

## Building Spiritual Movements

**Purpose:** The purpose of this session is to acquaint you with basic principles of building a movement in your campus or community ministry.

**Objectives:** This session will help you to:

1. Comprehend what a movement is.
2. Understand and explain seven activities needed to build a movement.
3. Apply these principles in a case study.

**Key Verses:** Acts 2:42-43

*Note to instructor: This class is best taught by someone who has experienced a movement.*

### I. Introduction

Words are important! The world was created with words, it was cursed with a word and by the word of God it will all be restored at the end. Words communicate beliefs, values, and actions. As part of worldwide Christian ministry, words are important to us. And, today, we want to talk about one of those important words.

### II. What Is a "Movement?"

A. Definition of "movement":



Civil rights movement    Women's rights movement    revival in a country    renewal in a church

What do these movements have in common? Write down your ideas before continuing.

You may have written things like: common beliefs, fervor, organized to convert others to their position, large public events.

Webster's Dictionary defines a movement as "A series of organized activities by people working concertedly toward some goal." *World Book* adds this, "The efforts and results of a group of people working together to bring about some one thing. Abundance of incidents, action." Usually the results of a movement are greater than the summation of each individual's efforts – a multiplied outcome.

What are some of the key words in these definitions? What are the action words? How do people relate to movements?

- B. Definition of a "***Spiritual Movement:***" *A Spiritual Movement is an expanding group of disciples of Jesus Christ who are spiritual multipliers and are **committed to** glorifying God by helping to fulfill the Great Commission in the power of the Holy Spirit.*

### III. Essential characteristics of a spiritual movement:

- A. A common goal: the Great Commission.
- B. A common strategy: expose, win, build, and send.
- C. A common method: initiative evangelism and spiritual multiplication.
- D. Common tools and materials.
- E. A common power: the Holy Spirit
- F. Increasing commitment to the goal (by developing personal convictions).
- G. Critical Mass: the amount of committed people needed to pursue its goals.

If there was one word that characterized movement it would be activity, lots of activity. To develop a spiritual movement there are seven essential activities.

*Note to instructor: It would be helpful for you to share about experience you have had in a movement. What did God do through the movement? How were lives changed?*

*Note to instructor: Have the students get into Target Area groups to discuss their answers to IV.A-G and the Discussion Questions. If you'd like, stop their discussions about 10 minutes before class time finishes to ask what they came up with on certain questions (you pick which ones).*

### IV. Seven Essential Ongoing Activities Necessary to Build a Movement.

#### A. **Mobilize Concerted Prayer**

Since any spiritual movement is God's work, it can only be accomplished by His power. Prayer is evidence of faith and reminds us of our dependence on God. The apostles chose prayer and the ministry of the Word over administration in Acts 6:4. Too often, today, we look for people to pray for us, while we do the "work of the ministry." The Apostles approached it from the other direction. We are commanded to pray without ceasing in 1

Thessalonians 5:17. Prayer is to be our way of life. Do everything in an attitude of prayer. James 4:2,3 says asking is the way to receive from God. If you do not see God meeting your needs and blessing your ministry, perhaps you have not asked Him.

What would be needed to mobilize concerted prayer in your Target Area? What would it look like? Write down your thoughts.

## B. Sow Broadly and Reap

Galatians 6:7-9 says that we reap the kind of harvest we sow. Proverbs 11:24 explains that the one who scatters, increases all the more. Ecclesiastes 11:1-6 encourages to sow diversely because we never know which one will produce the harvest.

Jesus preached to multitudes (Matthew 5:1), small groups (Mark 2:1-12), and individuals (John 4). His disciples did the same (Acts 2; Acts 10).

Never stop presenting the gospel. Do follow-up in the context of evangelism. Take a new believer witnessing or have a new believer watch you follow-up another new believer. Plan and hold large evangelistic events such as university and community classics, "Jesus" film shows, etc. provide for large and small group follow-up through integrating converts into discipleship groups. Balance large group exposure with small group and personal evangelism. But don't stop doing evangelism.

Think of the people you are discipling. How could you involve them in evangelism with you? Write down your thoughts.

## C. Move with the Movers

Provide opportunities for growth and when people respond, they are demonstrating they are ripe, ready for further growth. In other words, you proclaim the truth and move with those who respond to it -- those who want to grow towards God and be involved in ministry.

Ripe fruit is ready to pluck and use for God's purposes, but green fruit should be left to ripen. Don't spend concentrated, personal time with those who aren't moving. Provide large group settings where they can mature.

