives, friends, co-workers, other acquaintances**

**Judea - the barrier of making contacts
getting acquainted with strangers of our own culture**

**Samaria - the barrier of another culture, religion or ethnic group
learning to understand other cultures, religions and ethnic groups**

**end of the earth - the barrier of language
learning to communicate the Gospel in another language**

2. the training ministry of Paul

a. Paul got to know the family of Timothy

2 Timothy 1:3-7

“I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as *my* forefathers *did*, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also. Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

Paul had prayed for Timothy for a long time
Paul knew that the faith of Timothy was genuine
Paul had seen that faith in his mother and grandmother
(this had probably been noticed on his first trip to the area)
Paul had recognized the gift the Lord had given to Timothy
Paul reminded Timothy that God had given him a spirit of power
Paul reminded Timothy that God had given him a spirit of love
Paul reminded Timothy that God had given him a disciplined mind

b. Paul invited Timothy to join the team

Acts 16:1-3

“Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, *the* son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father *was* Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took *him* and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek.”

Paul learned that Timothy had become a disciple
Paul learned that Timothy had a good report in several cities
Paul wanted Timothy to become a part of the team and travel with him
Paul knew that Timothy had a multicultural background

c. Paul had Timothy as a part of his team for several years

Acts 20:4

“And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia—also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia.”

**Paul had a team travel with him so he could train them in ministry
(a total of nearly 40 different people are mentioned at various times)
Paul developed team members from the various cities where he ministered**

d. Paul showed Timothy how to strengthen existing churches

Acts 16:4-5

“And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.”

**Paul helped the churches learn about the decision of the Jerusalem Council
(this is explained in detail in Acts 15:1-29)**

**Paul showed Timothy how to strengthen the churches in the faith
Paul showed Timothy how to start new churches**

e. Paul later sent Timothy to strengthen existing churches

1 Corinthians 4:14-17

“I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.”

**Paul showed the importance of warning rather than shaming
Paul explained the difference between an instructor and father
Paul showed the importance of leading by example
Paul described Timothy as a faithful and beloved spiritual son
Paul said Timothy would remind them of his ways**

**B. The “western culture” has as its goal - I know,
while the “majority culture” has as its goal - I can do**

**Universities of the “western culture” give tests to determine if the student has
learned the material in the lecture.**

Biblical training in most Bible Institutes, Christian Colleges and Theological Seminaries
have adopted this model throughout the “western culture”.

“majority culture” determines what a student has learned by what he is able to do.

Biblical training in the New Testament and in the early church involved a teacher and a
group of followers ministering together and putting into practice the things that they
were being taught as they learned them.

1. Christ showed the disciples how to preach and teach

Mark 1:35-39

“Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and
departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed. And Simon and those *who were* with
Him searched for Him. When they found Him, they said to Him, ‘Everyone is looking
for You.’ But He said to them, ‘Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there
also, because for this purpose I have come forth.’ And He was preaching in their
synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons.”

**Christ showed the importance of prayer by example
Christ expanded the vision of the disciples by example
Christ took the disciples with Him to other towns
Christ explained His purpose as they traveled together
Christ had the disciples with Him as he preached in synagogues
Christ had the disciples with Him as He traveled throughout Galilee
Christ cast out demons as the disciples observed
Christ healed people as the disciples observed - Mark 1:40-2:12**

2. Christ showed the disciples how to reach groups of people

Mark 2:13-17

“Then He went out again by the sea; and all the multitude came to Him, and He taught them. As He passed by, He saw Levi the *son* of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him. Now it happened, as He was dining in *Levi's* house, that many tax collectors and sinners also sat together with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they followed Him. And when the scribes and Pharisees saw Him eating with the tax collectors and sinners, they said to His disciples, "How *is it* that He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners?" When Jesus heard *it*, He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to repentance."”

Christ ministered to groups of people wherever He met them

Christ taught people when they came to Him

Christ called Levi (Matthew) while he was at work

Christ accepted an invitation to dinner at the house of Levi

Christ sat down with the tax collectors and sinners

Christ was criticized by the scribes and Pharisees

Christ said that He had come to call sinners to repentance

3. Christ tested the ability of the disciples to minister to groups

John 6:5-9

“Then Jesus lifted up *His* eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, ‘Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?’ But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. Philip answered Him, ‘Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little.’ One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, ‘There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?’”

Christ used situations they were facing to test the disciples

Philip did not answer the question but, instead, gave a financial report

Andrew answered the question; although, he could not imagine the answer

4. Christ showed the disciples the meaning of a spiritual family

Mark 3:31-35

“Then His brothers and His mother came, and standing outside they sent to Him, calling Him. And a multitude was sitting around Him; and they said to Him, ‘Look, Your mother and Your brothers are outside seeking You.’ But He answered them, saying, ‘Who is My mother, or My brothers?’ And He looked around in a circle at those who sat about Him, and said, ‘Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother.’”

**Christ heard His mother and brothers had come to visit Him
Christ said His spiritual family was already sitting around Him
Christ said He was looking for people who did the will of God
Christ said that the disciples were a part of His spiritual family**

5. Christ said that He would equip the disciples to become fishers of men

Matthew 4:18-22

“And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.’ They immediately left *their* nets and followed Him. Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.”

**the only requirement was to follow Him
the disciples did follow Him**

6. Christ saw the disciples become effective fishers of men

Acts 2:38-41

“Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.’ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*.”

**Peter preached the same message of repentance that Christ had preached
Peter saw the Lord use him as the Lord added 3,000 to the church**

**C. The “western culture” expects people to learn by listening,
while the “majority culture” helps people to learn by doing**

Pastors assume people have learned because a sermon has been preached.

Most pastors and missionaries in the “western culture” think that people have learned Scripture and will put it into practice because they have heard it in a sermon.

The “majority culture” helps people to learn by doing, not just hearing.

The apostles and other leaders of the early church knew that others would learn how to share the Gospel as they were shown how to share the Gospel in their own homes and in the homes of others.

1. the apostles concentrated on things that involved both hearing and doing

Acts 2:42, 46-47

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ...⁴⁶So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

**the new Christians met daily in the temple and in their homes
the new Christians discussed the apostle's doctrine in their homes
the new Christians had fellowship with one another in their homes
the new Christians were sharing communion together in their homes
the new Christians were praying together in their homes
the new Christians were filled with gladness (extreme joy)
the new Christians experienced simplicity (singleness) of heart
the Lord gave the Christians favor with all the people
the Lord brought more people to Himself daily**

2. Peter trained people by taking them with him

Acts 11:12

“Then the Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered the man's house.”

Peter was led by the Holy Spirit

Peter took six brethren with him as he ministered

Peter showed the six how to minister in the home of a Gentile

3. Paul trained people by taking them with him

Acts 20:20-21

“How I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Paul shared with the leaders all that was helpful

(Paul prepared leaders before he left them - Acts 14:22-23)

Paul made known to the leaders the things that God had taught him

(Paul explained the whole counsel of God - Acts 20:27)

Paul taught the leaders how to minister publicly

(Paul taught the leaders to reproduce - Acts 19:8-10)

Paul taught the leaders how to minister to people in their homes

(here we see that much of the training happened in homes)

Paul showed the leaders how to share the Gospel with Jews

(Gentile leaders learned to minister to Jews)

Paul showed the leaders how to share the Gospel with Gentiles

(Jewish leaders learned to minister to Gentiles)

Paul showed the leaders how to share the message of repentance

(Christ came to call sinners to repentance - Luke 5:32)

Paul showed the leaders how to share the message of faith

(this is faith in our Lord Jesus Christ)

D. The “western culture” expects people to learn for ministry, while the “majority culture” helps people learn in ministry

Most pastors and missionaries in the “western culture” have been trained in colleges and seminaries.

In this way, they are removed from their culture and taught theory in the halls of learning where it is not applied for several years.

The “majority culture” frequently helps people to learn in ministry.

This is often done by taking short-term training and instruction in the local area where the people can learn in ministry instead of for ministry. In addition, this trains the whole leadership team instead of just the potential pastors.

1. Christ helped people learn in ministry

a. Christ encouraged people to begin ministering immediately

John 1:40-45

“One of the two who heard John *speak*, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, ‘You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas’ (which is translated, A Stone). The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, ‘Follow Me.’ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, ‘We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote--Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.’”

Andrew was invited to spend time with Christ

Andrew first found his own brother and told him about Christ

Andrew then brought his brother to Christ

Philip was invited by Christ to follow Him

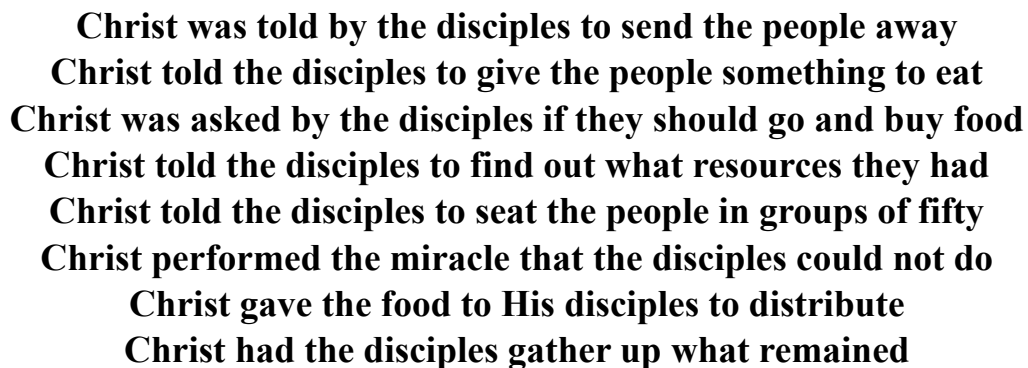
Philip immediately went to tell his friend Nathanael

Philip told Nathanael that Christ fulfilled the promise of the Old Testament

b. Christ gave the disciples many opportunities to learn as He ministered

Mark 6:35-44

“When the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him and said, ‘This is a deserted place, and already the hour *is* late. Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat.’ But He answered and said to them, ‘You give them something to eat.’ And they said to Him, ‘Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them *something* to eat?’ But He said to them, ‘How many loaves do you have? Go and see.’ And when they found out they said, ‘Five, and two fish.’ Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties. And when He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven, blessed and broke the loaves, and gave *them* to His disciples to set before them; and the two fish He divided among *them* all. So they all ate and were filled. And they took up twelve baskets full of fragments and of the fish. Now those who had eaten the loaves were about five thousand men.”