Mark 3:13-19: Jesus personally picked out the twelve disciples.  
Matthew 19:16-30: The rich young man went away.



Matt 8:18-22: Cost of discipleship

John 2:23-25; 6:61-65, 70: Jesus moving with the movers

Don't expect all Christians to be equally ready to move for Christ at the same time (try to remember when you also may not have been ready to move for Christ). Don't expect all Christians to produce the same kind or amount of fruit (Matthew 13:23; 1 Corinthians 3:6, 9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

How can we provide opportunities for people to respond – to show if they are “ripe fruit?”

What would happen if you invested a lot of time and effort into people who don't want to “move” – that is people who don't want to trust God in greater steps of faith in the ministry?

#### D. **Build Multiplying Disciples**

*If you do not produce multiplying disciples the movement will last only as long as the original leader can sustain it through personal effort.*

A multiplying disciple is one who is growing in his relationship with Christ, wins others to Christ, helps to build them in the faith, and sends them out to do the same. Paul's example in 2 Timothy 2:2 is to build into faithful men & women.

**First**, the disciples must have **Biblical teaching and parenting**.

- We are told in 1 Peter 2:2 to "long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation."
- It is the responsibility of the discipler to provide this pure milk to the newer Christians who desire it (Matthew 4:19; 28:20; Mark 3:14; 1 Thessalonians 2:5-12; 1 Peter 5:2, John 21:15).

**Second**, the disciples must be involved in **personal and group ministry**.

Mark 3:14; Acts 11:25-26; Acts 16:1-3; Acts 18

**Multiplying discipleship groups are not equal to a movement. A movement includes small groups, but is comprised of much more. A movement will never grow when its membership focuses only on building small groups.**

## E. Build Personal Conviction

**The strength of a movement is directly related to the number of men and women who hold and demonstrate personal conviction in the values and purpose of the movement.** A person's involvement in a movement is as deep as his conviction. Therefore, a Christian movement must seek to deepen the personal convictions of its members.



A personal conviction is a strong belief that one holds with certainty to be true about the world and, as a result, is the basis for determining one's actions in it.

Growth in personal conviction occurs in discipleship groups.

**First**, teaching the Word of Christ instructs them as to what is right.

**Second**, giving them constant opportunity to be committed (surrender) to the Lordship of Christ through obedience to the Word.

**Third**, live out your convictions in their presence. Vision is caught, not taught. Give them more than information, give them your lives: 1 Thessalonians 2:8; 1 Thessalonians 1:6

**Fourth**, we are more likely to embrace a conviction that we see others embracing and living out. Fellowship with those of like mind.

Personal conviction is also built when we encourage the membership to take "**faith steps**." Involving them in experiences which force the application of Christ's Word.

As you look at your influence in your disciples and in other Christian's lives, how could you more effectively build personal conviction in their lives?

## F. Establish Credibility

Why is credibility important? Members of the movement will think, "This is real and I'm proud to be part of it." Non-members will think, "This is really interesting, I need to treat it cautiously. I wonder why it works? What does it take to belong?"

1. Since new things can be viewed with suspicion, you can establish credibility by:
  - a. Obeying God above men  
Acts 24:14-16 (Paul's defense before Felix)  
1 Thessalonians 2:1-6: didn't come serving men, but God.

- b. Being a person of integrity, remaining true to the Word.  
1 Peter 2:12 "Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles..."  
Matthew 5:16, "Let your light shine before men...that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father...."
- c. Serving  
1 Corinthians. 9:19-23: Though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all.  
Matthew 20:25-28; John 13:1-17
- d. Momentum activities (Have similar impact as miracles)  
Acts 2:41-47 (mass evangelism with response)  
Acts 4: Peter and John's arrest and godly response

What could you be doing to more effectively establish credibility in your ministry involvement?

## G. Develop Leadership

When Paul arrived in a city to begin a movement for Christ, he usually went first to the synagogue. There he found the existing leadership in the Jewish community. Often, this leadership came to Christ and provided additional leadership for the growth of the Christian movement in the first century. When he founded a church, he always appointed elders and deacons - men and women who would lead and care for God's people. A leader is a person who causes others to take **effective action**.

Definition of a Christian Leader: "A person who leads others to take **effective actions** that result in the **building of multiplying disciples**."

Leaders need to be built up in the areas of character, conviction, and competence. They also need development in organization, people skills, vision, and communication. As new leaders are trained, give them increasing responsibility.

Who are the people in your Target Area who cause others to take effective action? How could you begin to establish a relationship with them (a direct contact, through a friend of the leader, a leadership seminar, and executive seminar, etc.)?