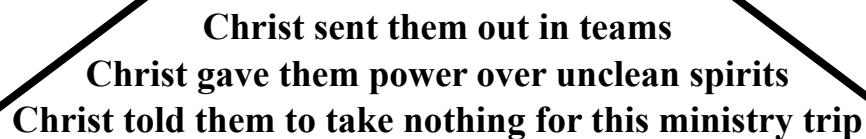


- Christ was told by the disciples to send the people away**
- Christ told the disciples to give the people something to eat**
- Christ was asked by the disciples if they should go and buy food**
- Christ told the disciples to find out what resources they had**
- Christ told the disciples to seat the people in groups of fifty**
- Christ performed the miracle that the disciples could not do**
- Christ gave the food to His disciples to distribute**
- Christ had the disciples gather up what remained**

c. Christ sent the disciples out to learn in ministry as He supplied their needs

Mark 6:7-9

“And He called the twelve to *Himself*, and began to send them out two *by* two, and gave them power over unclean spirits. He commanded them to take nothing for the journey except a staff—no bag, no bread, no copper in *their* money belts—but to wear sandals, and not to put on two tunics.”



- Christ sent them out in teams**
- Christ gave them power over unclean spirits**
- Christ told them to take nothing for this ministry trip**

2. Paul helped people learn in ministry

a. Paul and Barnabas took Mark as a helper

Acts 13:5

“And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as *their* assistant.”

b. Paul and Barnabas saw Mark go home

Acts 13:13

“Now when Paul and his party set sail from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia; and John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.”

c. Paul did not want to take Mark a second time

Acts 15:36-41

“Then after some days Paul said to Barnabas, ‘Let us now go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, *and see* how they are doing.’ Now Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark. But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work. Then the contention became so sharp that they parted from one another. And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus; but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.”

d. Paul later realized that Mark was profitable for ministry

2 Timothy 4:11

“Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.”

Paul did not give up on developing men in ministry

e. Paul next took Timothy as a helper

Acts 16:1-3

“Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, *the* son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father *was* Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took *him* and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek.”

f. Paul left Silas and Timothy to minister at Berea

Acts 17:14

“Then immediately the brethren sent Paul away, to go to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy remained there.”

Paul gave Timothy on-the-job ministry experience

g. Paul had Silas and Timothy rejoin him for ministry in other cities

Acts 17:15

“So those who conducted Paul brought him to Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed, they departed.”

Acts 18:5-6

“When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus is the Christ*. But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook *his* garments and said to them, ‘Your blood *be* upon your *own* heads; I *am* clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.’”

Paul experienced greater boldness when he had a team with him

h. Paul had Timothy take the leadership of a team he sent to Macedonia

Acts 19:22

“So he sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia for a time.”

i. Paul later sent Timothy to minister to the church in Corinth

1 Corinthians 4:17

“For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.”

**Paul called Timothy his faithful and beloved son
Paul said Timothy would remind them of his ways
Paul said Timothy would remind them of his teachings**

j. Paul and Timothy ministered together with a larger team

Acts 20:4

“And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia—also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia.”

k. Paul considered Timothy a full partner in ministry

1 Corinthians 16:10-11

“Now if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for he does the work of the Lord, as I also *do*. Therefore let no one despise him. But send him on his journey in peace, that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with the brethren.”

**Our goal should also be to help people learn in ministry and develop them to:
become full partners in ministry!**

E. The “western culture” teaches people through formal means of communication, while the “majority culture” usually trains people through non-formal means of communication

Most teaching in the “western culture” happens within buildings designed for formal communication from the teacher to the students or the pastor to the people.

In this form of communication, the teacher or pastor gives the people information and there is often no discussion where people can get their questions answered.

Much of the “majority culture” training happens during “teachable moments” in answer the questions that are in the minds of the learners.

These questions may come at any time and in any place so that the teaching and training are not limited to buildings designed for formal communication.

**1. Christ spoke in parables to the multitudes and explained them to the disciples
Matthew 13:10-15**

“And the disciples came and said to Him, ‘Why do You speak to them in parables?’ He answered and said to them, ‘Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: “Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; for the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.”””

**Christ wanted the disciples to know and understand
Christ said those who receive truth will be given more
Christ said that those who rejected did not see
Christ said that those who rejected did not hear
Christ said that those who rejected did not understand
Christ said that the hearts of the people had grown dull**

2. Christ often questioned the disciples

Matthew 16:13-17, 21

“When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, ‘Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?’ So they said, ‘Some *say* John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter answered and said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.’ ...From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.”

Christ asked the disciples about the opinions of others
Christ asked the disciples who they said that He was
Christ wanted the disciples to be able to explain who He was
Christ said that the Father had revealed this truth to them
Christ then began to teach about His coming death
Christ began to teach about His coming resurrection

3. Christ was often questioned by the disciples

Matthew 24:1-3

“Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said to them, ‘Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.’ Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?’”

Christ listened to the things that interested the disciples
Christ used those things to stir up questions in their minds
Christ then left the temple and went to the Mount of Olives
Christ saw the disciples come to Him with questions
Christ answered their questions in Matthew 24 and 25

4. Christ used visual illustrations and questions to teach the disciples

John 13:2-10

“And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter. And *Peter* said to Him, ‘Lord, are You washing my feet?’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.’ Peter said to Him, ‘You shall never wash my feet!’ Jesus answered him, ‘If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.’ Simon Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head!’ Jesus said to him, ‘He who is bathed needs only to wash *his* feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.’”

Christ waited until after the Supper to give the disciples time to serve

Christ said nothing as he took the towel and basin

Christ silently began to wash the feet of the disciples

Peter questioned why the Lord would wash his feet

Christ explained that Peter did not understand at that time

Peter said Christ would never wash his feet

Christ said Peter would have no part with Him then

Peter then wanted more than his feet washed

Christ explained the need for cleansing, not a bath

5. Christ demonstrated the meaning of servant leadership

John 13:12-17

“So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for *so* I am. If I then, *your* Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.’”

Christ asked the disciples if they understood what He had done

Christ said that they called Him Teacher and Lord

Christ said that was exactly who He was

Christ said the disciples needed to learn to serve one another

Christ said that He had given them an example to follow

Christ said He, as the greater, chose to serve them

Christ said that He was the One who now sent them

Christ said blessing would come from doing, not just knowing

6. Christ answered various questions at the Last Supper

John 13:24-25, 36-38, 14:5, 8, 22

“Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, ‘Lord, who is it?’ ...³⁶Simon Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, where are You going?’ Jesus answered him, ‘Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward.’ Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.’ Jesus answered him, ‘Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.’”

“Thomas said to Him, ‘Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?’ ...⁸Philip said to Him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.’ ...²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’”

**Christ answered the question asked by John
Christ answered the questions asked by Peter
Christ answered the question asked by Thomas
Christ answered the question asked by Philip
Christ answered the question asked by Judas**

7. Christ opened the understanding of the disciples after the resurrection

Luke 24:44-49

“Then He said to them, ‘These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.’ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.’”

**Christ explained how He had fulfilled the Old Testament
Christ opened the understanding (mind or thinking) of the disciples
Christ opened the comprehension (the tying of things together) of the disciples
Christ explained the meaning of the resurrection to the disciples
Christ said the disciples were to preach repentance
Christ said the disciples were to preach forgiveness of sins
Christ said that the disciples were to be witnesses of the resurrection
Christ said the disciples were to depend on the power of the Holy Spirit**

**F. The “western culture” teaches people to know about God,
while the “majority culture” helps people to know God**

Most teaching in the “western culture” is based on formal teaching with the authority of the teacher backed up by quotes from many authorities.

Messages, speeches, and books are filled with quotes that are considered authoritative by the person speaking and hopefully the people who are listening or reading.

Because much teaching in the “majority culture” happens in the context of daily living, the focus is on the way that God works in our daily lives as the Holy Spirit leads us and guides us.

As a result, the focus is not just on gaining knowledge but rather understanding how that knowledge changes our lives.

1. Christ helped people to spend time with Him

1 John 1:1-4

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.”

**the disciples recognized that Christ was from the beginning
the disciples heard Christ (He talked to them for three years)
the disciples saw Christ (He walked with them for three years)
the disciples really studied Christ (He gave them full freedom to know Him)
the disciples handled Christ, especially after the resurrection
the disciples passed this message on to us as official witnesses
the disciples wanted us to enjoy this same fellowship and a full joy**

**2. Christ shared everything that the Father told Him to share
John 15:15-17**

“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another.”

**Christ shared with them as friends
Christ shared all that He heard from the Father
Christ chose the disciples and appointed them to bear fruit
Christ said that their fruit should remain
Christ said that He would answer their prayers to the Father
Christ commanded them to love one another**

**3. Christ wants us to really get to know Him
Philippians 3:8-11**

“Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

**we want to know Christ personally - John 10:27
we want to be in Christ experientially - Galatians 2:20
we want to live in His righteousness and not our own
we want to understand the power of His resurrection
we want to experience the fellowship of His sufferings
we want to become conformed to His death**

**4. Christ gave us the Holy Spirit so we can experience His peace
John 14:26**

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”

**Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit
Christ said the Father would send the Holy Spirit
Christ said that the Holy Spirit would teach all things
Christ said the Holy Spirit would bring all things to remembrance**

**5. Christ gave us the Holy Spirit to bear witness of Him
John 15:26-27**

“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.”

**Christ said the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth
Christ said the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father
Christ said that the Holy Spirit would testify of Him
Christ said the disciples would bear witness of Him
Christ said the disciples had been with Him from the beginning**

**6. Christ gave us the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth
John 16:13-14**

“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you.”

**Christ said the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth
Christ said the Holy Spirit will not speak on His own authority
Christ said the Holy Spirit will speak what He hears
Christ said the Holy Spirit will speak of things to come
Christ said the Holy Spirit will glorify Him**

**G. In the “western culture”, people learn for self,
while in the “majority culture”, people learn so they can share with others**

Most learning in the “western culture” is so that people can know because western learning is based on rugged individualism for self-gain.

Most people want to learn so they can know the things that will help them to beat the competition.

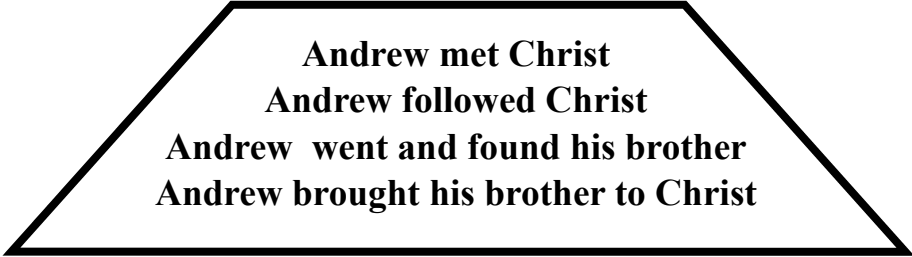
Most learning in the “majority culture” is so that people can learn how to help others especially within the context of Christian teaching.

Most times people in the “majority culture” first want to learn so they can help their own people. As they grow as Christians, they become concerned about people of other tribes and nations.

1. Christ encouraged people to share with their families

John 1:40-42a

“One of the two who heard John *speak*, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus.”

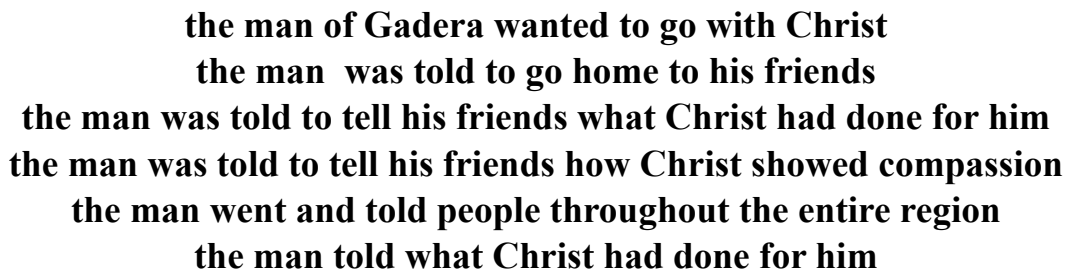


**Andrew met Christ
Andrew followed Christ
Andrew went and found his brother
Andrew brought his brother to Christ**

2. Christ encouraged people to share with their friends

Mark 5:19-20

“However, Jesus did not permit him, but said to him, ‘Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.’ And he departed and began to proclaim in Decapolis all that Jesus had done for him; and all marveled.”



**the man of Gadera wanted to go with Christ
the man was told to go home to his friends
the man was told to tell his friends what Christ had done for him
the man was told to tell his friends how Christ showed compassion
the man went and told people throughout the entire region
the man told what Christ had done for him**

3. Christ encouraged people to share with their co-workers

Luke 5:27-31

“After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, ‘Follow Me.’ So he left all, rose up, and followed Him. Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them. And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, ‘Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.’”

Levi (Matthew) was invited to follow Christ

Levi left all and followed Christ

Levi gave a great feast at his own house for Christ

Levi invited a large number of his co-workers to the dinner

Levi invited many sinners to the dinner also

Levi caused the scribes and Pharisees to criticize Christ

Levi heard Christ answer the scribes and Pharisees

4. Christ encouraged people to share with the people of their own town

John 4:28-29, 39-42

“The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, ‘Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?’ ...³⁹And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, ‘He told me all that I *ever* did.’ So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of His own word. Then they said to the woman, ‘Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world.’”

the woman left her waterpot where Christ was

the woman went into the city and invited people to meet Christ

the woman saw many of the people of her city believe because of her words

the woman saw many more believe because of the words of Christ

H. In the “western culture”, people receive grades for learning, while in the “majority culture”, people are rewarded for what they do, especially what they do to help others

All colleges and universities in the “western culture” reward students by giving them grades for what they have learned.

Most people in the “western culture” will measure their knowledge by the grades they were given in their classes.

In the “majority culture”, many of the rewards of learning are based on what people do rather than what they have learned.

**1. Christ illustrated this truth by a parable
Matthew 21:28-32**

“But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go, work today in my vineyard.' He answered and said, “ will not,” but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, “I go, sir,” but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of *his* father?’ They said to Him, ‘The first.’ Jesus said to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw *it*, you did not afterward relent and believe him.’”

Christ said a father asked his son to work in his vineyard

Christ said the father heard his son refuse to work in the vineyard

Christ said the father later saw the son repent and go work in the vineyard

Christ said the father asked a second son to work in his vineyard

Christ said the father heard the son promise to work in the vineyard

Christ said the father saw the second son never went to work in the vineyard

Christ asked which son was the obedient son

Christ was told that the first son was the obedient son

Christ said obedience was the way the sons were measured

2. Christ illustrated the importance of actions by His own actions

John 13:12-17

“So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for *so* I am. If I then, *your* Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”

Christ had observed that no one offered to wash the feet of the others

Christ waited until after they ate to give the disciples time

Christ then said nothing as He silently washed the feet of the disciples

Christ waited until he sat down before He began to explain

Christ said that they called Him their Lord

Christ said that He had given them an example to follow

Christ said that the disciples were to serve one another

Christ said they were not greater than He

Christ said they would experience blessing by doing not just knowing

3. Christ saw the early Christians show their love by their actions

Acts 2:44-47

“Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

the early Christians shared what they had with one another

the early Christians invited one another into their homes

the early Christians had favor with all of the people

4. Christ saw the early church continue to act on what they learned

Acts 6:1-6

“Now in those days, when *the number of* the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, ‘It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of *good* reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.’ And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.”

the entire church was concerned about the widows
the entire church realized the apostles had certain priorities
the entire church selected men to provide food for the widows
the entire church shared in this ministry to the widows

5. Christ saw individual Christians show what they learned by their actions

Acts 4:36-37

“And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold *it*, and brought the money and laid *it* at the apostles' feet.”

Barnabas was given a new name because he was such an Encourager
Barnabas sold land so that he could share with other Christians

Acts 9:36-39

“At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid *her* in an upper room. And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring *him* not to delay in coming to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought *him* to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them.”

Dorcas had become a disciple of Christ
Dorcas was full of good works to help others
Dorcas was full of charitable deeds (deeds to help the poor)
Dorcas had sewed much clothing for the children of widows

6. Christ calls us to be doers of the Word

James 1:22-25

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”

**we are called to be obedient to the Word of God
we deceive ourselves if we hear and do not do
we are like a man who looks at himself in a mirror
we are like a man who walks away and forgets
we are to look carefully at the perfect law of liberty
we are to continue in the law of liberty
we are not to be forgetful hearers
we are to be doers of the work
we can look forward to blessing for doing**

7. Christ calls us to Make Disciples

Matthew 28:18-20

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.’ Amen.”

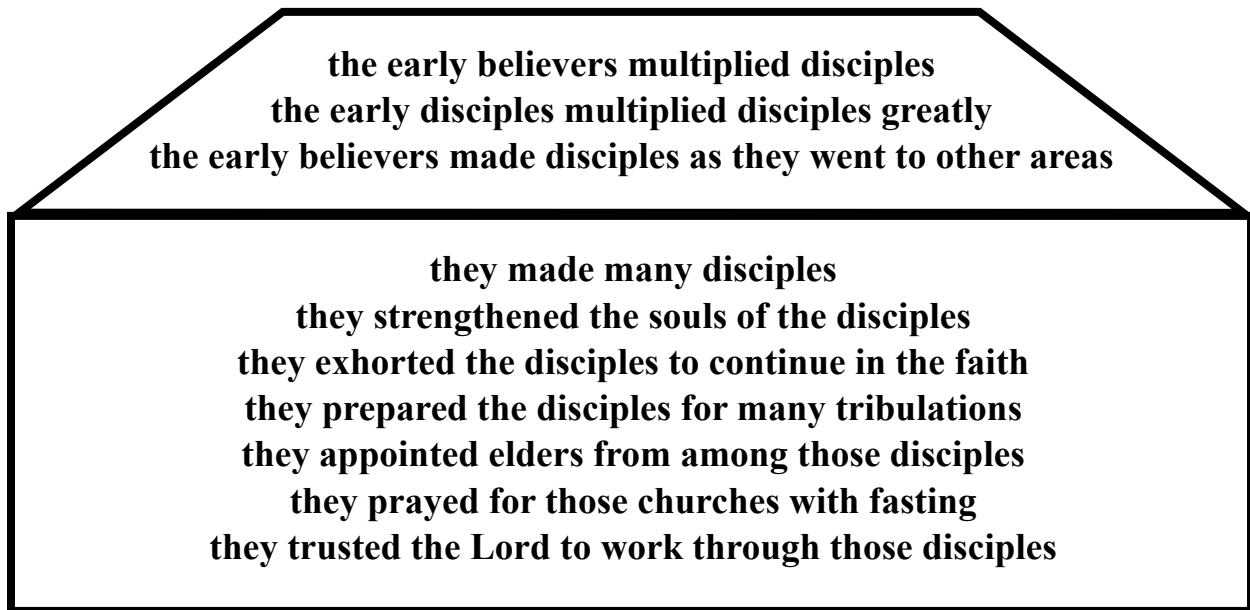
**Christ is the One who has all authority
Christ commanded Christians to Make Disciples
Christ said that command involved three things
Going
Baptizing
Teaching (how to obey all that Christ commanded)
Christ said He is with us always**

8. Christ saw the early believers help others as they Made Disciples

Acts 6:1, 7, 14:21-23

“Now in those days, when *the number of* the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. ...⁷Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.”

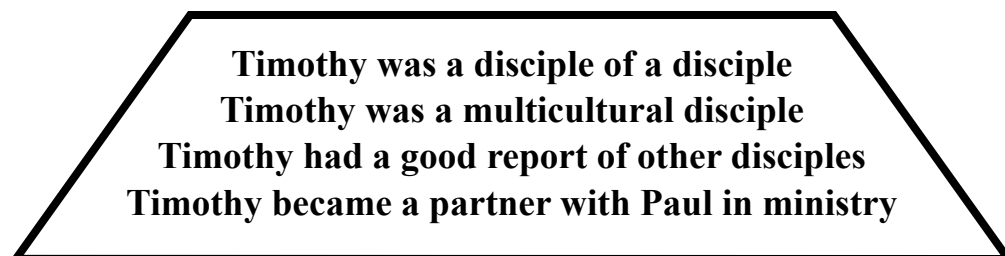
“And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting *them* to continue in the faith, and *saying*, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.” So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.”



9. Christ saw the early believers develop reproducing disciples

Acts 16:1-3

“Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, *the* son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father *was* Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took *him* and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek.”



I. In the “western culture”, the teacher is in front of the students, while in the “majority culture”, the teacher is working with the students

In the “western culture” the teacher, pastor or missionary usually stands in the front and delivers his lecture or message to those who are listening.

The goal is to give knowledge to those who are listening.

In the “majority culture” the teacher, pastor or missionary either goes with the students as they learn or sits together with them discussing what they have observed and discussing the questions that they have.

1. Christ was already discussing and asking questions as a child

Luke 2:46-47

“Now so it was *that* after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers.”

**Christ was sitting with the teachers
Christ was listening to the teachers
Christ was asking questions of the teachers
Christ caused the teachers to be astonished at His understanding
Christ caused the teachers to be astonished at His answers**

2. Christ spent time discussing questions with interested individuals

John 3:1-4

“There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?’”

**Nicodemus came to Christ with questions
Nicodemus felt free to ask additional questions
Nicodemus and Christ had an extended discussion**

3. Christ led uninterested individuals to ask questions

John 4:6-11

“Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from *His* journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, ‘Give Me a drink.’ For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, ‘How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?’ For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, ‘If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, “Give Me a drink,” you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.’ The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?’”