As you are building multiplying disciples, have any of them shown themselves to lead others to take effective actions? Are they developing character, convictions, and competence in leadership skills? How could you give them increasing responsibility to let them apply what you've taught them?

## V. Action Point.

Meet with your Target Area team (students and mentors). Seek the Lord's will on how He wants your team to apply this session in your Target Area.

Read the two case studies in the Appendices.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. In your own words, what is a movement?
  
2. What would a movement look like in your Target Area? Describe it in terms of the seven activities mentioned in this lesson.

## APPENDIX A

### Case Study 1

One year, two people were involved in the Campus Crusade for Christ ministry in a state. Several years later, over 10,000 people were involved. Christians from every major denomination, Christian organization, college, high school and evangelistic prayer group united to reach the inhabitants with the claims of Christ.

The director began to work in this particular place because it had the country's highest literacy rate and because most of the national leaders lived there. The Gospel had the greatest potential to flourish in this area.

The first problem was that Christians feared the Campus Crusade ministry would start another church. Consequently, they were afraid to help. The ministry began by contacting non-Christian people and simply presenting Christ to them. The Lord worked and people were won to Him. Then the staff began to train them in personal evangelism and follow-up. They wanted to make sure there was a strong foundation for the ministry, so they worked calmly and quietly.

In seven years, Campus Crusade trained thousands of people in the state. Fifty percent of these people started witnessing in their own areas, witnessing in at least one home per week. At the end of this time the ministry's momentum increased by conducting a Leadership Training Institute (LTI) and a Campus Crusade Classic (evangelistic meeting). Consequently, several key church leaders were challenged to involvement and one joined the staff of Campus Crusade. This leader influenced the involvement of other church leaders and pastors.

Then came the Here's Life Campaign. A total of 267 churches participated. Many gave their facilities for training and encouraged their church members to be involved. Several churches discontinued Sunday afternoon youth group meetings to allow young people time for witnessing.

One problem was supervising so many people, so the staff used some local evangelists for that purpose. They conducted five conferences and trained hundreds of evangelists to present their faith who, in turn, trained prayer groups to begin to reach their own areas. Later, Campus Crusade staff conducted training institutes all over the area to help these evangelists train thousands of prayer group participants for Here's Life.

In October they conducted large evangelistic meetings. They had two teams, one started at the top of the state and the other at the bottom. During the last three months of the year over a million individuals attended these large meetings.

Throughout the Here's Life Campaign and evangelistic meetings, people who trusted Christ were invited to attend follow-up meetings on weekends. Teaching new converts was primarily the responsibility of the person who led them to Christ and his local church.

By the grace of God, at the end of the year almost everyone in that area was contacted. Over a million individuals indicated they invited Christ into their lives.



## APPENDIX B Case Study 2

Christianity was first introduced here in 1875 through a small group of people who became Christians in a neighboring land. One returned to this village and within a few months had a congregation of 100 people.

One hundred years later, this tiny nation hosted the largest Christian gathering in the history of the world and was well on its way to saturating the entire population of 33 million with the claims of Christ.

The seeds for the spiritual explosion that is now taking place were planted in 1904 when some missionaries asked God for a revival throughout the country. The first wave of revival came and reached its peak in 1907 when over 50,000 new Christians were added to the church. The church increased over 300 percent between 1904 and 1910. In the next 50 years it increased 2,600 percent – 10 times the growth rate of the population.

The second wave of revival began in 1958 when a pastor, who was a school principal, shared his vision and personal commitment to reach students for Christ with 32 professors and pastors. Thus the ministry of Campus Crusade for Christ was founded in this country.

To reach their goal of saturating the nation with the Gospel, the ministry devised a plan to reach villages, where half of the people lived. Trained workers challenged and trained the two most influential people in each village to conduct small discipleship groups. The village plan was launched on a national scale through nine successive LTI's. A total of 13,715 men and women attended.

To accelerate the village plan and help mobilize thousands of Christians to spread the Gospel, more training institutes were held, for church members and leaders, and EXPLO '74 was organized. EXPLO '74 with 300,000 delegates included the largest number of personal decisions made for Christ at one gathering.

After EXPLO '74 delegates were sent home to recruit 10 others to attend additional training conferences held throughout the fall of 1974. Each delegate was challenged to befriend 10 non-believers and present Christ to them.

Some say that this country may be the key to evangelization of the rest of the continent because of its strong church which has been tried by the fires of persecutions and tempered through suffering and war. There is committed Christian leadership at nearly every level of education, government and military.