**Christ met a Samaritan woman as He sat by the well
Christ started a conversation with the Samaritan woman
Christ experienced initial rejection by the Samaritan woman
Christ aroused the curiosity of the Samaritan woman
Christ led the Samaritan woman to begin asking questions**

4. Christ discussed the questions of His disciples

Mark 4:10-12

“But when He was alone, those around Him with the twelve asked Him about the parable. And He said to them, ‘To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but to those who are outside, all things come in parables, so that “Seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand; lest they should turn, and their sins be forgiven them.”’”

**Christ was asked to explain the parable
Christ explained why He taught in parables
Christ explained the parable to the disciples**

5. Christ listened to the report of the disciples from their ministry trip

Mark 6:30

“Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught.”

**Christ had the disciples gather around Him after their ministry trip
Christ knew the disciples were eager to tell about their ministry trip
Christ had them tell what they had done as they ministered
Christ had them tell what they had taught as they ministered**

6. Christ asked two followers what they understood

Luke 24:17-24

“And He said to them, ‘What kind of conversation *is* this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?’ Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, ‘Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?’ And He said to them, ‘What things?’ So they said to Him, ‘The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those *who were* with us went to the tomb and found *it* just as the women had said; but Him they did not see.’”

Christ asked the two to explain what they were talking about
Christ asked them to explain what things had happened in Jerusalem
Christ listened as they told about their hopes
Christ listened as they told what the women had said

7. Christ used both visual examples and explanation

Luke 24:40-45

“When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, ‘Have you any food here?’ So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. And He took *it* and ate in their presence. Then He said to them, ‘These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.’ And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.”

Christ showed the disciples His hands and His feet
Christ recognized that they still did not believe
Christ showed He was real by eating food in front of them
Christ then explained what He had said to them in the past
Christ opened their understanding of the Old Testament
Christ helped them get things straight in their minds

**J. In the “western culture”, the goal is knowledge,
while in the “majority culture”, the goal is wisdom**

In the “western culture” the one who speaks first and shares his knowledge will often influence the entire group toward his point of view.

This usually results in people giving their opinions, or their personal convictions, instead of giving Biblical principles.

In the “majority culture”, the one who speaks last, because of his wisdom, will have: carefully listened to what each of the others have said and will pick out the best ideas and combine them, rephrase other ideas that need to be developed further, and not include ideas that would detract from the purpose.

**1. the disciples heard problem solving questions asked by Christ
Mark 8:27-31**

“Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, ‘Who do men say that I am?’ So they answered, ‘John the Baptist; but some *say*, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Peter answered and said to Him, ‘You are the Christ.’ Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him. And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.”

**Christ took the disciples to an area where they would not be interrupted
Christ discussed many questions as He traveled with the disciples
Christ asked the disciples about the opinions of others about Him
Christ listened to the opinions that the disciples had heard
Christ asked the disciples about their own convictions regarding Him
Christ gave them the opportunity to say that He was the Christ
Christ told them not to tell others their convictions at that time
Christ began to teach about His coming death and resurrection**

2. the disciples let all speak before sharing their thoughts

Acts 15:5-7, 13-22

“But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, ‘It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses.’ Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. And when there had been much dispute, Peter rose up and said to them: ‘Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.’ ...¹³And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, ‘Men *and* brethren, listen to me: Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: “After this I will return and will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; so that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, says the LORD who does all these things.” Known to God from eternity are all His works. Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, *from* sexual immorality, *from* things strangled, and *from* blood. For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath.’ Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, *namely*, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.”

**the disciples let everyone give their opinions, so, it was a long discussion
the disciples then heard how the Lord sent Peter to the house of Cornelius
the disciples heard what God had done among the Gentiles from
Paul and Barnabas**

**the disciples all had their opportunity to speak before there was silence
the disciples listened as James reviewed what Peter had said
the disciples listened as James reviewed principles from the Old Testament
the disciples listened as James gave his recommendations:**

**they should not trouble the Gentiles
they should give four principles from the first nine chapters of Genesis**

**abstain from things offered to idols
abstain from sexual immorality
abstain from things strangled
abstain from blood**

the disciples had unanimous agreement with the recommendations

3. the disciples in Rome saw all present given an opportunity to speak

Acts 28:17, 22-24

“And it came to pass after three days that Paul called the leaders of the Jews together. So when they had come together, he said to them: ‘Men *and* brethren, though I have done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered as a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.’ ...²²‘But we desire to hear from you what you think; for concerning this sect, we know that it is spoken against everywhere.’ So when they had appointed him a day, many came to him at *his* lodging, to whom he explained and solemnly testified of the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus from both the Law of Moses and the Prophets, from morning till evening. And some were persuaded by the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.”

Paul called the Jews in Rome together

Paul explained why he had been sent as a prisoner to Rome

Paul heard that Jews in Rome wanted to learn more

Paul heard the Jews accept an invitation for discussion

Paul explained Biblical principles from the Law and the Prophets

Paul and the Jews had an entire day of discussion

Paul saw some believe and others reject

4. the disciples who believed heard Paul turn to the Gentiles

Acts 28:25-29

“So when they did not agree among themselves, they departed after Paul had said one word: ‘The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet to our fathers, saying, *‘Go to this people and say: “Hearing you will hear, and shall not understand; And seeing you will see, and not perceive; For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.”*’ Therefore let it be known to you that the salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it!” And when he had said these words, the Jews departed and had a great dispute among themselves.”

Paul further explained principles from the book of Isaiah

Paul explained why he now turned to the Gentiles

Paul saw that the Jews had much discussion among themselves

K. The “western culture” usually focuses on methods that are culture specific, while the “majority culture” focuses on principles that will apply in many different cultures

The Pharisees, who had become Christians, wanted to focus on the methods they had developed which would have made Christianity very culture-specific.

This was illustrated very clearly in the previous section where we saw their response at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15.

Christ, and the apostles, shared Biblical principles and illustrated them from what the Lord was doing. This was to help Christianity become a belief system that could spread rapidly among all cultures, not limited by Jewish law which had been designed to keep the Jews a separate people so Christ could come from that nation.

The four things that were summarized by James at the Jerusalem Council all came from the first nine chapters of Genesis which made them universal for all nations.

**1. the Gentiles were instructed to avoid four things
Acts 15:28-29**

“For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.”

Genesis 2:24; 4:3; 9:3-4

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh...”

“And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.”

“Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. But you shall not eat flesh with its life, *that is*, its blood.”

**abstain from things offered to idols - Genesis 4:3
(Cain was the first idol worshipper who brought his own works to God)
abstain from blood - Genesis 9:4
abstain from things strangled - Genesis 9:3-4
abstain from sexual immorality - Genesis 2:24**

the church was led by the Holy Spirit!

2. if Jews, we are to practice the law of liberty

James 1:25, 2:8-10

“But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”

“If you really fulfill *the* royal law according to the Scripture, ‘*You shall love your neighbor as yourself*,’ you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all.”

**the perfect law of liberty is to:
love your neighbor as you love yourself!**

3. if Jews we, will be judged by the law of liberty

James 2:12

“So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.”

**our speech will be judged by the law of liberty
our actions will be judged by the law of liberty**

4. if Gentiles, we are to stand fast in liberty

Galatians 5:1

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.”

**we are to stand fast in our liberty
we are to realize that Christ has made us free
we are not to be entangled again with a yoke of bondage (the law)**

5. if Gentiles, we are called to liberty

Galatians 5:13

“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”

**we are called to liberty
we are not to use liberty to satisfy the flesh
we are to use liberty to serve one another in love**

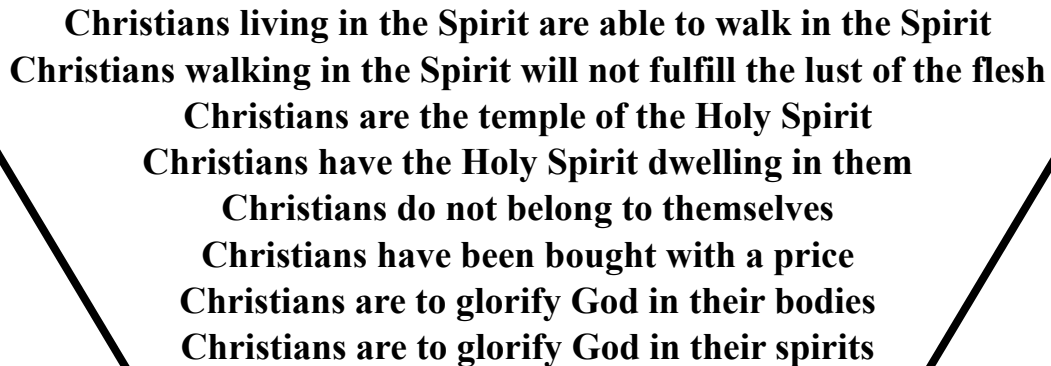
6. as Christians, we are to walk in liberty by walking in the Spirit

Galatians 5:16

“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.”



Christians living in the Spirit are able to walk in the Spirit
Christians walking in the Spirit will not fulfill the lust of the flesh
Christians are the temple of the Holy Spirit
Christians have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them
Christians do not belong to themselves
Christians have been bought with a price
Christians are to glorify God in their bodies
Christians are to glorify God in their spirits

7. as Christians, we are to be led by the Spirit

Galatians 5:18

“But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”

Romans 8:14

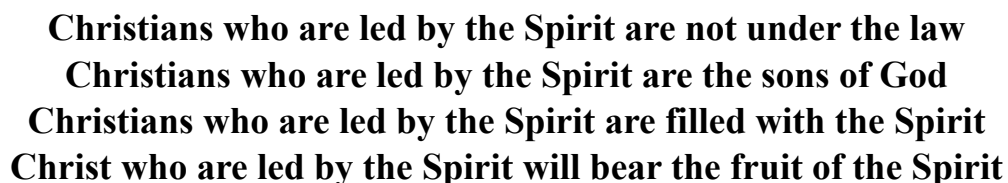
“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.”

Luke 4:1

“Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness.”

Galatians 5:22-23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ”



Christians who are led by the Spirit are not under the law
Christians who are led by the Spirit are the sons of God
Christians who are led by the Spirit are filled with the Spirit
Christ who are led by the Spirit will bear the fruit of the Spirit

understanding the ministry of the Spirit is a key in every culture!

8. as Christians, many of us depend on our own strength

Romans 7:14-25

“For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that *it is* good. But now, *it is* no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but *how* to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.”

“I”, “me”, “my”, and “myself” are used 38 times in these verses when we depend on our own strength as Christians, we will fail

**I do not understand why I do what I do
I hate the things I am doing
I cannot carry out the desires of my will
I realize that sin dwells in me
I can will to do something but do not have power to carry it out
I do not do the things I will to do
I do the things I will not to do
I realize that sin dwells in me
I will to do good but do evil instead
what a wretched person I am
who will deliver me from this body of death?**

9. as Christians, we can live in victory when we yield to the Holy Spirit

Romans 8:31-39

“What then shall **we** say to these things? If God *is* for **us**, who *can be* against **us**? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for **us** all, how shall He not with Him also freely give **us** all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for **us**. Who shall separate **us** from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: ‘For Your sake **we** are killed all day long; **we** are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Yet in all these things **we** are more than conquerors through Him who loved **us**. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate **us** from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus **our** Lord.”

**in the first seven chapters of Romans, the Holy Spirit is mentioned one time
in Romans 8, the Holy Spirit is mentioned nineteen times**

**“we”, “us”, and our are used 13 times in these verses
when we depend on the Holy Spirit, we serve in His strength:**

**we know that God is for us
we know that no one can stand against us
we know that God will freely give us all things
we know that no one can bring a charge against us
we know that Christ is making intercession for us
we know that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ
we know that we are more than conquerors through Christ
we know that nothing can separate us from the love of God
we know that we have that love through Jesus Christ our Lord**

**10. as Christians, we know that we have been crucified with Christ
Romans 6:6**

“Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.”

**we know that our old man was crucified with Christ
we know that our past, present and future sins are blotted out
we know that we do not need to be slaves to sin any longer**

**11. as Christians, we can now act on what we know
Romans 6:11**

“Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

**we can act based on the fact that we are dead to the control of sin
we can act on the fact that we are alive to the power of God in Christ**

**12. as Christians, we choose to yield to the Holy Spirit moment-by-moment
Romans 6:13, 16, 19**

“And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. ...¹⁶Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? ...¹⁹I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members *as* slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness *leading* to *more* lawlessness, so now present your members *as* slaves of righteousness for holiness.”

**we no longer need to present ourselves as unrighteousness to sin
we can now present ourselves to God as those alive from the dead
we will be the slaves of the thing to which we present ourselves:
when we yield to sin, we experience Romans 7:24
(oh, wretched man that I am!)
when we yield to God, we experience Romans 8:35-39
(in all these things we are more than conquerors!)**

**III. Understanding Whether We Look at the World from a “Western Culture”
Worldview or a “Majority Culture” Worldview**

A. What form of communication did we experience as we grew up?

Questions to ask ourselves:

How much of our total learning occurred in the classroom?

**How much of our learning happened where someone else talked
and we were expected to learn by listening?**

**How much of our learning happened because individuals took time
to ask us questions and listen to our answers?**

**How much of our learning happened due to the fact that we spent time
with individuals who showed us how to do things as we watched?**

**How much of our learning happened due to the fact that we spent time
working with individuals who involved us in what they were doing?**

**How much of our learning occurred as a result of informal discussion
where we were encouraged to ask questions
so that we could get our questions answered?**

**How much of our learning occurred because individuals spent time
showing us how to do the things that they were doing?**

**How much of our learning occurred as we were given opportunities
to do things while the one teaching us observed what we were doing?**

**How much of our learning occurred as we reported what we had done
and then discussed with our teachers the things we had said and done?**

**How many of our teachers had as their goal to serve us and help us
reach our full potential?**

**How many of our teachers helped us to become full partners with them
in ministry for the Lord?**

B. Were our goals to: learn to know or learn how to do as we grew up?

Questions to ask ourselves:

Was the primary concern of our teachers to cover material or to prepare us to live our lives effectively?

Was the primary concern of our teachers to help us learn the material or to help us understand why we were learning that material?

How many of our teachers were willing to spend time with us outside of classes so that we could see how they put their lessons into practice in their own lives?

Was our primary reason for learning to help us pass tests, get grades ,and complete the requirements of classes?

Were our Christian teachers willing to let us observe their lives in many different situations so that we could see how they handled various situations?

How much of what we learned in our Christian lives was learned in the context of going with a teacher, observing the teacher, and then participating in ministry with the teacher?

How much of what we learned happened as a result of our teacher giving us problem solving situations so that we could determine how to put into practice the things we were learning?

How many opportunities were we given to go along with a Christian teacher as the teacher ministered so we could see how that teacher ministered?

How many opportunities were given by that teacher to discuss and learn to apply what we had observed as the teacher ministered to others?

What did we learn about the prayer life of our Christian teachers as we prayed together with them for the people to whom we went to minister?

What three Christians had the greatest impact on our spiritual growth and why did those Christians make a greater impact on our lives than the rest of the Christians we knew?

C. Were we expected to learn by listening or learn by doing as we grew up?

Questions to ask ourselves:

How many of our pastors assumed that we had learned once they had preached their sermons?

How many of our Christian teachers assumed that we had learned once they had taught their lessons in class?

How often were we reminded that God is the audience and we are the participants in the worship services of our church?

How many of our Christian teachers encouraged our questions during the class so we could get our questions answered immediately?

How many of our Christian teachers provided opportunity for questions and further discussion at the conclusion of each class?

How many of our Christian teachers asked us questions in Bible studies and gave much time to hear the ideas and thoughts of most of those participating in the Bible studies?

How many of our Christian teachers gave individuals in the Bible study opportunity to prepare and participate in leading the Bible study?

How many of our Christian teachers helped us develop opportunities to share outside the Bible study the things that we were learning in the Bible study?

How many of our Christian teachers either visited us in our homes or invited us to visit them in their homes?

How many of our Christian teachers encouraged us to discuss our questions with them during a meal?

How many of our Christian teachers actually took the time to show us how to put into practice the Biblical principles that we were learning in Bible study so that those principles became a part of our daily lives, not just information we had learned?

**D. Did we learn for ministry, or did we learn in ministry
as we grew spiritually?**

Questions to ask ourselves:

**How much of what we were taught about how to share the Gospel
with others occurred while we were talking with people
who were not yet Christians and how much occurred
isolated from those who were not yet Christians?**

**How much were we expected to know before we were allowed
to begin sharing with others the things that we were learning?**

**What is the first experience we remember where we had the opportunity
to minister to someone else and how long did that occur after our salvation?**

**What was the average length of time between the time we were first taught
a Biblical principle and the time we were given the opportunity
to teach that principle to someone else?**

**When was the first time we were invited to go along with someone
who was involved in ministry so we could be their helper?**

**How often did more mature Christians take us with them
so we could gain experience in on-the-job ministry with them?**

**How much experience did we have as a part of a ministry team
ministering to others as we grew spiritually?**

**What were our personal reactions the first few times
we were a part of a cross-cultural team in ministry?**

**What are some of our key memories from the first time
we led a ministry team within the church?**

**What are some of our key memories from the first time
we led a ministry team that was involved in evangelism
outside the church building?**

**What are some of the key lessons we learned for future ministry
as we had opportunities to learn while we were participating in ministry
to others as a part of a ministry team?**

E. Were we mostly educated through formal means of communication (classroom instruction) or through non-formal means of communication (hands-on instruction)?

Questions to ask ourselves:

Was much of our instruction given in buildings that are designed for formal communication from the teacher to the students or the pastor to the people?

Was much of our instruction given as we sat in rows or did most of it occur in circles so that all could participate in the discussion, not just listen to the teacher or the pastor?

Was most of our instruction given in large groups where the teacher or pastor was expected to do most or all of the talking?

Was much of our instruction given in groups that were small enough that we could feel free to ask questions at any time?

Did much of our instruction happen during informal times such as: the eating of meals, while traveling, or in other informal situations?

Was much of our instruction in larger or more formal groups followed by discussion in smaller groups so that questions could be answered and there could be understanding and application of the knowledge that had been given in the larger group?

Did much of our instruction come as a result of questions that we asked during the normal activities of daily life?

Did much of our instruction include visual illustrations so we could have those illustrations to help us remember what was discussed?

What are three key lessons you will never forget because of the visual illustrations used by the teacher?

What are three key lessons you will never forget because of the things you did as a part of learning those lessons?

F. Was the focus of those who instructed us to help us know about God , or did the instructors focus on helping us to get to know God personally?

Questions to ask ourselves:

Did teachers or pastors frequently back their teaching with quotes from many authorities?

Did much of that teaching emphasize purity of doctrine so people would be prepared to defend their faith?

Did part of that teaching help us to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man?

Did part of that teaching help us know that Christ dwells in our hearts through faith?

Did part of that teaching help us to become rooted and grounded in love and to understand with all of the saints the width and length and depth and height of that love?

Did part of that teaching help us to understand what it means to be motivated by the love of Christ?

Did part of that teaching emphasize how the Holy Spirit leads and guides us in our daily lives?

Did part of that teaching help us to understand how to experience the peace of God in our lives moment-by-moment?

Did part of that teaching help us to learn to enjoy our Christian liberty as we learn to walk in the Spirit and be led by the Spirit?

Did part of that teaching help us learn how the Holy Spirit guides us into all truth?

Did part of that teaching help us to pray for boldness so that we witness in the power of the Holy Spirit instead of our own strength?

G. During our development, did we learn for self (personal benefit), or did we learn to help others?

Questions to ask ourselves:

Did we basically learn so we could gain information to help us reach the goals we had for our personal life?

Was there a strong emphasis in our family on the importance of learning the information needed to be successful and make money?

What were the things our family emphasized that would help us to succeed in the world?

What did our family do to help us determine what we would become as we became an adult?

Did our family emphasize the importance of using our opportunities to learn to understand things that would help our people?

What were the things our family emphasized would give our lives meaning and purpose?

If we grew up in a Christian family, in what ways did our family encourage us to help others learn how to have their sins forgiven and receive eternal life?

If we grew up in a Christian family, what were some of the things our family helped us to learn, by their example, in order to serve others ?

What were the goals our parents had for their own lives and what goals did they encourage us to develop for our lives?

What were some of the ways we learned to serve others during the time we were between the ages of 12 and 25?

What were the things that determined why we did what we did as we became adults?

How would we describe our present purpose in life?

H. Were we rewarded for learning by grades and other rewards that benefited us personally, or were we rewarded for what we did, especially what we did to help others?

Questions to ask ourselves:

Did the importance of good grades for personal goals have a strong influence on our thinking and even influence the elective classes we took in school?

Were good grades important to us in school or were there other things that motivated us during that period?

In what ways did our families encourage or reward us when we reached out to help other people in need?

Did we seek good grades in school because of our desire for personal success or because of the importance of honoring our family by our grades?

Did our families think we were successful because of the things we did or did they think we were successful by what we learned?

For what reasons did our families normally reward us as we were growing and maturing?

In what ways did our families help us to put into practice the things we were learning as we grew up?

How did our families respond when we took time to help and encourage others in their lives?

In what ways did our families encourage us when we put into practice the things that we were learning?

What are some of the ways you chose to help others as you were growing up and what did your family think of the ways you helped others?

Why do you think your family responded in those ways as they saw what you were doing to help others?

I. Did our teachers stand in front of us to teach, or did our teachers work with us and give us on-the-job training?

Questions to ask ourselves:

Did we receive most of our teaching in classes where the teacher, pastor or missionary stood in the front and gave his message or lecture to those who were listening?

What are three of the most important questions you wanted to ask your parents but never did?

Why do you think you never asked those questions of your parents even though you really wanted to ask them?

What are three of the most important questions you wanted to ask your pastor but never did?

Why would you say you never asked your pastor those questions?

Who was your favorite teacher and why do you think that teacher was your favorite teacher?

What were some of the reasons that pastors or Christian teachers took you with them or showed you how to do the things they were teaching?

What were three of the most meaningful times one of your parents sat down with you to discuss some of your most important questions?

What were three of the most meaningful times a pastor or teacher sat down with you to discuss some of your questions?

What were three of the most meaningful times a pastor or teacher sat down with you and discussed how to apply Biblical principles in your life?

What were three of the questions a pastor or teacher asked you as you sat together that had a great impact on your life?

What are three visual examples (word pictures) that a pastor or teacher shared with you that helped you to remember important lessons in your life?

J. Was our goal to gain knowledge or to learn wisdom?

Questions to ask ourselves:

Why do you think that, in the “western culture”, the one who speaks first and shares his knowledge (or sometimes just his opinions) will often influence the entire group toward his point of view?

Why do you think many people, in the “western culture”, feel uncomfortable when someone asks a question and it is more than a minute before anyone gives an answer to that question?

What are three questions you have had to think about for a long time that have had a great impact on your life?

Why do you think that those three questions had such a great impact on your life whether you ever got answers for them or not?

Why do you think that Christ often asked the disciples questions that made the disciples really have to think before they could give an answer?

Why do you think that some teachers will ask a question and encourage everyone to give their ideas before the teacher explains why he asked the question?

Why do you think that people are better able to listen to the wisdom shared by the teacher after they have first shared their own thoughts?

How do you think most people feel when a teacher will listen to their thoughts, ideas, and opinions without telling them they are wrong?

Why do you think that an effective teacher will take the time to listen to the thoughts, ideas and opinions of the learners before sharing Biblical principles that he has found helpful in his own experience?

Why do you think that the book of James tells us we need to ask the Lord if we lack wisdom?

What are some of the ways we have found helpful to grow in wisdom?

K. Were we taught by methods that were culture-specific, or did our teachers help us learn principles that would apply in many different cultures?

Questions to ask ourselves:

As we were growing up, did our teachers often say that this is the right way to solve a problem, or did they suggest a variety of ways to solve a problem?

Did our teachers often discuss with us the different choices we faced and then help us to think about the good and bad consequences of each of those choices?

Did much of what we were taught focus on rules to follow or did most of what we were taught help us to understand Biblical principles?

In what ways did our teachers show us how to apply Biblical principles?

Did the things we were taught help us to learn to focus on Biblical principles or was the primary emphasis on methods that would work in our particular culture?

As we were growing up, were we shown how to think through our choices and learn to make wise decisions?

As we were growing in our spiritual lives, did we have the law of liberty from the books of Galatians and James explained to us?

As we were growing in our spiritual lives, in what ways were we shown how to walk in the law of liberty by learning to walk in the Spirit?

As we were growing in our spiritual lives, in what ways were we shown how to be led by the Holy Spirit moment-by-moment?

In what ways did our spiritual parents help us to understand what Romans 7:14-25 says about trying to depend on our own strength?

In ways did our spiritual parents help us to understand what Romans 8:31-39 says about the way the Lord will give us victory as we learn to walk in the Spirit?

IV. Understanding Why the Tri-Cultural Obstacle Is the Most Complex of All

A. We must help people understand the cultural context in which the Word of God was written

1. the Old and New Testaments were written by writers who grew up in the Jewish culture and were familiar with the Jewish law, feasts, and culture

These writers wrote under the inspiration of God

2 Timothy 3:16-17

“All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

These writers wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit

2 Peter 1:19-21

“And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke *as they were* moved by the Holy Spirit.”

These writers wrote some things that even they did not understand

Daniel 12:8-10

“Although I heard, I did not understand. Then I said, ‘My lord, what *shall be* the end of these *things?*’ And he said, ‘Go *your way*, Daniel, for the words *are* closed up and sealed till the time of the end. Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.’”

**the wicked cannot understand
the wise will one day understand**

These writers wrote things that other writers even found difficult to understand

2 Peter 3:15-16

“And consider *that* the longsuffering of our Lord *is* salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable *people* twist to their own destruction, as *they do* also the rest of the Scriptures.”

Peter wrote to the Jews while Paul wrote to the Gentiles!

**2. we must understand our system of Biblical interpretation
(as Christians who believe that all of the writers of Scripture were inspired by the
inspiration of God as they wrote, we define our system of interpretation as the
grammatico-historical interpretation of Scripture)**

**Grammatico-historical interpretation says that the meaning of any Scripture
is defined by the intent of the original author.**

Two key things that determine the original intent include:

a) the language the writer used

It is important to understand that the communication, thought and learning patterns of the “majority culture” are often similar to the Hebrew patterns. This means that the eleven keys mentioned in the earlier section of this manual must be considered in our efforts to try and understand the intent of the original writer.

b) the historical context in which the writer wrote

Since the Old Testament was originally written to the Jews, the writers and readers were familiar with the Jewish law, feasts and culture.

In contrast, only part of the New Testament was written to those who had a Jewish background. Many of the books written by Paul were written to churches where most of the people were Gentiles. Instead of the Jewish law,

Acts 15:28-29 says:

“For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.”

It is important to continue to grow in our understanding of the cultural context in which each book of the Bible was written, because that will give us a much greater understanding of the things we are learning and explaining to others.

**At the same time, while there can be only one meaning,
we do understand that there can be many applications!**

**B. We must help people understand the culture from which we come
(is it “western culture” or “majority culture”?)**

1. the “western culture” is more like the Greek culture

The Greek culture was more focused on philosophy

Acts 17:18-21

“Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, ‘What does this babbling man want to say?’ Others said, ‘He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods,’ because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection. And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, ‘May we know what this new doctrine *is* of which you speak? For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean.’ For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.”

**philosophers are given to the pursuit of learning
philosophers want to either hear or tell some new thing**

The Greek culture was more focused on human wisdom (knowledge)

1 Corinthians 1:22

“For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom.”

1 Corinthians 8:1

“Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.”

James 3:14-16

“But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there.”

**the Greek culture chose to seek after human wisdom
the Greek culture was based on human wisdom and knowledge
the Greek culture became puffed up with its knowledge
the Greek culture had wisdom that did not come from the Lord
the Greek culture had wisdom that was earthly, sensual and demonic
the Greek culture had wisdom that produced confusion and every evil thing**

2. the “majority culture” is more like Hebrew culture

The Hebrew culture was focused on balanced learning

Exodus 18:20

“And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do.”

**teach them the statutes and laws (knowledge)
show them the way to walk (character)
show them how to do the work (ministry skills)**

The Hebrew culture was based on knowledge of the Old Testament

Acts 15:21

“For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath.”

**the Jews had developed synagogues in every city with Jews
the Jews read the law of Moses in the synagogues every Sabbath**

**The Hebrew culture was designed to develop godly character
(the Pharisees developed their own sinful character)**

Matthew 23:15

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.”

the Jews were supposed to show people how to walk by example!

The Hebrew culture was designed to develop ministry skills

Luke 4:16-17

“So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written.”

Mark 1:17

“Then Jesus said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’”

**the men and older boys all read in the synagogue services
(seven to nine men would read in every service)
the teachers invited people to follow them and learn ministry skills**

3. the “majority culture” also differs from the Hebrew culture

**Hebrew knowledge was to be based on Biblical principles,
while majority knowledge was based on cultural standards**

Deuteronomy 6:1-2

“Now this *is* the commandment, *and these are* the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe *them* in the land which you are crossing over to possess, that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.”

the Word of God was to be passed from generation to generation by Israel

**Hebrew goals were to develop godly character,
while majority goals were to develop conformity to the culture**

Deuteronomy 6:4-6, 20-25

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD *is* one! You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ...²⁰When your son asks you in time to come, saying, “What *is the meaning of* the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments which the LORD our God has commanded you?” then you shall say to your son: “We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand; and the LORD showed signs and wonders before our eyes, great and severe, against Egypt, Pharaoh, and all his household. Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers. And the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as *it is* this day. Then it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe all these commandments before the LORD our God, as He has commanded us.””

**the Word of God was to be the basis for Hebrew character
the Word of God was to be explained by the parents to the children
the Word of God was to be modeled for the children by the parents**

**Hebrew training was to develop ministry skills, while majority training was to
develop skills to help their particular culture**

Deuteronomy 6:8-9, 18

“You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. ...¹⁸And you shall do *what is* right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you, and that you may go in and possess the good land of which the LORD swore to your fathers.”

**the Word of God was to guide the thoughts of Israel
the Word of God was to guide the actions of Israel**

4. the “majority culture” also differs from what God want us to become

Christ wants our lives to be transformed

Romans 12:1-2

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

**we are to present our bodies to God as a living sacrifice
we are to present our bodies to God as a holy sacrifice
we are to present our bodies to God as an acceptable sacrifice
we are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds
we are to live our lives so we carry out the will of God**

Christ wants us to become men and women of God

2 Timothy 3:16-17

“All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

**we are to realize that all Scripture is inspired by God
we are to realize that all Scripture is profitable
we are to seek to become complete (mature)
we are to become equipped for every good work**

Christ wants us to learn to function as His temple in the world

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

“Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.”

**we are to recognize that our body is the temple of God
we are to recognize that we were bought with a price
we are to glorify God in our body
we are to glorify God in our spirit
we are to recognize that both our body and spirit belong to God**

C. We must help people understand the cultures to which we are taking the Gospel and in which we are seeking to plant additional churches

1. cultures and people without Christ have some common characteristics

They are driven by five things

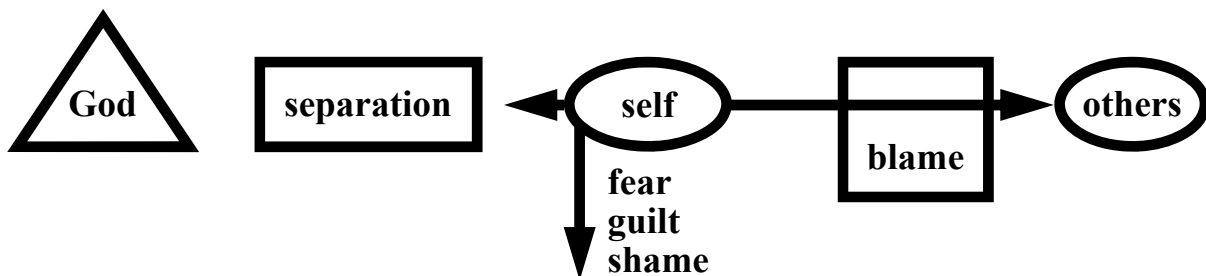
Genesis 3:8-12

“And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, ‘Where *are* you?’ So he said, ‘I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.’ And He said, ‘Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?’ Then the man said, ‘The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.’”

they have a changed relationship with God

they have a changed relationship with self

they have a changed relationship with others



Spiritual death is separation from God

(Adam experienced spiritual death that day and physical death over 900 years later)

Genesis 2:16-17

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’”

Spiritual death produces fear, guilt and shame within

(every person without Christ is motivated by this fear, guilt and shame)

Genesis 3:10

“So he said, ‘I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.’”

Spiritual death causes us to blame God and others

(we do not want to accept personal responsibility for our own choices)

Genesis 3:12

“Then the man said, ‘The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.’”

2. many cultures have a fear of evil spirits

Acts 8:9-12

“But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, ‘This man is the great power of God.’ And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.”

**such cultures are controlled by those who practice sorcery
such cultures think that sorcerers have the power of God
such cultures see the power of Satan demonstrated
such cultures can be set free through the power of Christ**

3. many cultures are controlled by demonic power

Acts 19:13-20

“Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned *them* in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and *it* totaled fifty thousand *pieces* of silver. So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.”

**such cultures are under the power of demonic spirits
such cultures depend on exorcists to free them
such cultures see the power of evil spirits demonstrated
such cultures have great fear of those evil spirits
such cultures are amazed when they see the power of Christ
such cultures may turn to Christ in great numbers**

4. many cultures practice idol worship

Acts 17:16

“Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols.”

1 Corinthians 10:14-20

“Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, *though* many, are one bread *and* one body; for we all partake of that one bread. Observe Israel after the flesh: Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything? Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.”

**many cultures are given over to idols
many cultures need to be set free from idolatry
many cultures sacrifice to demons when they sacrifice to idols
many cultures have fellowship with demons in their false worship**

5. many cultures have made worship of self their idol

2 Timothy 3:1-8

“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith.”

**many cultures become lovers of self
many cultures become lovers of money
many cultures have great pride
many cultures reject the authority of their parents
many cultures have no love for others
many cultures make pleasure their god
many cultures have a form of religion but no power
many cultures never come to the knowledge of the truth**

6. all cultures are spiritually dead without Christ

Ephesians 2:1-3

“And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.”

**such cultures are dead in trespasses and sins
such cultures walk according to the course of this world
such cultures follow the prince of the power of the air
such cultures follow the spirit who works in the sons of disobedience
such cultures follow the lusts of their own flesh
such cultures follow the lusts of their own mind
such cultures are the children of wrath**

7. all cultures face eternal judgment without Christ

Hebrews 2:14-15

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.”

Revelation 20:15, 21:8

“And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”
“But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

**all cultures had One (Christ) come who came to destroy the power of death
all cultures fear the one (Satan) who has the power of death
all cultures are in bondage to the one who has the power of death
all cultures without Christ will one day be cast into the lake of fire
all unbelieving individuals will experience eternal judgment**

V. Applying This Understanding to the Development of an Effective Ministry

A. Is our focus on telling others what the Bible commands them to do, or is our focus on showing others how to apply the Word of God in their daily lives?

1. we can give Biblical commands to fulfill our own desires

Matthew 23:1-7

“Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: ‘The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, *that* observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, “Rabbi, Rabbi.””

proud religious leaders will often give commands for others to follow
proud religious leaders will not do what they teach others to do
proud religious leaders will put heavy burdens on others
proud religious leaders will not do what they tell others to do
proud religious leaders want the things they do to be seen by others
proud religious leaders want to be treated like they are important
proud religious leaders like to be given titles to impress others

2. we are called to model godly leadership by our own example

Mark 10:42-45

“But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said to them, ‘You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.’”

godly Christian leaders do not seek authority over others
godly Christian leaders achieve greatness by serving others
godly Christian leaders help others to develop their full potential
godly Christian leaders give their lives to serve others

B. Is our goal to help others gain knowledge, or is our goal to equip others for effective ministry by taking them with us and showing them how to minister?

1. we can give only knowledge because people like knowledge

1 Corinthians 8:1

“Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.”

Romans 2:17-24a

“Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, and know *His* will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? For ‘the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.’”

**people with knowledge only can become proud
people can use their knowledge to boast in God
people can have knowledge because they are instructed in the law
people can think that their knowledge will help them guide others
people can teach others knowledge but not apply it to themselves
people can cause others to blaspheme God by their knowledge**

2. we will transform lives when we lead by example

1 Thessalonians 1:6-10

“And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything. For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, *even* Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.”

**we can invite others to become followers of us and of the Lord
we can help others learn to be led by the Holy Spirit
we will see others combine their words with being examples to others
we will see others begin to talk about their faith in God
we will see others tell how they turned from idols to serve the living God**

C. Are we helping people learn by giving them opportunities to do things that they are learning as they learn them?

**1. James said people can learn knowledge but not learn to use that knowledge
James 1:22-25**

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”

**Christians can learn the Word of God but not be shown how to obey it
Christians who learn but do not obey deceive themselves
Christians can be like a person who looks at himself in a mirror
Christians can forget what kind of persons they were
Christians are to learn the law of liberty and be shown how to practice it
(the law of liberty is to love one another as Christ has loved us - John 13:34-35)
Christians are not to be forgetful hearers but doers of the Word**

**2. Peter gave new Christians opportunities to put knowledge into practice
Acts 9:42, 10:23-24**

“And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.”
“Then he invited them in and lodged *them*. On the next day Peter went away with them, and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him. And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends.”

**many people in Joppa believed on the Lord
Peter was asked to bring the Gospel to Cornelius in Caesarea
Peter took some of these new Christians with him to Caesarea
Peter and these new Christians came to the home of Cornelius
people from Joppa put knowledge in practice in Caesarea**

D. Are we helping people learn in ministry by taking them with us and showing them how to minister?

1. we will be effective as we take others with us in ministry

Matthew 4:18-19, 23

“And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.’ ...²³And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.”

Christ invited men to travel with Him as He ministered
Christ promised He would show them how to become fishers of men
Christ took these men with Him throughout Galilee
Christ showed these men how to teach in the synagogues
Christ showed these men how to preach the Gospel of the kingdom
Christ showed these men how He healed people and cast out demons

2. we will be effective as we shows others how to minister by our example

Acts 20:20-21

“How I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Paul taught the Christians all that was helpful
Paul taught these things to the Christians publicly
Paul then showed them how to teach these things from house to house
Paul showed them in the homes of both Jews and Greeks
Paul showed them how to share the message of repentance
Paul showed them how to share the message of faith in our Lord Jesus

E. Are we expecting people to learn to minister through sermons and classes, or are we showing them how to minister by our example?

1. many people can hear but not understand or apply

Matthew 13:9-13

“He who has ears to hear, let him hear! And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.”

Christ said that people must have a right attitude to really hear
Christ explained to His disciples why He spoke in parables
Christ said that it had been given to them to know and understand
Christ said that the crowds were not given the ability to understand
Christ said that the crowds could see but not really see
Christ said the crowds could hear but not really hear
Christ said that the crowds could not understand

2. Christ gave the disciples understanding in a small group

Luke 24:45-49

“And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, ‘Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.’”

Christ had to open their understanding so that they could understand
Christ explained the purpose of His sufferings and death
Christ explained the purpose of His resurrection
Christ explained that they were to teach what repentance meant
Christ explained that they were to teach how to have forgiveness of sins
Christ said they were to be witnesses of these things
Christ said they could not witness in their own strength but needed His power

F. Are we teaching people about God, or are we helping people get to know and understand how God is working in their daily lives?

1. many people can know about God but not know God

Luke 10:25-29, 37

“And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, ‘Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?’ He said to him, ‘What is written in the law? What is your reading *of it?*’ So he answered and said, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,” and “your neighbor as yourself.”’ And He said to him, ‘You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.’ But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’...³⁷ And he said, ‘He who showed mercy on him.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’”

a lawyer tested Christ

a lawyer wanted to know how to inherit eternal life

a lawyer knew the summary of the law perfectly

a lawyer was told to obey the law perfectly and he would live

a lawyer wanted to justify himself

a lawyer heard the parable of the good Samaritan

a lawyer was told to follow the example of the Samaritan

2. many people need to be shown how God works in our lives

Philippians 3:9-10

“And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.”

we want to show that we are not depending on our own righteousness

we want to show people what it means to accept Christ by faith

we want to help people understand that God gives us righteousness by faith

we want to help people see our desire to really know Christ

we want to help people see our desire to know the power of His resurrection

we want to show people our desire to know the fellowship of His sufferings

we want to show our desire to be conformed to the death of Christ

**G. Are we teaching people just for their own information,
or are we equipping them so that they can help others?**

**1. we will only be blessed if we do what we know is pleasing to God
John 13:16-17**

“Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”

**Christ had just served the disciples
Christ had just washed the feet of the disciples
(Christ showed by example that serving brings blessing)
Christ said that the disciples were not greater than their Master
Christ said blessing does not come by knowing
(there is no blessing in knowing facts)
Christ said blessing does come by doing**

**2. we will experience blessing as we equip people to help others
Ephesians 4:15-16**

“But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.”

**blessing happens as each Christian learns to speak the truth
blessing happens as each Christian learns to speak in love
blessing happens as each Christian helps others grow up in Christ
blessing happens as each Christian recognizes Christ as the Head
blessing happens because each Christian impacts the entire body
blessing happens because each Christian does his or her share
blessing happens as God causes each Christian to grow in love**

**H. Do we focus on church attendance,
or do we affirm those who are using what they learn to help others?**

1. the Lord used persecution to scatter the church

Acts 8:1, 3-4

“Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ...³As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing *them* to prison. Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.”

**the Lord allowed great persecution to happen to the church at Jerusalem
the Lord scattered the Christians throughout Judea and Samaria
the Lord allowed the apostles to stay in Jerusalem
the Lord allowed the persecution to continue
the Lord saw those scattered share the Gospel everywhere**

2. the Lord blessed Philip in Samaria

Acts 8:5-8

“Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city.”

**the Lord led Philip to preach Christ in the city of Samaria
the Lord had prepared the hearts of the people of Samaria
the Lord caused the people to respond to the preaching of Philip
the Lord defeated unclean spirits in the city of Samaria
the Lord brought great joy to the city of Samaria**

3. the Lord blessed many unknown Christians throughout Samaria

Acts 9:31

“Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.”

**the Lord blessed many unknown Christians who shared the Gospel
the Lord multiplied churches throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria
the Lord led these churches to experience His peace
the Lord led these churches to be built up spiritually
the Lord led these churches to walk in the fear of the Lord
the Lord led these churches to walk in the comfort of the Holy Spirit**

I. Do we depend on our sermons and classes for people to learn, or do we take people with us and show them how to minister through on-the-job training?

1. the Lord led the early church to combine Bible study and on-the-job training
Acts 2:42, 46-47

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ...⁴⁶So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

the new Christians met continually in homes for Bible study
the new Christians met continually in homes for fellowship
the new Christians met continually in homes for breaking of bread
the new Christians met continually in homes for prayer

the new Christians continued to go to the temple - Acts 3:1-26
(this was to share the Gospel with others at the hour of prayer)
the new Christians continued to meet from house to house
(this provided opportunities to share the Gospel with extended families)

the new Christians were filled with extreme joy as they saw God work
the new Christians experienced great unity among themselves
the new Christians were filled with praise to God
the new Christians saw the Lord working in the lives of the people
the new Christians saw the Lord add new people to the church daily

2. the Lord worked to cause the disciples to multiply
Acts 6:7

“Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.”

the Lord saw the Word of God continue to spread
(the early Christians continued to share with others)
the Lord saw the number of disciples multiply greatly
(the early Christians learned to become disciples -
a disciple is defined in Matthew 13:52)
the Lord led many priests to become obedient to the faith
(the early Christians saw many religious leaders come to Christ)

**J. Do we help people just gain knowledge of the Word of God,
or do we help people to understand why they learn what they learn and
how to apply it in their daily lives so that they grow in godly wisdom?**

1. the Lord wants us to serve out of love not law

1 Timothy 1:5-7

“Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, *from* a good conscience, and *from* sincere faith, from which some, having strayed, have turned aside to idle talk, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.”

**the Lord wants us to develop love from a pure heart
the Lord wants us to develop love from a good conscience
the Lord wants us to develop love from a sincere faith
the Lord does not want us to turn aside to idle talk as some have
the Lord knows that some want to be teachers of the law
the Lord knows that such people do not understand the Gospel clearly
the Lord knows that such people claim to have clear understanding**

2. the Lord wants to give us understanding in all things

2 Timothy 2:7

“Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.”

**the Lord wants us to help Christians really learn to think about the Word
the Lord promises to give understanding of all things as we really think**

3. the Lord wants us to help others grow in spiritual understanding

Colossians 1:9-11

“For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy.”

**the Lord wants us to pray for others
the Lord wants all Christians to be filled with the knowledge of His will
the Lord wants all Christians to develop great wisdom
the Lord wants all Christians to develop spiritual understanding
the Lord wants all Christians to walk based on His wisdom
the Lord wants all Christians to become fruitful in every good work
the Lord wants all Christians to increase in the knowledge of God
the Lord wants all Christians to be strengthened with all might**

K. Do we focus on methods that work in the culture of our church to help our church in its growth, or do we help people learn to understand Biblical principles that will transform their lives and help them to reach out to people of many different cultures?

**1. many Jews wanted the entire church to be based on Jewish law and culture
Acts 15:1-5**

“And certain *men* came down from Judea and taught the brethren, ‘Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.’ Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question. So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren. And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them. But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, ‘It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses.’”

**Jews from Judea wanted all Gentiles to be circumcised
Jews from Judea had very strong opinions about this choice
Jews from Judea sent Paul to go to Jerusalem to talk to the leaders
Jews who had been Pharisees felt Gentiles must be circumcised
Jews who had been Pharisees felt Gentiles must keep the law**

**2. the church determined together that the Gentiles were not under the law
Acts 15:28-29**

“For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.”

**the church was led by the Holy Spirit
the church said the Gentiles were not under the law**

**the church listed four necessary things from the first nine chapters of Genesis:
idolatry (man’s own efforts to please God) - Genesis 4:3-5
blood (the life of the flesh is in the blood) - Genesis 9:4
things strangled (the life of the flesh is in the blood) - Genesis 9:4
immorality (in marriage two become one) - Genesis 2:24**

3. many Jews in Jerusalem still wanted to follow the Jewish law

Acts 21:19-21

“When he had greeted them, he told in detail those things which God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. And when they heard *it*, they glorified the Lord. And they said to him, ‘You see, brother, how many myriads of Jews there are who have believed, and they are all zealous for the law; but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise *their* children nor to walk according to the customs.’”

**the Jews glorified God for what He was doing among the Gentiles
the Jews were still all zealous for the law
the Jews were concerned what Paul might be teaching other Jews**

4. many Jews reaffirmed their decision about the Gentiles

Acts 21:25

“But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written *and* decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from *things* offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality.”

**the Gentiles were not under the law
the Gentiles had four necessary things
(these universal things came long before the law)**

5. the Lord chose to spread the church to the Gentiles from Antioch

Acts 13:1-3

“Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away.”

**the church in Antioch was already multicultural
the church in Antioch was led by the Holy Spirit**

**the church sent a team that had ministered among Gentiles
the church sent a team that had developed leadership among Gentiles**

Some Concluding Thoughts

It is very evident as you compare these eleven common characteristics of the “western culture” with the “majority culture” (the rest of the world, including most of the people in the “western culture” who have a somewhat limited formal education) that there is much more to contextualization than appears at first glance.

One of the greatest challenges today in Christian groups on secular university campuses in the United States, Canada or other “western culture” countries is the fact that the thoughts and ideas of many of the Asian students are largely ignored by staff members of European background. This is true even though a high percentage of all students in Christian groups on university campuses are made up of Asian students and many of these Asian students are among the top academic students in those universities.

This same problem is very common among “western culture” pastors and missionaries throughout the United States, Canada and other “western culture” nations. Few pastors and missionaries have really taken the time to listen and try to understand the thoughts and ideas of “majority culture” individuals especially among the groups that have less formal education than is common among Asian students.

In the cities of the United States and Canada, where a high percentage of residents are foreign born (the 2010 census said 39.5% of the total population of the city of Los Angeles are foreign born), effective evangelism and church planting will usually only happen when missionaries and church planters take the time to listen to the people and gain an understanding of them. This same thing is true in any rural area where “western culture” pastors and missionaries are trying to plant churches cross-culturally.

Understanding why the tri-cultural obstacle is the most complex of all

Tri-cultural means that we must understand three cultures. First, we must understand the cultural context in which the Word of God was written. Second, we must understand the culture from which we come (is it “western culture” or “majority culture”?). Third, we must understand the culture to which we are taking the Gospel and in which we are seeking to plant churches.

First, as evangelicals, we define our system of interpretation as the grammatico-historical interpretation of Scripture. That system of interpretation says that the meaning of any Scripture is defined by the intent of the original author. The intent of the original author can only be determined by the language he used and the historical context in which he wrote. That is why it is important to take the time to gain an understanding of the cultural context in which each book of the Bible was written.

We stated earlier that “western culture” usually bases communication on the Greek model of communication while the “majority culture” often bases communication on the Hebrew model of communication. It is important to understand that the communication, thought and learning patterns of the “majority culture” are often similar to the Hebrew patterns. This means that the eleven things mentioned in this manual must be considered in our efforts to try to understand the intent of the original writer. At the same time, while there can be only one meaning, we do understand that there can be many applications.

Second, as pastors, missionaries, and other Christian leaders, we must recognize the culture from which we have come. A pastor, missionary, or church leader coming from the “majority culture” will have an easier time understanding the Biblical context than a leader from the “western culture”. However, for anyone to be effective in cross-cultural communication, one must learn to become a good listener so we can benefit from the emphasis on wisdom in “majority cultures”. Since we do not understand the meaning behind many things in a culture new to us, this will include letting mature Christian leaders in that culture determine what things should be included in our worship and ministry.

Since Paul had ministered in the Gentile culture for many years, he listened to the advice of the church leaders when he returned to Jerusalem for what became his final visit to that city. In Acts 21:23-26, they said to Paul, “Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow. Take them and be purified with them, and pay their expenses so that they may shave *their* heads, and that all may know that those things of which they were informed concerning you are nothing, but *that* you yourself also walk orderly and keep the law. But concerning the Gentiles who believe, we have written *and* decided that they should observe no such thing, except that they should keep themselves from *things* offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality.’ Then Paul took the men, and the next day, having been purified with them, entered the temple to announce the expiration of the days of purification, at which time an offering should be made for each one of them.” Here, we see that Paul walked orderly and kept the Jewish law because he was a Jew but he never imposed that law on a Gentile church. We also see that Paul followed the Jewish law so he could minister effectively to Jewish Christians.

At the same time, Paul did everything possible to fight for freedom from the law for Gentile Christians. Galatians 2:3-5 says, “Yet not even Titus who *was* with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. And *this occurred* because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage), to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.” Paul made certain that the Jewish law was not imposed on Titus since he was a Gentile.

Then, Galatians 2:11-14 says, “Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed; for before certain men came from James, he

would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before *them* all, ‘If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?’” Paul made it very clear that Peter, Barnabas, and the other Jews were practicing hypocrisy because of the fact that they were acting out of fear, instead of acting in love. 1 John 4:18 says, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.”

Paul further explained that freedom when he said to the Galatians, in Galatians 5:1 and 13, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. ...¹³For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” Here, we see that Paul also made it very clear to the Gentiles that Christian liberty is not the freedom to carry out one’s own agenda. Instead, Christian liberty provides the opportunity to serve one another in love.

Third, as pastors, missionaries, and other Christian leaders, we must make ourselves students of the culture to which we are going. One of the key things we can do is explain and interpret the Scriptures in their grammatico-historical context. By explaining the Scriptures in that context, we help people understand the intent of the original author. They quickly learn that the intent of the original author can only be determined by the language he used and the historical context in which he wrote. However, instead of making the applications ourselves, we ask the people of the culture to whom we are going to explain to us how they would apply the Biblical principles in their context.

This prepares Christians of other cultures to do two things. First, they are able to help people of their own culture. Second, they see how they can also share the Word of God with people of other cultures. We said that tri-cultural means that we must understand three cultures. As we help people to develop that tri-cultural understanding, they are being prepared for a much wider ministry than just to people of their own culture. That helps to equip every Christian to carry out the instructions of Ephesians 4:15-16, which says, “But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.” Each Christian who comes to a clear understanding of this tri-cultural principle will be able to have an effective ministry to people of other cultures and help to carry out the Great Commission to Make Disciples of all nations as that Christian yields to the Lord and serves in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Are you ready to let the Lord work in your life, and through your life,
to help “Make Disciples” of all nations?

Disciples who are:
growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ
growing in Godly character
growing in ministry skills

